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Minnesota local history:
A visual and personal narrative of home

Masters of Creative Arts (Research)

Thesis submitted by:

Alesha Jeanette Peckels

Post-Graduate Research Diploma (Visual Arts)

Bachelor of Arts: Visual Arts and American Indian Studies

James Cook University (Townsville), February 2008

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All family participation: interview material, letters, emails, imagery and so on have been pre-approved for inclusion in this

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Declaration on Ethics

The research presented and reported in this thesis was conducted within the guidelines for research ethics outlined in the *National Statement on Ethics Conduct in Research Involving Human* (1999), the *Joint NHMRC/AVCC Statement and Guidelines on Research Practice* (1997), the *James Cook University Policy on Experimentation Ethics. Standard Practices and Guidelines* (2001), and the *James Cook University Statement and Guidelines on Research Practice* (2001). The proposed research methodology received clearance from the James Cook University Experimentation Ethics Review Committee.

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Abstract

This thesis explores a visual and personal narrative of home in the State of Minnesota. It introduces and analyses methods of recording an accurate historic remembrance of place on both personal and formal levels. As the aim of this thesis is to provide a special inside-view of Minnesota social history, private narratives and imagery have been incorporated to demonstrate how two extended families of settlers embrace objects and local art.

The collection of folklore has been filtered throughout text in all chapters, and each section includes family introductions in order to establish place and the participant's frame of mind during the recorded narrative sessions. To validate local historic facts provided in interview and personal printed matter (ancestral origins), background research on both place and family was carried out prior to the conduction of interview sessions. A brief overview of history in the State of Minnesota is described in Chapter One and provided the author with motives as to what driving force resulted in the interviewed families' migration to Minnesota as new settlers during the late 1800s.

Chapter Two and subsequent chapters explore Minnesota's social history (various topics) through the eyes of one generation of family members during the 1950s – 1980s. Chapter Two provides the reader with a personal view of the Minneapolis metro-area community and family involvement in the Catholic Church and school. This chapter establishes home in a community and leads into Chapter Three and its theory; Chapter Three demonstrates how the Minnesotan families create an intimate space in the home. Photographs, art work and cooking recipes are samples of the creative approach utilised in retaining and sharing this family's past with readers. Both families' home and social life are similar but are in no way exactly the same (it must be said that these families are related through marriage).

Chapters Four and Five explore a personal connection to place through activities and imagery. Chapter Four follows the family along the Mississippi River and connects fishing folklore to a series of photographs spanning fifty years. Chapter Five explores a portion the Wild Rice River which flows through the family farm in Northern Minnesota. And finally, Chapters Six and Seven

take a step further from the previous (Chapters Four and Five) and relate family folklore to specific objects utilised during special family outings and activities (fishing and hunting and winter festivities).

In conjunction with chapter narratives and theory, numerous personal photographs and art works were also incorporated. The images enrich this unique personal account of social history in Minnesota and break traditional research boundaries; the personal history in this thesis can be experienced without words as well as in a formal textual setting. A Masters of Creative Arts is at the core of this thesis, and its work, both by family and the author, are experienced in a large individual format alongside the body of text. Chapter Eight discusses the importance of art work throughout the thesis and delves into a particular interpretation of this thesis's goal: to experience a personal and phenomenological Minnesota.

Acknowledgements

I would like to thank my family: the Peckels, Miller, Zigan and Roy clans. You are my inspiration and the reason I make art; my work and I are alive because of you. Thank you to my parents and grandparents, and the countless family participants who contributed their time, personal imagery, art work, letters and emails, and hours of interview material.

Thank you to Cohen and family for your patience and positive energy.

You are all my family; this book was written about you, for you.

Alesha Jeanette Peckels

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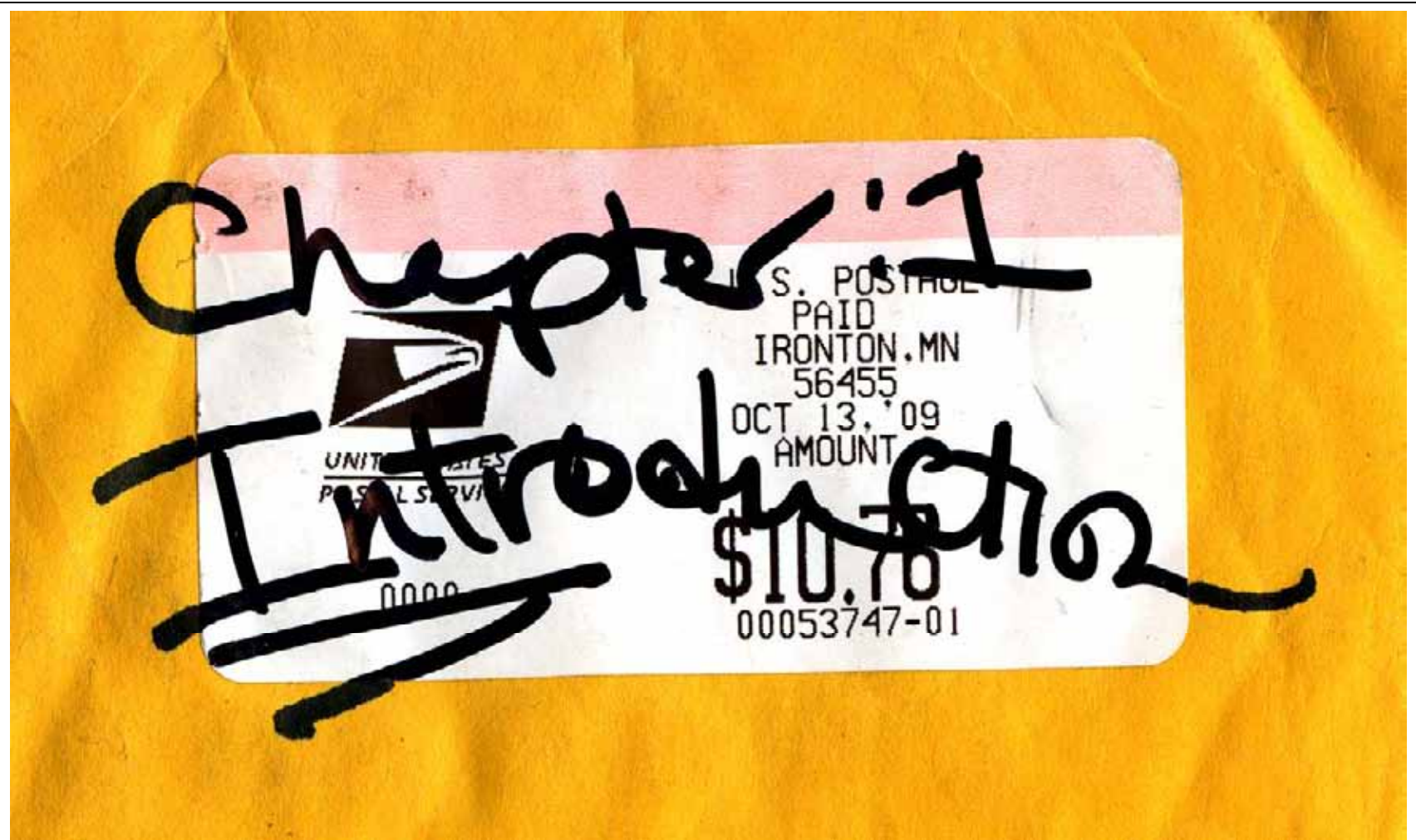
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Chapter One: Introduction

Chapter One: Introduction-

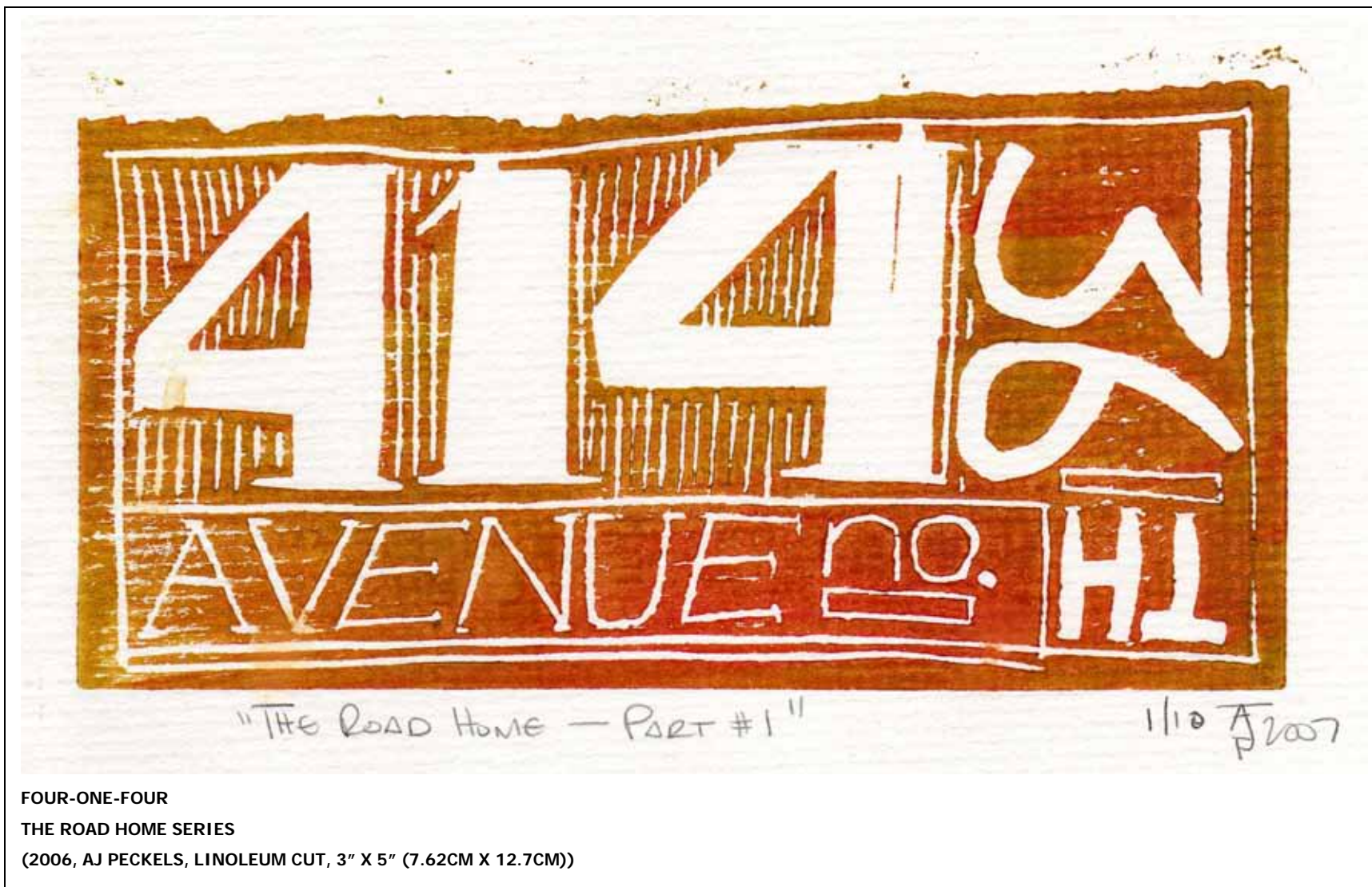
I. Gwiazda Polarna

Gwiazda Polarna (North Star) was a Polish newspaper that circulated the Minnesota region in the late 1800s to early 1900s (Radzilowski 2005). This thesis represents my own personal roadmap home, and the North Star is my first marker. The map guiding me home consisted of my family's old houses. Home to me was a place I stayed at long enough (one year or more) to miss once I had left.

I felt that in order to make a home you had to long to live in it when you were not there to enjoy it; to leave and long to return. There were many of these places in my life, some still exist and others have been transformed into new homes for other families. Because there were so many homes that drifted in and out of my memory, I wrote a list, and ended up creating the *Road Home Series* (AJ Peckels 2006). This image is my visual interpretation of where my family's sanctuary once belonged and where it can now be found. The Minneapolis house was charted in the North Side of the city. My father bought that house for one dollar in July, 1975. We moved out in the late summer months in 1997. The Big Lake house has been our home for over ten years.

During this time, my parents also built the cabin up north in Pequot Lakes. The patch along the left-hand side of the exterior wall was because of me; I once locked the keys inside the house and my father had to cut a hole near the door in order to get us back inside. I made sure to include this hole in the wall as it marked my place of once staying at the cabin; it tells my story and in return I tell my family's story as well as the places they made their homes.

All three houses belonging (once belonged) to Bill and Barb Peckels have been depicted in the above image. The sketches are light and from memory; their highest peaks in the roof have been positioned towards the star which guides me home. My family is what brings me back, they are what create home. One cannot make themselves at home physically in the world if they are not surrounded by sound relationships within the community in which they are immersed. I wrote out my family's names in the star that points me towards home, my *Gwiazda Polarna*.





MINNEAPOLIS, MINNESOTA

(CA. 1996, AJ PECKELS, PHOTOGRAPH, 4" X 6" (10.16CM X 15.25CM))

IN 1975, WILLIAM PECKELS BOUGHT THIS HOME FOR ONE US DOLLAR.

BILL OF SALE

Know All Men by these Presents, That.....

Dianne M. Carlson, widowed and not remarried

of the County of Hennepin and State of Minnesota, part y.....

of the first part, in consideration of the sum of.....

ONE DOLLAR AND OTHER GOOD AND VALUABLE CONSIDERATIONS - - - - - ~~DOLLARS~~

to her in hand paid by William M. Peckels

of the County of Hennepin and State of Minnesota

part y..... of the second part, the receipt whereof is hereby acknowledged, do ~~es~~ hereby Grant, Bargain, Sell and Convey unto the part y..... of the second part, his executors, administrators and assigns, forever, the following described Goods, Chattels and Personal Property, to-wit:

stove
refrigerator
automatic washer and dryer
gas light
gas grill
all curtains

now in use at the premises at 414 - 36th Avenue North, Minneapolis

MINNEAPOLIS, MINNESOTA (JULY 1975, WILLIAM PECKELS)

ORIGINAL DEED TO PREVIOUSLY OWNED PECKELS HOME ON 36TH AVENUE NORTH: PAID IN FULL WITH \$1.00 USD

II. Thesis research: Approach and interpretation

There were many aspects of research to consider while compiling evidence and materials for this thesis. Research on the genealogical and geographical backgrounds of the two families was needed in order to narrow the field of research within Minnesota. Second, a thorough understanding of Minnesota history was required. And finally, the usefulness of various anthropological methods and approaches were considered.

In order to research families from a designated region, it was necessary to obtain background information which explored circumstances that would have attracted these migrant families, more specifically, the Polish and German settlers to Minnesota. Thus, a general understanding of family origins was necessary in locating these people in their new land and investigating possibilities as to why their move to Minnesota was significant.

What opportunities were there in Minnesota that may have provoked these settling families to move into the region? Why leave a birth country in order to begin a new life? Researching these questions and Polish and German origins was vital in placing these two extended families within Minnesota.

Radzilowski (2005) analyses how Polish settlers throughout the state of Minnesota applied their knowledge to jobs advertised to entice migrants to settle the region. Peterson (1998) writes on central Minnesotan German settlement, and focuses research on how German families in Stearns County Minnesota utilised local goods and traditional techniques building Minnesota-German homes.

Further Minnesota sources, such as the Minnesota Historical Society (2003a) explore migrant-specific jobs located in the Minneapolis milling district and along the Mississippi River. Having consulted sources such as Peterson (1998) and Radzilowski (2005) it has been possible to place together a rough timeline and regional pattern of migrant relocations, work and so on that correspond with the oral histories provided by research participants.

Connecting relocated families in Minnesota to their native soil proved slightly difficult but not impossible. Both Miller (Marcienkewicz¹) and Zigan (Cygan) families changed their surnames, and the initial versions were necessary for tracing their origins. According to Brown (2005) and a statement by a railroad land commissioner (Radzilowski 2005) there were apprehensions about Polish migrants and about placing groups of Polish people together, as effects would be “detrimental” to the Minnesota region. The decision to change their names may have been made in order to increase chances of securing jobs and settling land in a region such as Minnesota; they may have sounded/appeared less Polish to locals hiring within the region.

Alongside name changes, country borders throughout the Poland, Germany and Hungary regions were skewed in the later 1800s so familial origins were difficult to pinpoint (Brown 2005; Fraser 1995). However, evidence provided by members of the Peckels/Miller family placed their distant Marcienkewicz ancestors to Prussian Poland, and a distant Peckels ancestor’s birth to Luxemburg in 1860.

Despite racist claims of Polish ineptitude, some Miller descendents do not attribute their surname change to this, but assert that it was due to the fact that the original surname, Marcienkewicz, was simply too long. Links to mill work along the Mississippi may have also contributed to the Miller name change.

The Zigan name has been linked during the course of this research project to the Poland/Germany/Hungary regions in Europe, with the Gypsy peoples of these regions. Okely (1983), Fraser (1995), and Fonseca (1995) research Gypsy origins throughout Europe. Okely (1983) explores the term ‘Gypsy’, linking it to Egyptian origins- the name evolved: *Gitanes*, *Gitanos*, *Tsiganes*, *Cygan* (a clear connection to the Zigan/Cygan clan).

One source restricts the Zigan family (or Cygan, a geographical spelled version of the name) “...to a very limited zone in northwestern Transylvania and the neighbouring territory; and it is precisely there that a noble family Zygan is to be found,

¹ Marcienkewicz may be spelled incorrectly by Miller family descendents; a scholar with Polish language knowledge has provided a second version of the surname spelling: Marcinkiewicz. This version was provided while researching and assessing this thesis. However, for the thesis the Miller family version will be utilised.

with antecedents going back to the original Hungarian invasion in the ninth century” (Fraser 1995). Zigan family charts link their ancestors to predominantly Poland and Germany.

After completing early research of tracking down family origins to predominantly the Poland/Germany regions of Europe, and estimating a timeline of arrival in the United States and Minnesota, interviews were conducted with members of both families on their knowledge of family history and connection to Minnesota. The collection of oral history (with a majority of material being excerpts from interviews recorded by the author during August/September 2006) encapsulates memories from participating family members. This oral/written collaboration revealed the important people, places and objects that are discussed in the following chapters.

A general understanding of Minnesota history (Ash 2004) and Minnesota art history (Coen 1996, Greiner 2001) was essential in order to explain why the research participants focused on these particular places and objects in their narratives. Further study was required on places that were specifically mentioned, including the Mississippi River and its resources, Peckels/Zigan home towns and counties and their geographical locations and attributes (Ash 2004, TMHS 1989, Remick and Ringsak 2003, MDN 2006), and regional community activities and festivals (Risjord 2005, Thorkelson 2003, Tourism, EM 2006), including activities during the winter months (TMHS 1970/71a-2003c).

Published histories of Minnesota provide abundant information pertinent to local communities and activities that are also relevant to the research participants. These have been cited accordingly throughout the text. The purpose of combining local history with family oral history was to make evident a personal voice within the historic text, linking the people to place.

Historic articles and materials, whether visual, written or oral are all basic communication formats incorporated in this thesis to place people within a familiar surrounding deemed home by contributing family members. A comprehensive understanding of objects and places is explored. Anderson (1997) is associated with the inclusive approach to heritage provided in this thesis. Knudsen (2004) assisted the writer in supporting the oral approach to text and landscape. Minnesota local historic guides

(text, websites and databases), visual art and personal exploration through dreams and past memories were also used to produce this account of a people and their relationships with one another and with the places they call 'home'.

After gathering interview materials and a general understanding of the family backgrounds and connections to Minnesota, more specifically the regions in which these families settled, it was then the task at hand to conduct research into how these families strived to create space into places they could call home. Interviews conducted; mainly with third-generation family members generated a vital insight: the people could not connect themselves to place without connecting themselves to their families and local communities; one could not have home without communication and activities within the spaces around them. Anthropology theory describes not only how people connect people to place, but how they creatively *make* place through their social relationships with one another and via their communal activities (Gupta and Ferguson 1997; de Certeau 1984).

Bachelard (1994) beautifully connects people to place and to home. His explorations of place and space correlate perfectly with the evidence gathered from interviews in 2006. Personal interviews were vital for understanding how people not only connect to place (Nash 1997, McCarthy, Ashton and Graham 1997). Connecting personal history to local history was essential (Anderson 1997), and sharing these findings with other people is equally as important (Klapproth 2004). The chapter description to follow outlines how this thesis progresses towards demonstrating how people make themselves at home in the world through their shared engagement with particular cultural objects and activities.

III. Outline

Each chapter develops different aspects of the creative means by which members of two families, Peckels and Zigan, strive to connect to place and bond to their evolving heritage in Minnesota. First, objects are discussed in sequence with place; explaining why each is important in relation to Minnesota heritage. Second, I consider how these objects are important throughout the Minnesota region and how people incorporate them into their daily activities.

General background research and anthropological studies are formal approaches to an informal practice; which I feel later require a researcher to provide personal feelings and memories as a guiding reference to information gathered through an auto-ethnographic approach. Pratt (1986) expanded upon difficulties in defining the role of a researcher, and how readers and writers are forced to draw lines between personal narratives and a more scientific perspective. This thesis will apply personal narrative of close family, sample writing, and personal experience through artwork; all of which provide an auto-ethnographic account of how a place world is made.

By combining scientific study, phenomenology and autobiographical experience in a single literary work, one can experience a history of place, its interaction with people and local activities, personal connections to both place and activities/objects, and in this case, personal expression through art work, folk art, written letters and photography in the home. This writing technique draws on many previous forms of research: Klapproth (2004) compared Anglo-Western and Australian Aborigine recording methods (the accuracy and embedded origins of a written approach versus an oral approach to maintaining a person and place's history); Reed-Danahay (1997) investigated a series of written approaches that embrace both self and cultural examination, and Palmer (2001) explored how writing from an ethnographic point of view can be beneficial for researchers, insiders and outsiders alike.

...the relationship between people and their surroundings encompasses more than attaching meaning to space. It involves the recognition and cultural elaboration of perceived properties of environments in mutually constituting ways through narratives and praxis (Low and Lawrence-Zúñiga 2003, p14)

The Peckels and Zigan Minnesota families observed throughout the following chapters of this thesis are both similar and different in ways of heritage and upbringing. In order to explore Minnesota and link the familial heritage to the text, chapter two has been designed to first locate this U.S. State and identify what natural resources may have enticed settlers into the region over the past 140 years. Sources such as Ash (2004) and the Minnesota Historical Society Press (2003b) aided in establishing a general understanding of European cultural settlement in the Minnesota region.

Chapter two recognises object and interview parameters, and supports *why* these two selected families have been chosen for this study. (Lineages of the Peckels and Zigan clans can be found in the appendices). More importantly, this chapter gives a broad overview of the origins of these Minnesotan clans and ponders over what Minnesota offered its migrants, and what may have enticed these families to settle there.

Migration advertisements, job opportunities and land for offer are some topics briefly discussed. Radzilowski (2005), Peterson (1998), and the Minneapolis Tribune (Meier 1981) describe which European migrants settled in particular regions throughout the State (including Polish and German settlers). A search of the U.S. Census Bureau (2007) assisted in establishing an arrival timeline of relatives of the interviewed families, who first arrived in the Minnesota region, comparing dates and surname data with the records provided by the Peckels/Miller and Zigan/Roy families.

In chapter three, the Peckels' Minneapolis residence can be viewed as more than basic structures designed to protect the family. The house becomes a home, a gateway between dreams and history; one cannot exist without the other. Stokes (1994) wrote on connecting culture and place through music (or a musical production of place), this chapter translates his work and applies culture to the home and its family through narrative and imagery.

Chapter three utilises both local written history and familial oral chronicles in order to see the Peckels house for more than its possession-value. Bachelard (1994) is a key reference here. His perception of the home is essential for the point of view and approach taken towards chapters three and five. The home is more than a structure: wood frames, glass windows, rooms with walls and doors to keep memories private.

...we should therefore have to say how we inhabit our vital space, in accord with all the dialectics of life, how we take root, day after day, in a 'corner of the world...' For our house is our corner of the world. As has often been said, it is our first universe, a real cosmos in every sense of the word. If we look at it intimately, the humblest dwelling has beauty. (Bachelard 1994, p4)

In saying this, the Peckels home is considered more than a just a location with an address; it is a sanctuary. The images and included personal narrative transform the house phenomenologically into an intimate space.

Chapter four travels the shores and waters of the Mississippi River mainly along the Little Falls region in Minnesota. This chapter revolves around site-specific photographs taken by the Peckels family. These images awakened the senses and dreams experienced by a family member; four photographs are analysed in this chapter.

Terms found in Anderson (1997) are used to explore these personal attributes of imagery and connect them to text and history. These include: portable heritage, pictorial heritage and intangible heritage.

Photographs, oral stories, and art works have been intertwined throughout the text in chapter four to better define the connection from place to object to family to folklore. Carmichael, Hubert, Reeves, and Scanche (1994) discuss theories connecting items to the past and present, the survival of culture, and question how the past is perceived by communities- who owns the past? It is the people in this chapter who share their history in a region to create a community's history, or its past, and it is therefore their ownership and their obligation to share this past in order to understand the importance of place and its connection to the people who live in an area, such as Minnesota.

The Minneapolis Mill District, lumber, fishing and hunting, and many other items have been touched upon in the subsequent chapters of the book; all of these goods and resources once revolved around the Mississippi River. Images by countless Minnesota artists in a variety of art mediums have been placed in various Minnesota history and art/history books. The visuals and natural wealth that come from the Mississippi River go beyond this body of water, as an object.

Minnesotans shape their lives by the Mississippi River; they include the river as a part of their lives because it has been included in everyday life by their ancestors. The Mississippi can be thought of as something more than a vessel of life for

regional Minnesota people. Chapter four connects personal imagery and narrative alongside a general knowledge of land and local history.

Chapter five bridges the past and the present and explores the memories of Zigan family and their interpretation of local farms in the Minnesota region. Although Zigans interviewed for this book are not farmers by trade, the local farms explored visually and textually, (particularly the Brown farm in Brooklyn Center and the Zigan family farm in McGregor Minnesota), hold a special place in the minds and hearts of the Zigan family.

Anderson (1997) discusses the techniques in which historians and government officials use to gather materials and preserve culture in Australian museums. Anderson (1997) summarises that a museum's approach to gathering/presenting history is based on aspects important solely to governing officials, and lack more personal heritage established by the people of a region. Writing on a place or object without heritage or content can make local historic items (images, handmade crafts, work tools) seem empty; with origins explained only in terms of their function or utilitarian worth (Anderson 1997).

Researchers and presenters can choose to incorporate a more personal history by including intangible heritage on personal, local and state levels. Thus, the following resources play a substantial role in my interpretation in chapter five: Anderson (1997), McCarthy, Ashton and Graham (1997), and Nash and Henderson (1997).

Chapter six searches Minnesota's outdoors in order to create an understanding of the importance of fishing and hunting within the region. It explores the story of a region connected by objects; these special items were designed by artist Mike Peckels. They are made from Minnesota-native materials: steel, wood and bone. These objects and their significance to the man connect him to the land around him, his family and a local history. Low and Lawrence-Zúñiga (2003) explore this connection in their writing on social construction. One must realise, that without the personal heritage which ties objects to activities, only a functional exploration of place and explanation of objects can be obtained.

To analyse Low and Lawrence-Zúñiga's (2003) theory of social construction of place, research was conducted on the aesthetics of fishing and hunting parties in Minnesota, in order to observe through text and art work how these aesthetics have evolved. According to Sheehy (TMHS 1989), in the past large fishing and hunting parties had no limits on catches and locations for gathering these natural food resources.

Over time fishing and hunting rituals have transformed because of law and environmental changes. This chapter discusses family folklore of land, (detailed accounts of the fishing and hunting experiences), imagery and objects. The focus is on Mike Peckels' knowledge of these outdoor activities and his craft of knife-making, which he employs to create functional art pieces as gifts for family members.

These stories explore the minds and hearts of the avid fisher/hunter families: Peckels and Zigans. The Zigans tell of their deer-hunting experiences at their farm plot just outside of McGregor Minnesota. Fishing stories again, take place in Little Falls amongst the Peckels, the town where the Miller half of the clan have established their familial roots only a few short generations ago.

Chapter seven discuss local communities in North Minneapolis and Brooklyn Center, and include personal narratives as to how these families fought off the cold and found enjoyment in Minnesota winters. Family members always have snow stories to tell, whether highlighting Minnesota's St. Paul Winter Carnivals (Risjord 2005; Minneapolis Tribune, Meier 1981), deadly snow storms (TMHS 1989, 2003c), outdoors activities: ice-fishing, snow forts, snow friends (horses, snowmen, and so on), or just plain surviving winter in Minnesota (Thorkelson 2003; Voyageur Press 1999).

Senses are engaged in chapter seven, as descriptions of the cold and enduring the harsh weather are all part of winter-living in Minnesota. The chapter describes how personal emotions are entangled with these winter activities. A very special photograph is considered as the object of focus of this chapter; the image is of Arganius Peckels with his daughter, Suzanne.

Bill Holm (Radzilowski 2005) wrote eloquently of Minnesota history, but more importantly, of personal history within the region- and how it has been said that heritage and culture are lost after the third generation. The image is coupled with an interview which phenomenologically brings the object and its contents to life again; Arganius Peckels, a second-generation Minnesotan, is connected to his third-generation children and their past winters in Minnesota. An object over-looked by historians, will be discussed in relation to Holm's theory (Radzilowski 2005) of culture being lost after the third generation- who will tell their stories?

The Peckels and Zigan clan heritage stories explored in this thesis demonstrate how these Polish-German Minnesotans make themselves at home in the world through their cultural objects and creative activities and how they link to Minnesota places, through regionally celebrated activities, and through the objects and/or images described in each chapter. These families have the desire to "...make the time to protect..." (Carmichael, et. al. 1994, p216) what each individual remembers from the past. The overall goal of this thesis is to incorporate personal stories and visual art expressions to allow both inside and outside readers the chance to experience the emotions people feel when describing the places, activities, and objects that they value.

IV. Who am I? Locating the author and subject matter

My full name is Alesha Jeanette Peckels. My name initials A-J-P belong to my grandfather Arganius John Peckels, my cousin Adam J. Peckels, his son Alexzander J. Peckels and so on. My middle name belonged to Grandma Peckels. My last name is of German origin, not Polish; as many believe it to be.

I was born and raised alongside two sisters: Maria-Kay and Sophia Christine in North Minneapolis by our parents: William Mark and Barbara Joyce, or Bill and Barb, and immediate relatives. It has been said that it takes a clan to raise a child, and thankfully that is how the Peckels family operates. I attended Catholic school from kindergarten through grade eight. Both sides of my family's past are connected to a Catholic up-bringing; my parents and their siblings also attended Catholic school as children.

When I lived in Minneapolis, I remember frequently driving by the green over-sized highway sign announcing the city limits of Minneapolis (Hennepin County) on HWY I-94 and the population read somewhere around 323,000 people; this of course is heading east on I-94 towards our old residence just off of the Fremont Avenue Exit. In the summer of 1997, my family moved out of the Minneapolis metro-area fifty minutes north to Big Lake, a growing suburban town located along HWY 10.

The metro-area that I relate my life to as a child in Minneapolis was simply chaotic. We lived right off of the interstate highway (six to eight lanes). The I94 cuts through the State of Minnesota east to west and links to other major highways and bi-ways: I35W, I35E, HWY 694, 494, 610 and so on.

This I94 highway was constructed when my parents were in their twenties (in the late 1970s). This landmark road system connects the heart of Minnesota, the Twin Cities of Minneapolis and St. Paul (our State Capitol), to all directions of the state: north (northwest and northeast), south, east and west. My view of life in North Minneapolis when I was young is quite different to my parents' perception when they were children.

My parents were brought up in the cities of Minneapolis (north-side) and Brooklyn Center (a suburb connected to North Minneapolis). According to them, their generation grew up with the cities; they were farm kids raised city kids. The house my mother was raised in had been up-rooted and relocated from Brooklyn Center to a town in the State of Wisconsin; the I-94 was to be built and their family home, along with many other residences, stood in the way of state and interstate highway progress.

I cannot imagine life the way it was when my parents were young. I see Minneapolis not as a city with farms and suburbs, but a large metropolis where the avenues are labelled alphabetically east to west and streets numbered in order north and south. I see houses in closely knitted neighbourhoods with minimal-sized backyards, closed Catholic schools; houses built fifty or more years ago have been ploughed over and replaced with townhouses and affordable housing units.



MINNEAPOLIS, MINNESOTA

(2005, COHEN BASSINGTHWAIGHTE, PHOTOGRAPH, 4" X 6" (10.16CM X 15.24CM))

My dad bought our house in the late 1970s for \$1.00 USD; I would never be so lucky today. Cities and landscapes change with age and industry demand; the life I know and the life my parents knew are so different and we are only one generation apart in age.

Although the times and landscape have changed since my parents were young, it must also be said that the same landscape I knew as a young woman has also changed, including the I-35W bridge, which collapsed on August 1, 2007. I crossed that bridge everyday while attending the University of Minnesota Twin Cities campus (2002-2005).

A photograph of my typical daily westbound view from the bridge was taken during my 2005 visit (viewed before). Although scenery may have changed drastically for even my generation, it is the perspective of my parent's generation that is the focus of this thesis.

Despite the different points of view, both city and landscape, in our past Minneapolis lives, each generation grew up surrounded and immersed in familial tradition, gatherings and annual family get-togethers. The places I relate to my life may not be the same places my parents remember and relate to their lives: my Uncle Ed Peckels's automotive repair shop, St. Bridget's Catholic School, Webber Park/Pool, Skate-land (roller-skate rink), Grandma Peckels's apartment in Robbinsdale Minnesota, Auntie Tootie's house, Uncle Kenny's house, Auntie Sue's house, the Zigan farm, Uncle Billy's video store.

These places along with our home on 36th Avenue and 6th Street North, no matter the cracks or peelings in the paint, creepy dank basements, leaking roofs, or whether they even exist today all symbolise the idea of home, and are only a dream away for me. The spaces that create a place in the world for my parents and their generation are an old world existent only in fading memories. The goal behind this personal essay is to cross the intangible bridge of Minnesota's past belonging to my parents and their generation in order to capture a glimpse of a life lived by the Peckels and Zigan Minnesota clans.

V. Family reactions

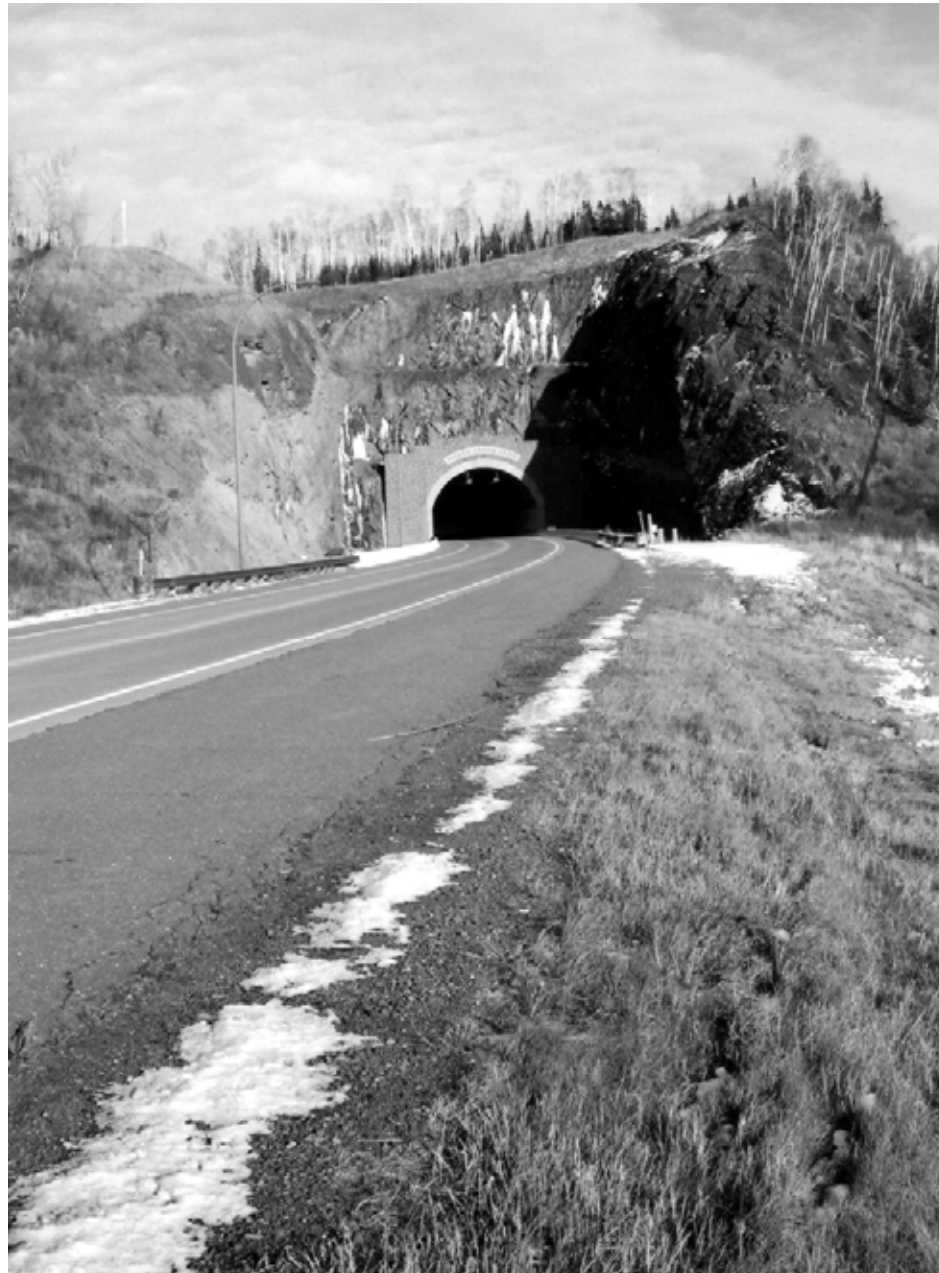
Many of my family members welcomed the challenge and were quite excited to see the outcome well before I began my Masters research in 2006. I went home with my partner in late 2005 to visit for the holidays, and was delighted to have so many relatives respond positively to the investigation into our family's creative side. Family folk art, imagery and homemade goods, foods and functional tools simply display how the family enjoyed themselves through activities inside and outside the home.

For example, many carpenters and handyman trades were adapted artistically on the Peckels side of the family. Mike Peckels applied his knowledge of metal works to his passion for hunting and fishing and produced a series of handmade knives for close friends and brothers. Jimmy Peckels applied his artistic hand at ceramic work along with woodwork.

Arganius John Peckels applied his carpentry skills obtained in Chicago to his home and its contents. He gladly repaired and renovated/expanded his family's Morgan Avenue home in Minneapolis. He also designed dresser tables, jewellery boxes, bed frames and other hand-crafted furniture.

This thesis will explore family artwork, furniture, imagery, ceramic works, and photographs. I was able to apply what I knew about my family's history: tradesmen work, family-built homes and places familiar to the Peckels and Zigan families.

I returned once more to Minnesota in 2006, arming myself with a digital voice recorder, my camera (and endless rolls of film), excessive amounts of luggage (research books, pictures and documents, and so on), and a list of twenty objects I may find a useful tool in guiding questions and interviews for gathering material for the thesis. I carried my voice recorder nearly everywhere for the duration of my trip home to Minnesota.



DULUTH, MINNESOTA
(2005, AJ PECKELS, PHOTOGRAPH,
8" X 10" (20.32CM X 25.4CM))

A majority of interviews took place at Uncle Kenny Peckels's cabin, near McGregor Minnesota for the Peckels contribution to this essay. My Grandpa Zigan was quite keen to say a few words to the microphone and to myself while visiting at the Zigan brunch; cousin Andy Zigan spoke on behalf of my Uncle Billy Zigan- he claimed Andy would be a great story-teller; both of these additions to the interview list were unexpected and delightful contributions.

VI. Who are they? Interviewing family members

The Peckels and Zigan families are quite large, and cutting down the number of members interviewed seemed essential. Since a majority of both sides of the families' second generation Minnesota-born members have passed away, it would be problematic to portray what each person valued about their lives and the involved objects in their daily activities.

Many of my aunts and uncles, or our third generation Minnesota-born family members are still alive, but as time slips away, these family members are getting older and will be disappearing alongside their generation's appreciation of activities and objects. In order to preserve the view of Minnesota through the eyes of the third generation, I have chosen to record my aunts and uncles as the key informants for the study.

Into each generation a new set of ideals and objects may be observed and incorporated into lifestyles and culture. Through minimising the number of interviewed parties to all third-generation direct relatives, it is possible to view a prominent overall outlook on objects and activities as seen by these siblings. On the basis of my own knowledge as an auto-ethnographer, the following themes were chosen to guide the interviews: the Mississippi River, snow, fishing/hunting, local farms and icons, homes and home arts, and family recipes.

Setting up a set list of interview questions was quite complicated as I sought to allow each research participant opportunity to discuss what was most important to them. For example, Mike Peckels applied his creative abilities making functional art works specifically designed for hunting and fishing; therefore the interview was a guided conversation, covering these topics. Applying my knowledge of each person enabled me to ask questions that made family members most comfortable and relaxed-

to get a natural reaction and story-telling method from each person. Each interviewed family member was also asked to view a slideshow of old family photographs prepared before arriving in Minnesota (all photographs donated by the same family members interviewed), to further spur memories and dreams, associated with activities and objects.

This specific age-group selection allowed for five Zigan members (two female, three males) and ten Peckels members (five male, five female) to be questioned for this essay. The only items utilised at interviews included a rough list of topics and a slideshow of photographs to encourage memories from each interviewed relative. There were Peckels, Miller, and Zigan family gatherings organised prior to the researcher's arrival in Minnesota in August 2006 and supplying a digital voice recorder to these events seemed to be the most appropriate time to gather recorded data.

Consent forms for family members to sign were brought along to these events; the aunts and uncles of the writer were also asked to search their homes for their favourite images and art pieces to include in the essay. Eddie Peckels supplied an abundance of photographs, as did Bill and Barb Peckels, and Barbie Dahlheimer.

A majority of the recorded interviews took place in Minnesota at these specified family get-togethers. Subsequent interviews were conducted via telephone conversations from Australia to Minnesota. Barb and Bill Peckels (parents of the writer), were interviewed at both, their Big Lake home and their cabin in Pequot Lakes, while going through photographs and old paperwork, for possible use in the paper.

Palmer (2001) discussed interview and recording methods from an ethnographic point of view; these findings determined that conducting interviews on-site may influence a participant's answers, which was the goal of hosting interviews amongst familial settings and scenery. The outcome of such interview tactics made it easier to capture on record a natural personal narrative, and in turn determined that a list of questions was not necessary. Relatives were quite happy recording their stories... in fact it turned out to be harder than imagined getting individuals out of the way of the family crowds for private sessions, so many

interviews have multiple voices and stories going on during recorded sessions. Before each recorded session, the family members viewed a family photo-slideshow.

The interviews were not intended to begin until after the photos were seen, but in most cases the interview would start at this point because typically an aunt or uncle would yell out for their children, spouse, or siblings, in order for everyone to get a good look at particular snapshots! Therefore I chose to focus select chapter content around some of these photographs. The family images guided entire interview sessions with multiple interviewed members present.

The following chapters will unite the place, general/local activities and the Peckels and Zigan families together. Unique family objects were utilised in order to that relate these people to the land and its offered activities. Old photographs, articles of clothing or artworks, became most important to this study. Each item in the following chapters reflects past memories, sensations and emotions of members of the Peckels and Zigan families.

VII. To the reader

Writing on Minnesota while living in Australia seemed a bit odd, but there was reason behind my madness. Many people have asked 'why don't you write your paper in Minnesota since it is about Minnesota?' That question must be answered with two responses:

First, my mother and my grandmother both lived in Sydney for some time back in the early 1970s. My mother returned to Minnesota, for what she thought was one last time, before migrating permanently to Minnesota, when she met my father. She stayed in Minnesota and settled into our Minneapolis home with him and they had us three girls to keep them quite busy. I did, however, grow up hearing about, and asking about Australia; my mother displayed her memories of her long lost home on a table in her and my father's bedroom. I loved looking through the photographs and objects she had collected on her journey. I told her long ago that when I would be old enough to attend university, I would do so in Australia...

I came to Australia for the first time in February 2002. I flew abroad alone and only at the age of twenty to a place I had only heard about through stories told by my mother, text and tourism. I left Minnesota bound for an unknown place shortly after the 9/11 attack in America, I was told if I chose not to leave (for fear of flying), that my tickets and tuition would be refunded in full, but I was determined to continue with my voyage.

I arrived and attended James Cook University (Townsville) for one semester. I enjoyed my time so much I returned again for one semester in February 2003. I decided upon my completion of my undergraduate degrees I would return again to further my education in the visual arts at James Cook University. I returned permanently in September 2004 to continue with my education, completing a Post-Graduate Research Diploma (2005). I wrote on visual art development in Minnesota (a then and now approach to important Minnesota activities and places). The completion of this degree led me into my Masters:

Second, I preferred to write about my family and our origins for this project, and chose to remain in Australia while completing the degree. I do not think it would be possible to complete my task at hand if I had returned to Minnesota. Living in Minnesota would have complicated the writing process as all of the minutiae and seemingly meaningless objects and daily routines or idiosyncrasies would be overlooked. I wanted to be able to write this paper as an insider looking from the outside-in to a place I memorised in my mind; I needed to forget about all of the little things that make living in Minnesota so important in order to remember them.

Writing my paper in tropical North Queensland during the hot summer months, surrounded by new sights, smells and tastes, forced me to *long for*, and appreciate Minnesota summers. I would even go back and re-live its long winters, which occur ironically and simultaneously when summer heat sets-in in Australia. While sweat beaded on my forehead, nose and upper lip, even from my elbow creases sitting by my computer, I thought of what was happening at that moment in Minnesota.

I am reminded of frost-bitten wintry days that freeze breath as it exhales from your mouth and nostrils- where icicles collect on the outside of your scarf over your lips and nose, and you receive wind burn to facial parts not covered by fabric. I hated

when I was late for work or class and my car doors had frozen-stuck overnight, making me even later. Sometimes it was so cold my car battery would not turn over unless it was plugged in to an extension cord running from the house and charged overnight. Windscreen wipers frequently froze to the glass when snow would melt and ice over again.

I remember yearning for snow days (limited numbers of days set aside for school cancellation due to snow fall) to be announced on local news channels and radio stations after large amounts of snow fell the previous night, so I wouldn't have to leave the warm cosy protection that home provided. I absolutely dreaded walking out of the house towards the bus stop, waiting in the bitter cold until my toes went numb, and then climbing onto the bus, thawing, trapped in soggy, sloppy, stinking socks and shoes, for the remainder of the day because wearing boots to high school or while attending university studies is not the cool thing to do...

All of these little occurrences happen repeatedly during Minnesota winter months, but until one leaves these seasonal events behind, it is only possible then, to remember each minuscule memory to its fullest detail. This paper embodies exactly that. I did return home in order to interview family, but left in order to interpret materials gathered while visiting.

This paper has become more than factual and historic information, it has evolved into a personal history. Above all, I am pleased that even if I cannot include all the stories that I recorded, they will still be accessible for future generations to enjoy. There was much laughter while interviewing members, and now the family will have this thesis to enjoy alongside a living interpretation of a personal Minnesota.

The chapters of this work are threaded together by one common goal, which is to demonstrate how members of two families make themselves at home in Minnesota through their engagement with particular objects and activities. These objects and activities are represented visually in such a way that text and art pieces become one. In other words, the art in this written work is not meant to be mere illustrative material designed to guide the reader through the story. I wish each reader to consider these works as the actual ingredients of history, the substance out of which personal histories are made.



GARRISON, MINNESOTA

(2006, BARBARA J PECKELS, PHOTOGRAPH, 4" X 6" (10.16CM X 15.24CM))

ALESHA J PECKELS BESIDE WALLEYE STATUE ON LAKE MILLE LACS

VIII. Thesis summary

In this thesis I explore, through a case study of a particular kin group, how Polish-German Minnesotans make themselves at home in the world through their cultural objects and creative activities. I seek to provide a personal insider-view of Minnesota social history; embracing local art, objects, and narratives of members of two extended early settler families, linked by marriage.

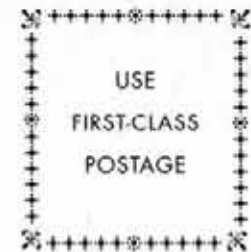
My research participants are all third-generation Minnesotan-Americans of the Peckels/Miller and Zigan/Roy families. In order to capture Minnesota history through their eyes and their memories of past experiences, I conducted a series of open-ended interviews during 2006. These oral histories include narratives of places, activities, and objects, the significance of which are revealed through visual representation and interpretation in the following chapters.

My family members tell their story throughout the following pages with a guiding hand from one of their own kin. It has been said that: "Being an author is not an end, but an adjunct to social action," (Knudsen 2004, p 315, Mudrooroo 1990, p142). The aim of this thesis is to create an original literary work incorporating various historical formats, visual works, local folklore, and regional family history, so as to indulge the mind and a majority of the senses; it is beyond the simple written word.

+++ **SELLING THE MILL CITY** +++

Gold Medal Flour

Washburn-Crosby Company, Minneapolis, Minnesota



Chapter Two.—

Locating
Minnesota.

Minnesota Historical Society Press +++ <http://www.mhs.org/mhspress/>

PECKELS & ZIGANS

Chapter Two: Locating Minnesota: Presenting the Peckels and Zigan families

Chapter Two: Locating Minnesota

In order to explore Minnesota, one must first locate it within the United States and identify the natural resources may have enticed settlers into the region over 140 years. Minnesota borders Canada (north), Lake Superior (northeast), Wisconsin (southeast), Iowa (south), South Dakota (southwest), and North Dakota (northwest).

A large expanse of State landscape offers bountiful fields for farming, producing sweet corn, green peas and sugar beets at a first-place ranking, and is the second producer of wild rice throughout the States (Ash 2004). Also, it must be mentioned that the State was number one in flour milling from 1880 to 1930 (TMHS 2003b). The northern regions of Minnesota have been the top producers in iron ore since the 1880s; seventy-five percent of United States ore used to-date is Minnesota-native ore (Ash 2004).

Setting aside farming and mining, Minnesota landscape is sprinkled and bordered by bodies of water. Lake Superior, one of the Great Lakes, borders Minnesota, Canada, Wisconsin, and Michigan. The Mississippi River runs through a majority of the state. River systems stem off of and into the mighty Mississippi, which cuts the United States almost into two halves. Literature resources vary on the amount of lakes the spread over the State.

One source declares that there are up to 15,000 lakes (24/7 Media 2004), another claims 12,000 lakes- defining a lake as an area larger than ten acres (Ash 2004). However, Minnesota vehicle license plates maintain the State to be *the Land of 10,000 lakes*, probably because it is a well rounded number... Regardless of the amount of lakes throughout the state, fishing activities take place in many Minnesotan daily lives- even during the winter months.

Minnesota, (or *minisota*, a Dakota word when translated means ‘...sky-tinted waters...’), became the official thirty-second state of the U.S. Union on May 11, 1858, (Ash 2004, p4). After Statehood, local newspapers printed in numerous languages (for arriving settlers), boasted resources and jobs that became available as industry in the state began to boom in the 1870s and

1880s. The Homestead Act of 1862 offered one-hundred-sixty acres of public land to settlers to farm for five years, bringing in people from other parts of the United States and European travelers (Risjord 2005).

Extended families arrived and settled Minnesota land, despite many outsider assertions that Minnesota winters were too harsh. A New York reporter once claimed in 1886 that the winter season was '...unfit for human habitation...', (TMHS 2003c, np). Settlers of all sorts of pedigrees made themselves at home in Minnesota, despite some of the harshest known winters, and utilised local resources in order to enjoy each Minnesota season as they came and went.

People from all over the world have settled the Minnesota region. According to resources, French Canadian, Polish, Dutch, Belgian, Swedish, Norwegian, Irish, and Icelandic, are only some of the peoples settled in the Western portion of Minnesota (Radzilowski 2005). Many of the immigrants that settled central portions of Minnesota came from German-speaking countries in Europe (Peterson 1998). There are, however, discrepancies in Polish/German numbers when old U.S. censuses were conducted. There are debates whether some migrants were German or Polish prior to 1918 censuses, as Poland did not exist officially at the time, otherwise known as Prussia (Radzilowski 2005).

A large number of migrants: Scandinavians, Bohemians, Poles, Czechs and Slovaks moved into the region in the 1880s (Minneapolis Tribune, Meier 1981). The Minneapolis/St. Paul regions were also settled by French-Canadians, German, Irish, Polish and Scandinavian migrants in the later 1800s (Huie 1996). There are also Minnesotan Jewish, Ojibwe, Hmong, and Palestinian communities (TMHS 1989).

New residents to the State continued to arrive over the decades and still today: African American, Asian, a re-generating American Indian population, Hawaiian, Pacific Islanders, and many more cultures (U.S. Census Bureau 2007). Although U.S. Census statistics erase lineage ancestry, (even in the 2000 U.S. Census), through an over-simplified method of recording people roughly by colour and continent, it is still evident that a plethora of peoples have found sanctuary and home in Minnesota.



MINNESOTA MAP

(CA. 1961, WILLIAM PECKELS, INK AND CRAYON, 11" X 8.5" (27.94CM X 21.59CM))

BILL PECKELS WOULD HAVE BEEN NINE YEARS OLD WHEN HE COMPLETED THIS MAP
ASSIGNMENT FOR OUR LADY OF VICTORY CATHOLIC SCHOOL (MINNEAPOLIS)

THE SECRETARY OF THE STATE BOARD OF IMMIGRATION
Has recently published the following statement, showing the
COST OF COMING TO MINNESOTA.

Immigrants should procure Tickets and contract for the carriage of Extra Baggage through to their ultimate destination, if possible.

**EUROPEAN
EMIGRANT RATES OF PASSAGE
TO ST. PAUL,
FROM**

| | | | |
|--------------------------|---------|----------------------------|---------|
| Berlin | \$56 00 | Rome, Italy..... | \$68 50 |
| Leipzig | 56 30 | Naples, Italy..... | 71 50 |
| Dresden | 59 70 | Paris..... | 54 50 |
| Hanover..... | 54 75 | Antwerp..... | 45 50 |
| Bremen or Hamburg..... | 54 00 | Magdeburg, Prussia..... | 54 65 |
| Stettin | 56 80 | Cassel..... | 55 70 |
| Danzig..... | 58 55 | Cologne..... | 58 05 |
| Königsburg, Prussia..... | 59 25 | Trier..... | 60 05 |
| Copenhagen..... | 54 00 | Basel, Switzerland..... | 51 90 |
| Christiana..... | 54 00 | Zurich..... | 53 00 |
| Gothenburg, Sweden..... | 54 00 | Frankfort on the Main..... | 51 10 |
| London..... | 54 00 | Prague, Bohemia..... | 60 10 |
| Queenstown, Ireland..... | 50 50 | Vienna..... | 61 80 |
| Liverpool | 50 50 | Pesth, Hungary..... | 65 60 |

(100 lbs. baggage allowed to each.)

AMERICAN RATES.

The following are first-class rates, from which emigrants commonly get reductions of from 33 $\frac{1}{4}$ to 50 per cent. They also get reduced rates on baggage. Make a bargain always at the Railway Station nearest your starting point.

TO ST. PAUL, FROM

| | | | |
|--------------------------------|---------|---------------------------------|---------|
| New York..... | \$37 00 | Pittsburgh, Pa., steamboat..... | \$28 00 |
| Boston, Mass..... | 43 00 | St. Louis, Mo., "..... | 8 00 |
| Baltimore, Md..... | 34 25 | Omaha, Neb..... | 14 70 |
| Philadelphia..... | 35 00 | Sioux City, Ia..... | 10 80 |
| Buffalo, N. Y..... | 28 00 | Chicago, Ill..... | 14 00 |
| Cleveland, O..... | 23 25 | Milwaukee, Wis..... | 11 35 |
| Cincinnati, O., steamboat..... | 18 00 | Davenport, Ia..... | 12 05 |
| Detroit, Mich..... | 22 00 | Madison, Wis..... | 10 65 |
| Toronto, Canada..... | 28 00 | Des Moines, Ia..... | 11 30 |
| Memphis, Tenn., steamboat..... | 22 10 | La Crosse, Wis..... | 5 35 |
| Davenport, Ia., "..... | 6 50 | " " steamboat..... | 2 75 |

The local rates within this State are generally four cents per mile, and half fare to immigrants. But special rates are given on all the roads to immigrants for fare and baggage or freight, on application to the agents.

IMMIGRATION ADVERTISEMENT

(DATE N/A, MINNESOTA HISTORICAL SOCIETY: MINNEAPOLIS TRIBUNE (MEIER 1981),
5" X 2.5" (12.7CM X 6.35CM))

I. Who are they? Choosing Minnesota case study families

With an ever-evolving kaleidoscope of peoples that settled and continue to move into Minnesota, it was necessary to narrow the study field. To reduce the broad scope of researching Minnesota families, I considered my own background experiences and familial perspective.

Therefore, I utilised the history and foundation my Minnesotan ancestors: the Polish-German community. Through verbal and visual histories of two clans from the central Minnesota area, this written work will demonstrate how Polish-German Minnesotans make themselves at home in the world through their cultural objects and creative activities.

One of the Road Home Series (AJ Peckels 2006) images I created includes all four surnames of my family members whom have settled the Minnesota region: Peckels/Miller and Roy/Zigan. These Polish-German lineages have been followed back in time to their place of departure from Europe, and are studied in this chapter. Both family clans come from Catholic backgrounds and come together in the North Minneapolis/Brooklyn Center region of Minnesota.

The Big Lake home portrayed in this image (*Big Lake: Road Home Series*: AJ Peckels 2006) is another land marker in my map tracing the way home, and reveals more lineage through names as in *Gwiazda Polarna* (AJ Peckels 2006). These markers are in some ways considered to me Minnesotan family seals; each containing names and symbols that tell our story.

The Road Home Series (AJ Peckels 2006) was designed on linoleum cuts so all markers could be duplicated for the Peckels and Zigan families and represent a path on their roadmaps to find home as well. This chapter and thesis as a whole allows us explore the Peckels and Zigan family homes and histories in the Minnesota region.



BIG LAKE

THE ROAD HOME SERIES

(2006, AJ PECKELS, LINOLEUM CUT, 4" X 4" (10.16CM X 10.16CM))

II. The Peckels/Miller clan

According to the 1880 U.S. Census, Peckels family members (of Germany) have been present in Minnesota since around the 1870s and 1880s possibly seeking labourer, mining, or mill work (as the only Peckels family member found on the U.S. database confirms a labourer position). The Marcienkewicz family came from Deutschland Poland. Both families are of Roman Catholic descent. The Marcienkewicz ancestors (my great-great grandparents) arrived in the United States, according to U.S. birth and death records, also in the early 1880s.

Around the time the Peckels and Miller clans made their way to Minnesota, there was tension amongst Minnesota residents and Polish migrants in the late 1800s. C. Lamborn, land commissioner (late 1800s) for the Northern Pacific Railroad stated:

...Do not send out any Polacks. There is a great prejudice against them. The [M]innesota and Manitoba people have refused to sell land for a colony of Polacks to settle on, as they claim they keep good settlers from coming in.

A few stray Polacks, Chinese, or anything else won't do any harm, but too many of a kind set down together in a new country, will be detrimental. (Radzilowski 2005)

Despite the racial tension towards Polish migrant workers, the Marcienkewicz family did settle the Minnesota region. The family surname however, was changed to Miller (according to some family members) after ancestors found work at the mills along the Mississippi River, with a bulk of the Miller family elders still living near or in Little Falls, Minnesota.

The Peckels family are of German ancestry, and prided themselves upon family, hard work, and the German-Catholic faith. The Peckels surname and given names are important to the tradition of honouring family members who have passed. The first Peckels to arrive in Minnesota from Luxemburg Germany were Anna and John Peter Peckels (also my great-great grandparents).

The first Minnesota-born generation belongs to Jacob (Jake) Peckels. Jake Peckels was born in Staples, Minnesota, 1892; he was my great-grandfather. His real name was James Jacob Peckels, not many family members knew him by James.

One of Jake's sons, Arganius John Peckels², a second-generation Minnesotan, was named after a distant Rutz family relative on his mother's side of the family. As the family folklore tells, Arganius and his brother Edward, promised to name their firstborn sons after one another, and so, Edward John Peckels (eldest of the third-generation Peckels clan) alongside his siblings share the family memories of Minnesota from their perspective.

John F. (Marcienkewicz) Miller married Minnesotan-born Victoria Johanna Knoll (born in Hastings MN, 1900), when she was fifteen years old in Little Falls MN, 1915. Second generation-Minnesotans included Jeanette Catherine Marcienkewicz (born in Little Falls MN, 1919) and her eleven siblings.

Arganius John Peckels (second-generation Minnesotan) wedded to Jeanette Catherine Marcienkewicz/Miller (second-generation Minnesotan) in Little Falls, Minnesota (MN), 1940. Nine of the eleven children belonging to Jeanette and Arganius John Peckels were interviewed as part of this study: Eddie, Kenny, Mike and Billy Peckels, Tootie Gephart, Kathy DuBois, Chris Goodin, Sue Noyes and Barbie Dahlheimer.

² Arganius J Peckels's name was also of debatable origins. Many believe his name to have been after a distant Rutz family member; however, there is a second story that suggests another origin. It was said that when Arganius was born, there were complications and he was quite ill. The family believed he would not survive so they sent him home with a clergyman; he would care for Arganius until his death, but the infant recovered. The Peckels family was so grateful that they allowed the family priest to name him; and thus the name Arganius entered the family's history books. My research revealed no previous distant Rutz family member with the name Arganius; although some names may not have been correct as they were simply abbreviations in family tree records.

Jeanette Miller And Ganie Peckels Wed This Morning

St. Adalbert's church was the scene this morning of the marriage of Miss Jeanette Miller, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. John Miller, and Ganie Peckles, son of Mrs. Edwin Johnson of Darling. Rev. John Kroll officiated at the service which was at 9 o'clock.

A white taffeta gown with a jacket was worn by Miss Miller and her veil was in train effect. Her flowers were calla lilies. Miss Mary Ann Grabowski, maid of honor, and Miss Gertrude Miller, bridesmaid, wore taffeta gowns in jacket effect in pink and aqua shades and carried Talisman roses. The gold cross which the bride wore was the gift from the bridegroom and the bride's attendants had gold lockets as their gifts from her.

Attending Mr. Peckles were Ed. Peckles and Ray Miller.

After a wedding trip in northern Minnesota, Mr. and Mrs. Peckles will be at home at 708 First street northeast.

Out-of-town guests were: Mr. and Mrs. L. Vack and family, Virginia; Mr. and Mrs. Peter Bednark, Harding; Mrs. Anna Jackson and daughter, Duluth; Mr. and Mrs. Friesmuth, Hastings; Mr. and Mrs. E. D. Peckles, Minneapolis, and Mr. and Mrs. John Salitros and daughter, Swanville.



LEFT:
WEDDING ANNOUNCEMENT
OF JEANETTE (MILLER)
PECKELS AND ARGANIUS
PECKELS
(1940, LITTLE FALLS
MINNESOTA LOCAL
NEWSPAPER, 3" X 1.5"
(7.62CM X 3.81CM))

RIGHT:
NORTH MINNEAPOLIS
(1951, PHOTOGRAPH,
5" X 3" (12.7CM X 7.62CM))



THE PECKELS CLAN (CA. LATE 1970s, PHOTOGRAPH, 3" X 4" (7.62CM X 10.16CM))

MINNEAPOLIS, MINNESOTA

BACK ROW: (left to right) WILLIAM MARK PECKELS (B. JAN 22, 1952), MICHAEL THOMAS PECKELS (B. MAY 30, 1949), JERALD ROBERT PECKELS (B. JUNE 2, 1959), KENNETH TEOFIEL PECKELS (B. APRIL 19, 1943), EDWARD JOHN PECKELS (B. FEB 7, 1942), JAMES FRANCIS PECKELS (B. FEB 8, 1948 – D. SEPT 27, 1998)

FRONT ROW: (left to right) BARBARA LOUISE DAHLHEIMER (B. JAN 28, 1958), JANET ELAINE GEPHART (B. OCT 2, 1944), JEANETTE CATHERINE PECKELS (B. NOV 9, 1919 – D. JAN 22, 1998), SUZANNE VICTORIA NOYES (B. JAN 30, 1956), KATHLEEN MARY DUBOIS (B. MAY 21, 1946), CHRISTINE ANNE GOODIN (B. SEPT 24, 1954)

III. Establishing home within a community

The third-generation Peckels siblings interviewed for the purpose of this research spoke passionately about their home and local community throughout the majority of the recorded material gathered. The topics home and community were also subject matter applied to art forms gathered and displayed throughout each chapter. These family members, my family, have been raised to the beliefs and traditions held true by our Peckels ancestors within a Catholic community in North Minneapolis.

Many photographs and narratives included in this thesis preserve Peckels culture and beliefs whether my father and his siblings even realised this was happening while donating time and imagery. A majority of the photographs from my father's childhood revolved around First Communions, Confirmations, school ceremonies and so on. Furthermore, many narratives captured the emotions felt by my aunts and uncles as they attended the private Our Lady of Victory Catholic School. I also learned during these interviews that my grandfather, Arganius, and his fellow parishioners within the North Minneapolis district (surrounding Morgan Avenue North) assisted in building the school and church.

As a fourth generation Peckels, I also attended Catholic school and learned to cherish the seven sacraments and sacred objects vital in my Catholic upbringing: rosary beads (prayer beads given to children as they make their First Communion), prayer books, bibles, saint pendants (worn for guidance), prayer cards and so on. These belongings alongside Catholic ceremony and schooling activities were all too familiar to me, so throughout my childhood I simply disregarded such as anything but an everyday way of life. As I grew, my parents gave me the option to choose for myself whether a Catholic lifestyle suited me best or not. So I began to observe family rituals differently, and had come to recognize that there are diverse ways to live and lead a spiritual life.

It was not until I recognised these significant changes in my faith while researching my family's firm Catholic foundation, that I distinguished the importance of these once unnoticeable details in photographs submitted by family, or in interview segments about attending Catholic school. These activities were from their past as well as mine, and I needed to connect and observe their importance to our Catholic background in this thesis.

Our family heritage would always remain the same: my family had participated whole-heartedly in activities at Victory Catholic Church and school (1950s and 1960s). They established lifelong friendships and assisted in founding a community my generation would also be submerged in: Saint Elizabeth Anne Seton School (1996).

In one prominent interview, my aunt Barbie Dahlheimer spoke of her Catholic upbringing with me. This interview was different to all other stories about attending Catholic school during the 1950s and 1960s; there was a change within the North Minneapolis Victory School and community, and she experienced it first-hand. I learned that the Roman Catholic Church was undergoing a major transformation while she and her siblings attended Catholic grade school.

My aunt mentioned topics such as Vatican II³, the cut of Latin courses and corporal punishment⁴ within the school system and many other changes that occurred during her childhood within Our Lady of Victory School. During the course of her interview, I simply dismissed these items as I assumed they must be understandable to my aunts and uncles and those whom also attended Catholic school during the 1960s and 1970s. I had no idea these changes had such a personal impact on my family.

There were monumental changes to a Catholic way of life in America, these changes created by the Second Vatican Council and according to Greeley (1979), were felt the most by "...the mid and upper-middle class suburban churches...", such as Our Lady of Victory in Minneapolis, Minnesota in the 1960s and 1970s (Greeley 1979, p91). There were changes in ceremony, Catholic school courses and a modified attitude in feelings towards said adjustments occurred within the church. Sadly people left the church, and the community attitude once held at Our Lady of Victory had evolved at this point. Researchers believe that despite said changes, that the Roman Catholic Church in the United States would have been in decline regardless, associating this fall in attendance to a sexual revolution: sex for pleasure in marriage, birth control, abortion, premarital sex, and so on (Greeley 1979).

³ Vatican II began in the early 1960s. Major changes occurred in the daily operations of the Roman Catholic Church and its schools. For example, before the Vatican II changes, a priest would conduct masses with his back to the congregation while speaking in Latin, but after the movement, the priest would face front and speak in English. Many other changes occurred as well.

⁴ Corporal punishment in the schools was handed down from instructing officials and inflicted on the body of disobedient students.



LEFT: MINNEAPOLIS CA. 1956, PHOTOGRAPH, 3" X 3" (7.62CM X 7.62CM)

OUR LADY OF VICTORY CATHOLIC SCHOOL: EDWARD AND KENNETH PECKELS

TOP RIGHT: ANOKA 2006, PHOTOGRAPH, 6" X 4" (15.24CM X 10.16CM) – PECKELS BAPTISM GOWN

BOTTOM RIGHT: ANOKA 2006, PHOTOGRAPH, 4" X 6" (10.16CM X 15.24CM) – POLISH EAGLE PIN, CATHOLIC MEDALLION



"Blessed are they that mourn for they shall be comforted." St. Matt. V. 5



May Jesus have mercy on the soul of

Arganins J. Peckels
Passed Away
Nov. 11 - 1962

PRAYER

O GENTLEST HEART of Jesus ever present in the Blessed Sacrament ever consumed with burning love for the poor captive souls in Purgatory, have mercy on the soul of Thy departed servant. Be not severe in Thy judgment, but let some drops of Thy Precious Blood fall upon the devouring flames and do Thou O merciful Saviour send Thy angels to conduct Thy departed servant to a place of refreshment, light and peace. Amen.

May the souls of all the faithful departed through the mercy of God rest in peace. Amen.



MALONE FUNERAL HOME
Fremont at Lowry Avenue North
Minneapolis 11, Minnesota

7182

PRINTED IN ITALY 11-



In Loving Memory

From—The Franciscan Fathers
Hollidaysburg, Pa.

MINNEAPOLIS, MINNESOTA

(NOVEMBER 11, 1962, PRAYER CARDS, 3" X 1.75" (7.62CM X 4.45CM))

PRAYER CARDS HONOURING ARGANIUS J. PECKELS (1916 - 1962)

IV. Our Lady of Victory, North Minneapolis

Barbie Dahlheimer described her life as a young Catholic student, growing up in North Minneapolis off of 52nd Street and Morgan Avenue North. Their house was located nearby the (then) Our Lady of Victory Catholic School, (now: St. Elizabeth Anne Seton Catholic School); as part of the local Catholic community the Peckels family was involved in countless school and church activities. Family members including Arganius Peckels also participated in building North Minneapolis's Our Lady of Victory Catholic Church.

This school remains open today, and was the same school my cousins Rosalee and Max Dahlheimer, my younger sister, Sophia Christine Peckels and I attended after St. Bridget's Catholic School (North Minneapolis) closed its doors in 1995 because of lack of funds. I asked Barbie to share her experiences in private school, but I was unaware to the many changes that came about in the Catholic Church while she was a student. It was interesting to hear how she coped with such adjustments. Her answers to these issues and view of life as a Catholic student in Minneapolis Minnesota are told in the following interview:

Interview with Barbie Dahlheimer (August 2006)

AJP: 'Now, the Catholic school [Sophia and I attended] is called St. Elizabeth Anne Seton School, what was its name when you were little?'

BD: "Our Lady of Victory Catholic School."

AJP: 'The gymnasium now was the church [portion of the school] before [when you were young]?'

BD: "It was the chapel. It was added on after the church was built. My dad [Arganius J. Peckels] and all the parishioners helped build the church. Mom [Jeanette Peckels] said they used to go on a Quonset-Hut off of Humboldt [Avenue North Minneapolis]; it was the church before it [the Our Lady of Victory church] was built."

[Barbie spoke more of community involvement within the parishioners, students and staff... she mentioned being lucky to be able to continue attending Our Lady of Victory Catholic School after her father, Arganius, passed away.]

AJP: 'The priest [I'm assuming head-priest of the parish] let you go to school for free [after the death of my grandfather]?'

BD: "After my father [Arganius Peckels] died, he [the priest] wanted to make sure we could still go to school. We didn't have to pay tuition..."

AJP: 'Did you wear uniforms at school?'

BD: "Oh yeah! [Barbie chortled.] Oh God, when I was in seventh grade, (that's when they switched from the full uniform... jumper (a skirt and bib), to a skirt and blouse), well we couldn't afford the skirt [speaking about families in general whose children attended the school]. So, some girls took the bibs off the old uniforms and [would] wear them for skirts. He [the head priest] thought mine was too short... I was walking by the rectory, he said 'Peckels. You get in here...' I walked up there; I was just shakin', I didn't know what I did. I never did anything wrong.

"[He said] 'You're an embarrassment to your mother. What are you doing wearing that skirt so short?' [Barbie lowered her voice and adjusted her mannerisms into, what I can only imagine, to be the priest's old gesticulations... Barbie wore an angry look on her face, with her brow lowered and was pointing her finger at me, as if I was in her shoes during the enactment.] 'You get that [skirt] made longer!' I walked out just bawling..."

AJP: 'Was it too short?'

BD: "No." [Now, my aunt had a confused look on her face, as if she was still pondering, all these years later, why he was so cruel to her over her skirt allegedly being too short.]

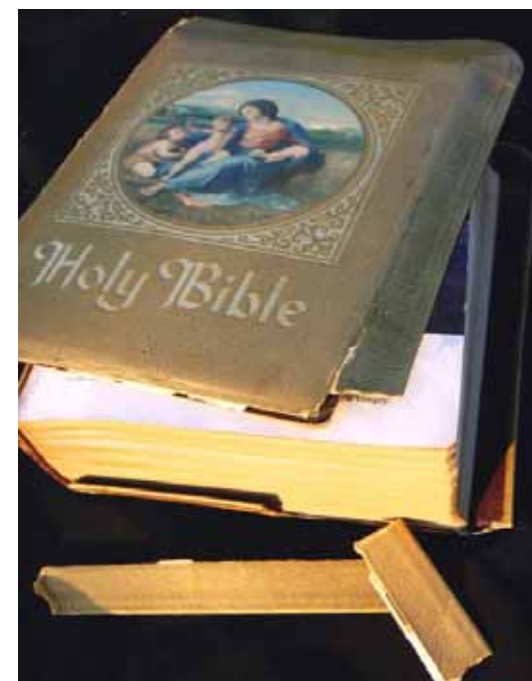
AJP: 'Were they supposed to go to your knees?' [When I got into seventh grade, the thing to do was to roll your skirt up, and if the Principle were to walk by, you'd be able to quickly roll it back to its position; skirts were to be worn just below the knee.]

BD: "To your knees; it was probably right above my knee, you know? I probably weighed sixty pounds at the time. [Barbie began to laugh again.] I remember he thought one girl... her uniform was too short... he made her stand up on the desk, and he cut her hem down."



LEFT: NORTH MINNEAPOLIS CA. 1966, PHOTOGRAPH, 3" X 3" (7.62CM X 7.62CM)

BARBIE DAHLHEIMER ON HER FIRST COMMUNION



TOP RIGHT: ANOKA MINNESOTA 2006, PHOTOGRAPH 4" X 6" (10.16CM X 15.24CM) - BARB DAHLHEIMER'S ROSARY

LEFT RIGHT: ANOKA MINNESOTA 2006, PHOTOGRAPH 6" X 4" (15.24CM X 10.16CM) - PECKELS FAMILY BIBLE

AJP: 'What about the nuns [who taught at the school]? Did you guys ever get *whacked* by the nuns when you were in school?'

BD: "I never did. None of us girls did [referring here, I think to her sisters and herself].

[This session was recorded while up at Uncle Kenny's cabin; the whole Peckels clan met there every year, and I thought it would be the best time to conduct interviews. My Uncle Mike (Peckels), one of Barbie's big brothers, overheard our conversation and decided to correct Barbie on the subject of getting punished by the nuns at school...]

MP: [He began to cackle at Barbie and muttered something inaudible.]

BD: [Barbie looked at me and re-assured me:] "*We were all good!*"

MP: "I got knocked in the knuckles by a giant toothbrush!"

BD: "Never! [At this point, I wasn't too sure whom to believe...] I did have to stand out by the flagpole once..."

AJP: 'What did you do?' [A confused smile spread across my face; I was so confused now...]

BD: "I can't remember what I did, but I had to stand out there during recess at lunch. I was *so* embarrassed. I had to stand there with my hands folded".

[Barbie folded her hands and closed her eyes. I pictured her standing next to a flagpole out at St. Elizabeth Anne Seton's (or Our Lady of Victory), contemplating what she could've done that deemed her punishment-by-flagpole... Maybe she was picking on a sibling; just as Mike had been harassing Barbie during the interview...]

BD: "It's true!"

AJP: 'Corporal punishment was allowed when you were in school?'

BD: "Yeah it was, but not in all schools. It wasn't allowed in Public Schools."

AJP: 'That would've been hard for a nun to discipline kids that way [by hitting them]?'

BD: "There were *so many kids*... forty to fifty in a classroom. How do you discipline that many kids? Yeah, if you were acting up, they'd whack you with a ruler; that was no big deal. It's no big deal. But they'd also take the time, if you wanted to stay after school; they'd help you. They might pull you aside and say, 'I noticed that you were having a bad day.'

"And they'd have something special to do, because they *knew* the families. *They did know all the circumstances, and we were not allowed to let another child feel bad, or to be mean to them.* [As a student] if you were mean to them [another student], you had to think of something nice to do for them, in return, to make them feel special. It was not allowed (to bully other children)."

AJP: 'I think my mom told me once that she really liked the fact that everyone had to wear uniforms because everybody appeared the same [equal] while at school.'

BD: "Yeah, it was not tolerated."

AJP: 'Did you go to church everyday?'

BD: "We did when we were little, and then I got to fourth and fifth grade, we only went to mass twice a week. And then they stopped teaching Latin; I felt so bad. I couldn't wait 'til I was in seventh and eighth grade; I could sing in Latin at the funerals (and other masses), and midnight mass at Christmas... I never got to do it. I was so bummed..."

[My Aunt Barbie went really quiet, and I felt badly for her. So many changes occurred in the system while she attended Catholic School; it must have been hard to handle as a child.]

BD: [After a long pause...] "And they [the church] had what was called Sorority Girls, but that was cut too. It was like a club only for girls, to get together and talk and make things; I suppose like a..."

AJP: '...An after-school thing [program] or something?'

BD: "Yeah, yeah..."

"Another thing to was, [that] by the time I graduated from [Our Lady of] Victory, there were [only] thirty-two kids in my graduating class. I think in your dad's class and that [my dad, Bill Peckels, and his older siblings], there were over one hundred kids in his graduating class. The biggest one [graduating class from Victory] was something like over two hundred [students]. The church had gone through Vatican One [I can only guess was when Catholic Schools began to phase out], and all the people [in local communities and in other cities] stopped going to church, and started pulling their kids out of Private School, umm..."

"In the spring, the eighth grade boys had to bring rakes [to schools] and help do all of the yard-work around the school; clean it up, rake it up. They were the ones who mowed; they would go out and take turns mowing. At the end of the year, everyone scrubbed out their own desks and helped clean, you know?"

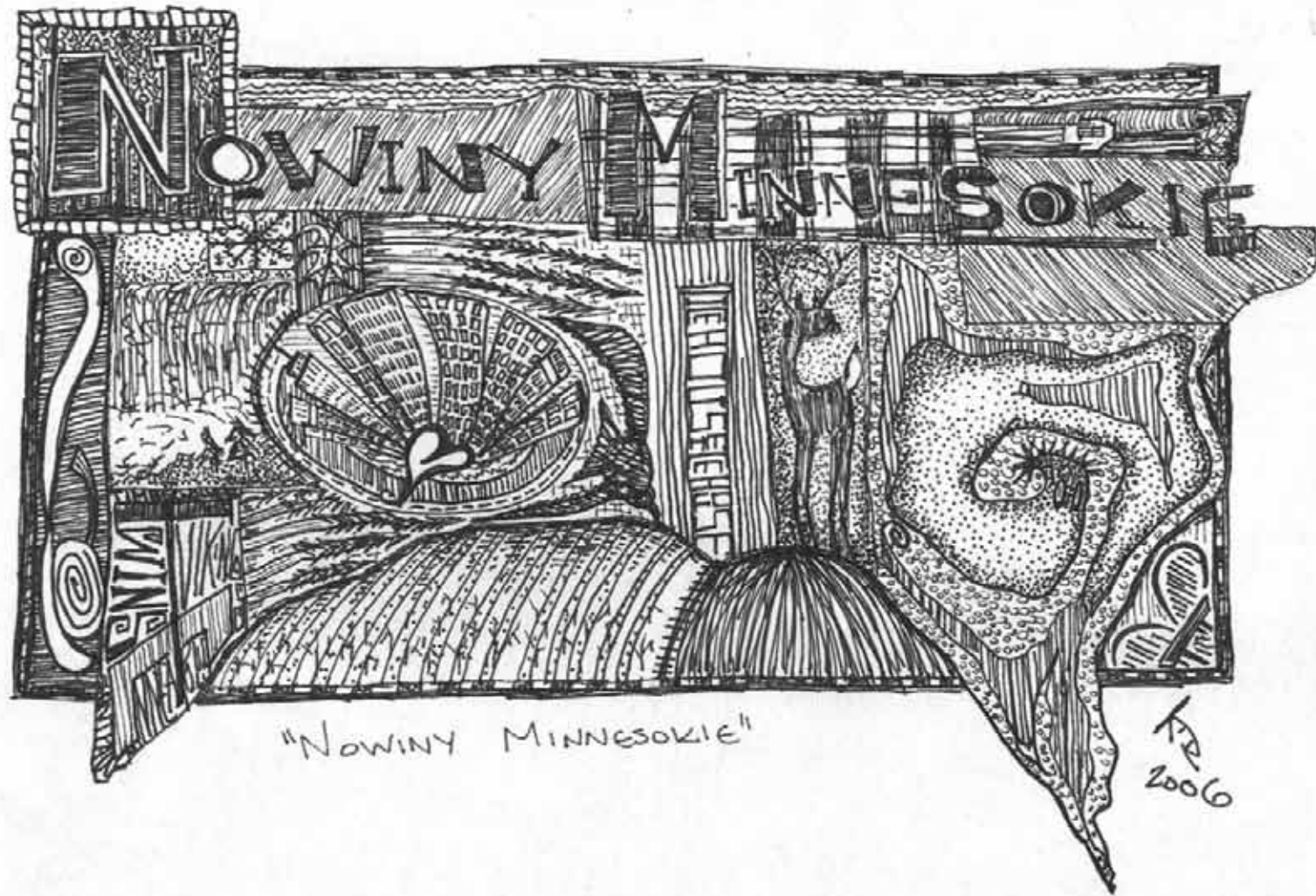
AJP: 'We did that at our schools too [St. Bridget's and St. Elizabeth]. When you got old enough, sixth, seventh and eighth grade, we'd go over to the nunnery and clean their yards for them; rake up the leaves. Yep.'

AJP: 'It's the Parish keeping the Parish clean.'

BD: "Right; it was. That's what kept it a community; everyone pitched in and everyone helped out."

The above exchange illustrates Barbie Dahlheimer describes the Catholic community the Peckels had become a part of in their North Minneapolis neighbourhood. The Peckels siblings spend much of their time and energy in creating personal narratives of that community's local history.

Some of the cultural objects that capture and hold shared memories of this upbringing include rosary beads and the family bible. These objects and the photographs of ritually significant events, such as First Communion, are personal possessions which link family members to one another through a shared faith and culture of Catholicism.



NOWINY MINNESOKIE (MINNESOTA NEWS)
(2006, AJ PECKELS, INK DRAWING, 4" X 8" (10.16CM X 20.32CM))

V. Nowiny Minnesokie

Nowiny Minnesokie was a Polish newspaper distributed throughout the Minnesota in the late 1800s – 1900s (Radzilowski 2005). While conducting the initial background research in Minnesota's history, I noted the titles of two of the old Polish newspapers that were once prominent in the area (*Nowiny Minnesokie* and *Gwiazda Polarna*). I knew that I wanted to create something intertwining Polish newspapers from the past with an image from the present; I wanted to connect a Polish past to my Polish family in the present time.

The first of these two Polish newspaper images I created was *Nowiny Minnesokie*. This image is a combination of many symbols that connect me and possibly other Minnesotans to the state: its place, activities and to other people. The image is Minnesota on a 90 degree clockwise angle. If one were to turn the page Minnesota would be in its upright position. Within Minnesota along the left-hand border lies the Mississippi River. A farm and its grain silos are located in the top corner next to the River.

Below the silos I drew in a portion of Paul Bunyan's plaid shirt. The large plots of land (with angled lines) are acres of fields of corn and wheat. Below the second field, in the third row of the image lies a white-tailed deer, representing Minnesota's diverse wildlife. The icehouse in the drawing represents the countless fish-houses found on the ice-covered lakes during the wintertime. (Fishing and hunting were placed side-by-side in the image and were built-in as once chapter in this thesis).

Beneath the icehouse (if looking at the image on its side in order to see Minnesota standing in an upright position), are pine forests and a bald eagle flying to its nest in the treetops. Minnesota contains hundreds of thousands of acres of national park land (Ash 2004) and regenerating forests the surround the St. Paul-Minneapolis metro-area. The heart in the image is the Minneapolis-St. Paul region; host to the state's capitol, the Sculpture Garden, the Metrodome (the state's baseball team: Minnesota Twins, and its football team: Minnesota Vikings are depicted to the left of the cityscape), and just outside the metro are lies Bloomington, where the Mall of America is found (Ash 2004). Along the bottom of the city image I drew in a road, representing the I-94 and I-35W/E highways.

I also drew in the seasons fall and winter above the Minnehaha Falls along the bottom of the state. Minnesota season changes are quite significant during the autumn and winter months, thus I felt the need to include symbols of these changes: a leaf and snowflake. Below the Minnehaha Falls, I then drew in the famous *Spoonbridge and Cherry* sculpture (Oldenburg and Van Bruggen); this work is found at the Minneapolis Sculpture Garden.

Along the bottom row or right-hand side of the image, which ever way it can be viewed, lays the Duluth Hi Bridge which connects the Minnesota side of Lake Superior to the Wisconsin side. The walleye is also drawn in this image. And finally, corn and wheat fields take up a majority of this portion of the image, the railroad divides these two fields; the new light rail system is being built in order to connect suburban and city life (from Minneapolis through to Rice Minnesota).

VI. The Zigan/Roy clan

Minimal family tree materials are available on the Minnesota Zigan clan. United States ancestry sources and U.S. Censuses indicate that the Zigan family first arrived from Germany departure ports (Bremen and Hamburg) in two waves; first in the 1870s and again in the late 1880s and early 1890s (U.S. Census 2007). The name Zigan or Cygan comes from Eastern Europe, and has evolved from the term *Tsiganes*, *Gitanes/Gitanos*, or Gypsy (Okely 1983).

Zigan ancestors are linked to the Neumann/Schneider clans and the Goligowski family, based near Browerville Minnesota, a predominately Polish region. George and Mary Neumann Zigan (my great-grandparents) were married in November 1922, bearing seven children, including Donald A. Zigan, (born in June 1924). A letter written by Mary Zigan in 1982 to her granddaughter Barbara Joyce Peckels (maiden name Zigan), described her familial heritage in the Browerville area.

There were books of Germain/Roy history, dating back to France in the mid-seventeenth century. U.S. Census, Birth/Death Records, researched by Carol French (with the help of TMHS and the Minnesota State History Center), assisted in filling in the

blank family tree relation places, giving a well-rounded family history to one half of the observed Zigan clan members. Both the Germain and Roy families have possible connections to the then present King of France, Louis XIV, (Wikipedia 2007b).

The first Germain clan established itself in Canada, led by Robert Germain and Marie Coignart; also known as one of *Les filles du Roi* (in French) - which roughly translates to 'kings daughters,' according to Roy family history data (materials donated by Adelle Decheine, 2006). Also stated in these historical documents, was that ancestor Marie Coignart Germain supplied her husband with a fifty pound dowry, matched by fifty pounds from the King.

It was hard to determine when the (French) Roy family first came to the U.S. and Canada region, having such a common surname in the region (the French fur traders heavily settled the Canadian/Minnesotan border in the mid-to late seventeenth century (Risjord 2005)). The name Roy, in old French, *Rey/Roi* means 'King,' and can be associated as a nickname for someone '...who lived in regal fashion, or earned a noble title in a contest of skill...', (Ancestry Database 2007).

As far as research and records show, the Roy family had been well-established in central Minnesota by the 1930s; the 1930 U.S. Census places Roy families in: Becker, Cass, Carver, Carlton, and Hennepin counties). The Roy and Zigan clans united when Adelle Mae Roy and Donald Zigan (my grandparents) married; their children took part in this Minnesota history project, alongside the Peckels family- who were brought together through the marriage of Barbara Joyce Zigan and William (Bill) Mark Peckels in August 1978.

Barb and Bill Peckels are both third-generation Minnesotans. Barb, Bill and both sets of their siblings donated everything from stories, photographs, items and photos of special family items, letters, prayer cards, invitations, books, artwork, interview time, and above all, support. This Minnesota history project has been possible to complete with the outstanding cooperation of the Peckels and Zigan clans.



THE ROY FAMILY CA. 1940, PHOTOGRAPH, 2" X 3" (5.08CM X 7.62CM)

MINNESOTA

LEFT TO RIGHT: KENNETH JAMES ROY, ADELLE MAE DECHEINE, LOUIS EUGENE ROY, KATHERINE (BERG) ROY, HAROLD LOUIS ROY, ELLA NORA BERG, LUELLA KATHERINE ROY, OTTO MAX BERG



BROWERVILLE, MINNESOTA,

(2006, AJ PECKELS, PHOTOGRAPH 4" X 6" (10.16CM X 15.24CM))

BURIAL OF GEORGE HENRY ZIGAN (1902 – 1975) AND MARY A. (NEUMANN) ZIGAN (1900 – 1994)

"...My grandparents were Joseph and Maria (Kurtz) Neumann; Benedict and France (Gallus) Schneider. My parents: August and Mary (Schneider) Neumann. My brothers: John, Peter, August, Joseph, Frank, Michael, Jacob. Sisters: Anna Bercyzk, Elizabeth Arnold. On November 14, 1922 I married George Henry Zigan at Long Prairie [Minnesota]. To this union were born the following children: [boys] Donald A., George J., Gerald L., Joseph S., [and girls] Rita, Marie Antoinette, Doris A..." (Excerpt from letter written by Mary Zigan to Granddaughter Barb Peckels, ca. 1982)

VII. Letter from Mary A. Zigan (ca. 1982)

I remember visiting my Great Grandma Mary Zigan up in Browerville Minnesota, back when I was ten or eleven years old (1992 or 19993). My mother was quite interested in exploring her family's origins. She also corresponded with ancestral ties in Poland, although translating the letters was quite difficult for her. Meanwhile, we would sit and socialise for hours in Browerville with Great-grandma Mary; the town where she raised my grandfather and his siblings. We would listen to her tell stories about her childhood and theirs, not that I can actually account any of those stories now.

Great Grandma Mary Zigan and my mother had been corresponding for years before we travelled to Browerville to see her so my mother and Mary could talk in person. While going through some of my mother's letters written back and forth to Great Grandma, I happened across one that caught me by surprise.

This letter was very similar to all the others. She wrote of the weather, caught my mother up on family gossip (what everyone has been up to since the last time they had written), and then my Great Grandma wrote about her life. It was ever so brief but quite moving in that it meant so much more coming from her in her own words and handwriting than it would from my mother or me in that case. She mentions her grandparents, parents, her husband and all of her children in a matter of sentences.

At the end of her family history speech, she told my mother to 'take it from here...,' and that is what I feel, as a family have done. We have compiled our history and stories and put it all together in order to keep our history alive, as Great Grandma's request of my mother.

That letter was written before I was even born and that tells me that our stories will continue to be told for generations to come. I have included this letter in amongst her pictures, pictures of her family and an image of her final resting place with her husband.

Browerville.

Blue Monday.

Dear Barb, Bill & Maria.

I am sorry I am such a slow worker but when and if I don't feel good I don't do any thing I have Arthritis and get it in different parts of my body some days arms back legs neck. Some times nothing helps whatever medication I take. Enough of this sad sack.

How are you all getting along seems ages since I heard from any one. I suppose Maria runs around all over now.

I suppose all the guys got a deer no one left us know. We do not know that Robbie was back

until Jerry called up Lonnie just before deer hunting. Jerry did not get one either.

How is Cheryl getting along with her French man.

The weather has been beautiful up to now. We had a few flakes of snow on Sunday. I don't care if we never get any of that stuff. If you need any more information let me know.

I don't know if that was what you wanted.

Can you get me the picture of all you kids to put in my you know the one I have hanging on the wall.

No news here. Take ~~care~~ care of each other. With Love Grand ma,

BROWERVILLE, MINNESOTA

(1982, 7" X 5" (17.78CM X 12.7CM))

LETTER FROM MARY A. ZIGAN TO GRANDDAUGHTER BARBARA J. PECKELS AND GREAT-GRANDDAUGHTER MARIA-KAY PECKELS

-II-

I don't know what you want
to know about my background
my Grand parents were.

Joseph and Maria (Kurtz) Neumann
Benedit and Frances (Hallus) Schneide
My Parents.

August and Mary (Schneider) Neumann.
My brothers. John, Peter, August
Joseph, Frank, Michael, Jacob.
Sisters Anna Berlygh, Elizabeth
Arnold.

On November 14, 1922 I married
George Henry Zigan at Long Prairie
To this union were born the
following children.

| | |
|------------|------------------|
| Donald G. | Rita V. |
| George J. | Marie Antoinette |
| Herald L. | Doris A. |
| Joseph. I. | (over) |

If you want some dates I
can furnish some.

Now you take it from here.

BROWERVILLE, MINNESOTA

(1982, 7" X 5" (17.78CM X 12.7CM))

LETTER FROM MARY A. ZIGAN TO GRANDDAUGHTER BARBARA J. PECKELS AND GREAT-GRANDDAUGHTER MARIA-KAY PECKELS



WEDDING PHOTOGRAPHS, (2" X 3" (5.08CM X 7.62CM))

LEFT: GEORGE AND MARY (NEUMANN) ZIGAN, MARRIED NOVEMBER 14, 1922 RIGHT: LOUIS AND KATHERINE (BERG) ROY, MARRIED JANUARY 19, 1892



WORLD WAR I PHOTOGRAPHS, (2" X 3" (5.08CM X 7.62CM))

LEFT: KATHERINE AND LOUIS ROY, WORLD WAR I, 1917 RIGHT: LOUIS EUGENE ROY, FRANCE WORLD WAR I, 1917



THE ZIGAN CLAN (CA. CHRISTMAS 1966, PHOTOGRAPH, 3" X 3" (7.62CM X 7.62CM))

BROOKLYN CENTER, MINNESOTA

BACK ROW: (left to right) DONALD A. ZIGAN (B. JUNE 21, 1924 – D. AUG 5, 2009), BARBARA JOYCE PECKELS (B. OCT 4, 1953), DONALD GEORGE ZIGAN (B. SEPT 29, 1951), WILLIAM HAROLD ZIGAN (B. FEB 20, 1948)

FRONT ROW: (left to right) ROBERT ROY ZIGAN (B. JAN 25, 1961), MARY KAY DIANE ZIGAN (B. APRIL 27, 1956 – D. AUG 19, 1978), CHERYL ANNE ZIGAN (B. AUG 26, 1959)



BROWERVILLE, MINNESOTA

(2006, AJ PECKELS, PHOTOGRAPHS, 6" X 4" (15.24CM X 10.16CM))

LEFT: SAINT JOSEPH'S POLISH CATHOLIC CHURCH

TOP RIGHT: STAINED GLASS IN SAINT JOSEPH'S CATHOLIC CHURCH

BOTTOM RIGHT: BILL ZIGAN AT SAINT JOSEPH'S CATHOLIC CHURCH

VIII. Polish Tiles

When I first began researching Minnesota art/history in 2005 it was difficult for me, as a Minnesotan, to enjoy a local foundation of place without learning anything about the people who lived there. While I compiled and categorised information about the region, it was quite clear to me that both local history and familial accounts of place were affecting my research and my artwork.

When writing about the Peckels and Zigans, it seemed more meaningful, even for me, to include their actual interviews and handwritten words about our history, right from the beginning of the thesis. In this chapter my Auntie Barbie tells the story of how Catholic school shaped her family and her community. She explains that everyone worked together as a congregation in order to enjoy life inside and outside the walls of Our Lady of Victory Catholic School in North Minneapolis. Great-Grandma Mary wrote about her family for my mother before I was even born; so the family could continue to research our past.

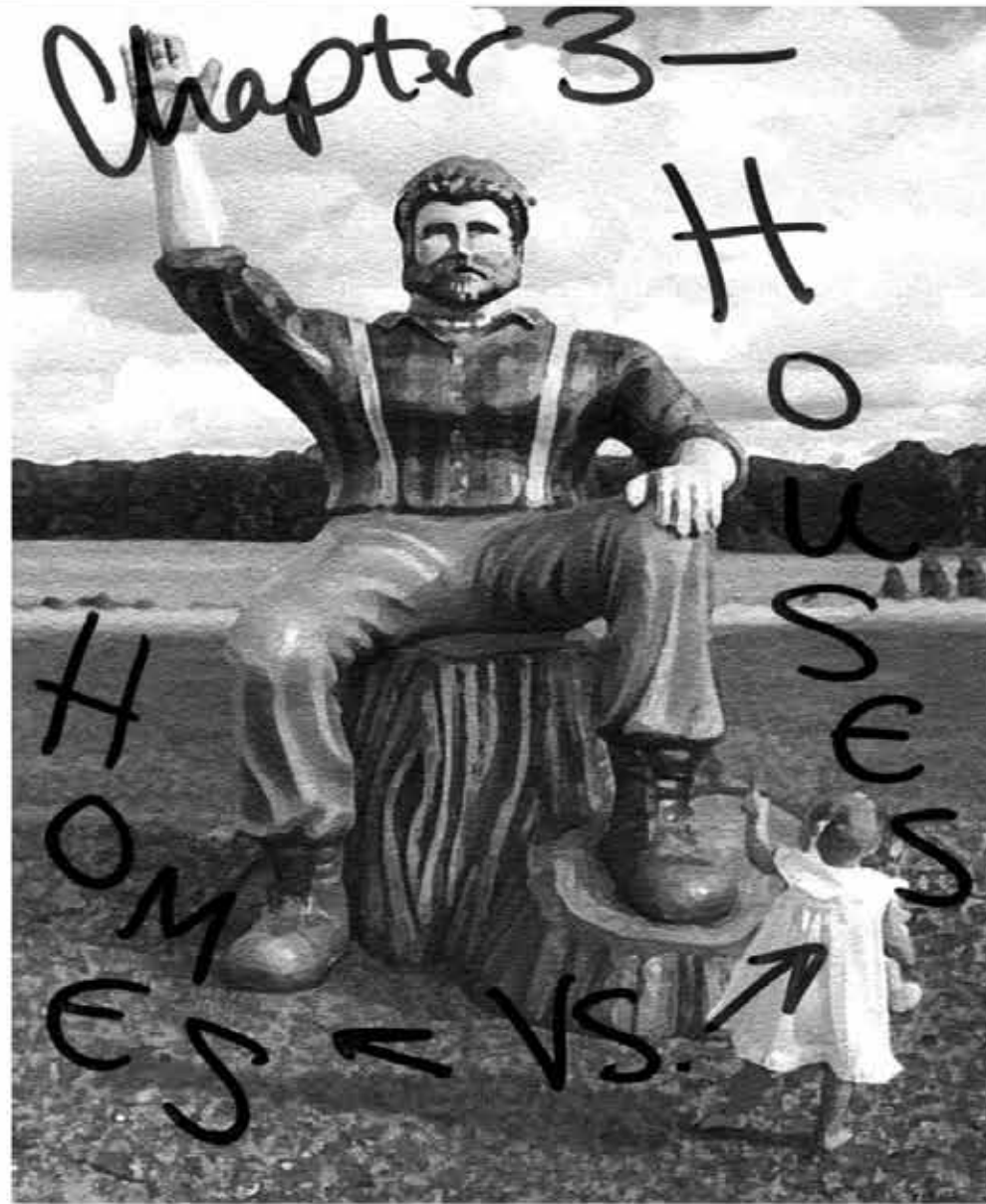
These interviews and letters were included in this chapter as references that demonstrate this extended family desires to recall our past and keep it with us in the present. These items and imagery are our way of presenting a local history. Not only did I find many of Great-Grandmother Zigan's letters, but I also found a couple written by distant relatives to mother in Polish back in the early 1980s as well.

I knew that most materials and information obtained would work their way into the thesis chapters as well as my art, but how could I illustrate through art the beauty in original objects which retain a local history through story? I took one of the handwritten letters from our distant Polish relatives and traced it onto paper-clay tiles. The tiles were cut in various shapes and sizes, bisque fired, and glazed clear, so the words would not be altered. These tiles were used in various family paintings and given to family members as a physical remembrance of our past. The imagery, interviews, letters, and Polish Tiles are a constant reminder to me that our history goes hand-in-hand with our region's local history and they are a symbol of our family's recount of place. They are another marker in my roadmap which leads home to family and Minnesota.



POLISH TILES (2005, AJ PECKELS, PAPER CLAY)

(2005, COHEN BASSINGTHWAIGHTE, PHOTOGRAPH, 8" X 10" (20.32CM X 25.4CM))



Chapter Three:

Houses versus homes: When personal identity constructs intimate space

Chapter Three: Houses versus home: When personal identity constructs intimate space

Terms **ethnography** and **ethnomethodology** are defined as scientific studies in which researchers analyse/describe cultures of mankind and connect the observed peoples to daily activities and routines in a particular area. **Ethnology** is "...the comparative scientific study of human peoples," (OU Press 2004, p476). The term **anthropology** is host to many definitions, two of which are: "...the study of humankind, especially its societies and customs," and, "...the study of the structure of evolution of humans as animals" (OU Press 2004, p55).

Over time, researchers have developed their approaches to studying peoples and cultures that allow them to go beyond the outside-observer perspective to incorporate more personal points of view, precious to the insider and families or communities that are the subject of research. The metaphysical study of the nature of being, or **ontology**, can better express how this thesis has been compiled (OU Press 2004).

In some scientific written applications, such as Palmer (2001), the use of ethnographic research proved to be an excellent source of information for tourism. Minnesota publishers have brought forth various tourism-gearred resources for travellers passing through the region, capitalising on what sells Minnesota.

Topics such as landscape and waterways, annual seasons, lumber industry and folklore in the region (for example, Paul Bunyan and Babe the Blue Ox) are some of the items found in various Minnesota tourism/history books (TMHS 2003a, Remick and Ringsak 2003). However, while some titles take a personal historic perspective into consideration, little has been written that brings the intimate histories of Minnesota families to life as aimed in this thesis.

Numerous literary resources on Minnesota living and regional history have also been published, including a guiding hand from participating local peoples that give a more personal experience/history of the State. Meier (Minneapolis Tribune 1981) Compiled clippings from Minnesota newspapers, letters, postcards and photographs in order to form a distinctive local history through its own historic resources (namely the Minnesota Star Tribune and its affiliates). Other sources include photography

taken of local contributing individuals alongside narratives (TMHS 2002) and local photographers who share art and personal accounts of place (TMHS 2000). These intimate approaches to life in Minnesota were available and included local artwork and communities who inhabited Minnesota. These works have proven for research purposes to provide a more intricate and personal connection to activity and place within the State of Minnesota.

To combine scientific study, phenomenology and biographical experience in a singular literary work, one can experience a history of place, its interaction with people and local activities, personal connections to place and objects, and in this case, folk art and imagery. Klapproth (2004) concluded that utilising more than one form of recording cultural data (personal narrative and local historic sources) will put forth an original portrayal of a studied community; imparting a more accurate community history for future generations. By choosing the Peckels and Zigan clans of Minnesota, I have made it possible to ascertain how a case study German/Polish community made themselves at home in the world through personal narrative, relating these people to objects and activities within the Minnesota region.

Both historic matter and personal accounts have been considered when assembling data for this chapter. Without combining both these recording methods of place, it would not be possible to successfully meet the aim of this thesis, to connect people to place, objects and activities, without first connecting the studied families to the people and communities which once surrounded them and their ancestors. Chapter two locates the studied families and describes how they came together to create a written history. This chapter takes a look inside the Peckels family home on an intimate level; this approach to recording local history has created invisible connections with these families to other clans who have also made themselves at home in the world. This thesis makes it possible for local history within the Peckels and Zigan clans to be passed down, not only through personal heritage and narrative, but also by way of text and imagery.

Through the participants' description of home in Minnesota, readers can integrate the depicted spaces and experiences into their own life journey of making themselves at home in the world, creating a universal connection of person to intimate space; thus the underlying goal of describing places, activities and objects found in the daily lives of the Peckels and Zigan families.

Shedding research barriers of origin, creed and location, each reader can relate everyday life situations experienced by the observed Minnesotan families to their own intimate spaces and regional folklore.

...we should therefore have to say how we inhabit our vital space, in accord with all the dialectics of life, how we take root, day after day, in a 'corner of the world...' For our house is our corner of the world. As has often been said, it is our first universe, a real cosmos in every sense of the word. If we look at it intimately, the humblest dwelling has beauty. (Bachelard 1994, p4)

All interviews for this thesis were conducted within homes and cabins of close family relatives. Some occasions to record took place conveniently at annual family gatherings; some interviewed members immersed themselves in family memories, eating traditional Polish food and reminisced about photographs and mental imagery from childhoods already nearly fifty years in the past.

The title of this chapter, *Houses versus homes*, is intended to emphasise the undertone of writing conducted in a formal approach for an informal format of research and discovery. An edifice exterior, constructed in brick and wood, has protected the case study clans from harsh Minnesota winters and long muggy summers. The old (but not-forgotten) Minnesotan addresses, some remain and others replaced by highways and byways, hide deeper meaning, and can connect the interviewed families' memories to others pasts.

The idea of *home* was that the people living within the walls of a house (an object without meaning) create themselves an intimate space where the house not only provided protection, but held the key to folklore and objects only special to the people who have lived in this particular place. The clans have engaged in particular activities, and the outcomes provided special objects/artwork and related folklore. All of these themes can be connected to a written Minnesota history, and have allowed for a more precise set of examples throughout history to be experienced on sensory levels, as opposed to an observant view; distance and vague.

Knudsen (2004) has written on Australian Aboriginal and New Zealand Māori literature. She described a work by Stephen Muecke; her description could perfectly explain transforming any cultures folklore and oral history into a more accurate historical written format:

The book itself is a mental map of a particular geographical place and it comes into being as the various sites of the place are being traversed: 'as the spoken voice is transformed into writing and the country then becomes the book, the traveller in turn becomes a reader.' (Knudsen 2004, pp234-235, Muecke nd, p 19)

By incorporating a first-hand account in a local history through the following interviews, it has become possible for readers to not only comprehend a lifestyle and culture unique to these two families in the Minnesotan communities. In addition, these family members have offered the opportunity to metaphorically step into and experience a region's history through imagery and narrative.

The case study families observed in this essay have eloquently contributed countless historical events, important to family and local history. The interviewed participants have allowed readers the chance to experience events intangible to all except for these settler German/Polish clans who lived through Minnesota milestone moments, now no longer solely accessible in dry voiceless Minnesota history books and tourist guides. Oral tradition within the contributing groups will provide a mental direction of place; the chapters explore intimate spaces and exceptional everyday objects associated with activities these family units have encountered in their Minnesotan pasts.



LITTLE FALLS, MINNESOTA (CA 1957, PHOTOGRAPHS, 3" X 2" (7.62CM X 5.08CM))

LEFT: JEANETTE PECKELS MIDDLE: JEANETTE AND ARGANIUS PECKELS RIGHT: ARGANIUS J. PECKELS

I. A sound house

Connections with music to anthropological and ethnographical exam have been made: Stokes (1994) explores a musical production of place. Stokes's (1994) essay contemplated an on-going argument; has the meaning and significance of music been overstated by researchers? Or, does music create invisible social boundaries and portray social structure through melodic arrangement?

If one were to suggest this were possible, it would also be probable for objects, sacred or everyday items, to possess a deeper societal meaning. These objects could hold more than face value to any reader/viewer/listener, an insider or outsider.

To apply the above theory; a reader might put forth the possibility that a song, (looking past the tempo, the choice of treble or bass clef, the bars, the rests and the note composition), could hold cultural significance beneath the surface which relates to the places it was written and heard, who listens to it, who dances to it, and how a piece of music can be appreciated or discarded.

Each listener grants self-significance to a musical work. This evidence can further be applied to items, more specifically, the everyday objects found in typical Polish/German Minnesotan homes observed in this thesis. "It will also appear quite clearly that, as the voice of the house is the voice of the people; and narrative originating in such a 'text' will have the community as its protagonist," (Knudsen 2004, p 187). In other words, the objects and their owners presented in this thesis will tell their families' stories.



YOU REMIND ME
(2007, AJ PECKELS, LINOLEUM CUT, 2" X 2" (5.08CM X 5.08CM))

II. You remind me

A house is not a home without a family around to make it so; they create a comfortable living space, you feel protected. A home is a family's safety place, where many of the household milestones occur: first steps, first words, baking cookies, colouring Easter eggs, teaching a dog to fetch, annual huckleberry picking, planting trees, and sharing your life with the ones you love. These are some of the things I recall about the Peckels Big Lake home.

My nieces have only ever experienced life as a Peckels within the margins of our Big Lake home. These two little girls have contributed greatly in transforming this house into a home; I miss the place simply because I long to relive some of the memories I have assisted in creating and continue to recall when I think of home.

The image *You Remind Me* (AJ Peckels 2007) says just that: our home reminds me of the family I miss and recall in during both my wakening and sleeping hours. The colours go light to dark, to me, viewing this small image is like recalling this home in my mind... the edges are fuzzy, but I can spot the front patio where the entryway to the house lies any day. That area of the house is where many hours are spent enjoying time as a family outside with our Black Labrador in tow.

The street address is our home's marker, but the home itself is my roadmap marker; it's like a light burning brightly in the back of my mind and when I close my eyes hard enough I can find it; when I can, this light will lead me to the Peckels family home.

There are so many different places I have grown attached to and found myself thinking of as home, I never thought it possible to have more than one sanctuary. But now I realise as my family expands and more memories are made, that home is where you make it and who you share it with. The markers on my roadmap all hold separate meanings and remind me of different times in my life. Right now there are so many beacons of light leading my way that I feel exceptional, a part of a unique family who reminds me that they will be around as long as I remember them to be, just as my Great Grandmother Mary Zigan asked us to do: 'take it from here,' carry our family's memories with us.

III. The Peckels home

The Peckels home was located in North Minneapolis. The property was actually four city plots on one block, which were all eventually sold off individually. This house held in eleven children and their parents Arganius and Jeanette, until Arganius Peckels died suddenly of a brain tumour at forty-six, leaving Jeanette alone with her children, the youngest at a mere nine months of age. This family remained close quite literally within the intimate spaces of their small city home.

Peterson (1998) recalled German house-building techniques specifically in the Stearns County region. Brick makers, (the Imdieke family were the first local German brick factory in the Stearns County region), maintained traditional German architecture of the time (late 1800s) right up to the brick designs bordering window sills. This example connected people to tradition, to a new land and demonstrated the adaptation of a German community to a combination of old and new activities.

By describing how a house is built in such a formal manner: bricks and mortar, panes of glass and wood; it leaves out the reason and importance of why the house has been built. What about the people who live within its walls? What of their stories and memories? The formal written account of maintaining German architecture in Minnesota does not tell a personal perspective of what went on inside the homes within this particular community, or why maintaining culture in a new home would be important to the people who live there.

Although, it is a great historic piece which gave examples of German hands creating new lives in Minnesota; it links the settlers in a community to a Catholic faith and a family oriented lifestyle. This sample of German-Minnesotan architecture is only the beginning; this chapter takes the reader beyond merely creating a house from local materials. It places the reader within the private walls of a home; the walls, the floors, the sink, the oven and its bread pans hidden inside all come to life through personal narratives.

This house, the item up for discussion in this chapter, was more than an object of bricks, wood and glass; it became more than a title, pages and a series of notes strung together. The Peckels family subconsciously altered these materials and connecting

notes into a personal place of memories and dreams shared by the observed Peckels siblings within the following sections. This metaphysical transformation can be understood by adopting a **phenomenological approach**: "... a philosophical approach concentrating on the study of consciousness and the objects of direct experience (OU Press 2004, p1055)."

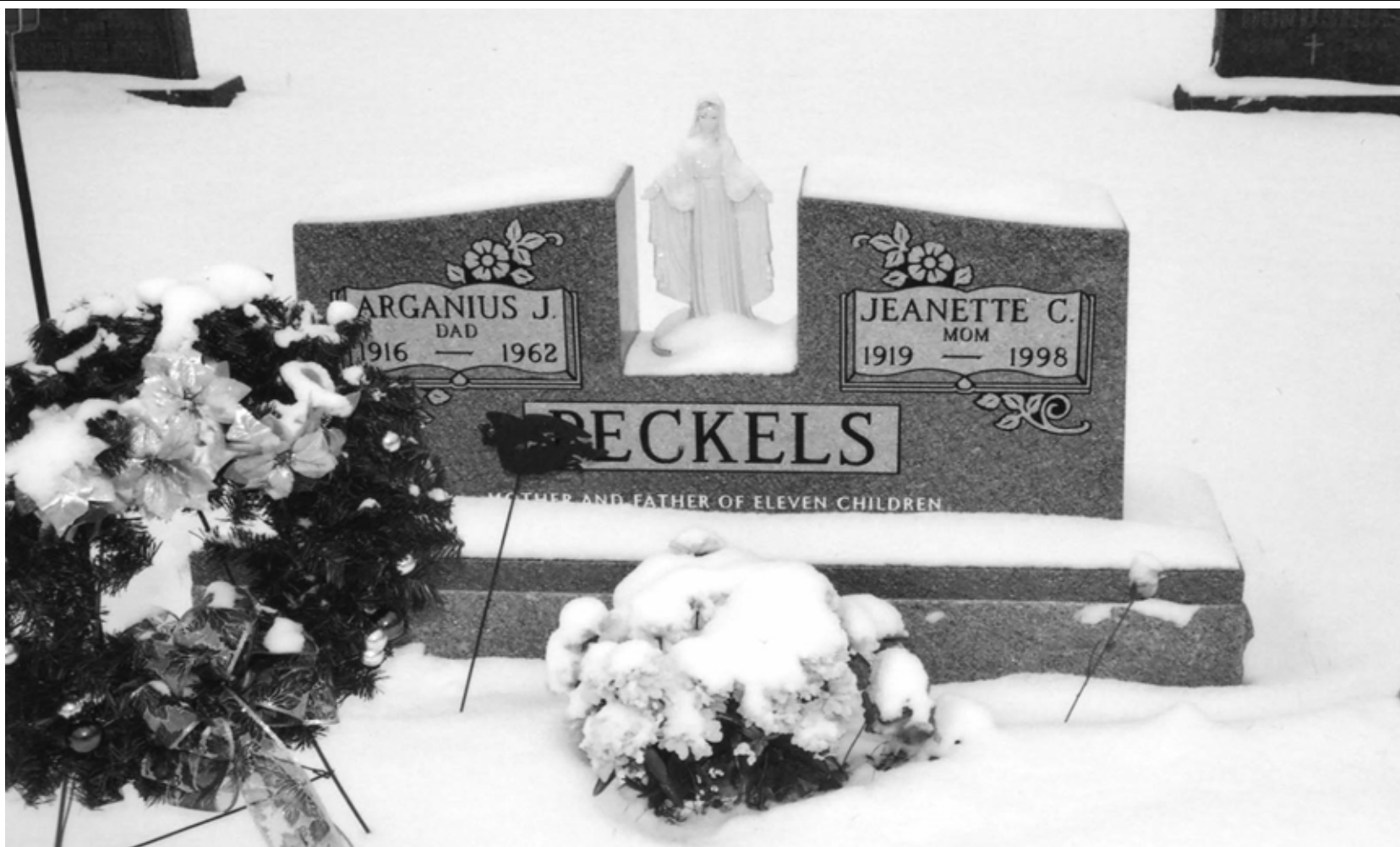
Objects such as the Peckels house, old photographs, bridges and handmade family folk arts are items all related to the Peckels and Zigan and, like Bachelard (1994), I argue that a phenomenological approach allows a richer understanding of this relationship.

The house, like fire and water... recall[s] flashes of daydreams that illuminate the synthesis of immemorial and recollected. In this remote region, memory and imagination remain associated each working for their mutual deepening. In the order of values, they both constitute a community of memory and image.

Thus the house is not experienced from day to day only, on the thread of a narrative, or in the telling of our own story. Through dreams, the various dwelling-places in our lives co-penetrate and retain the treasures of former days.
(Bachelard 1994, p5)

The Peckels home was just as important to this recording process as the collected narratives depicting it. Without an object, and in this case, its interior contents, there would be no narratives. The people protected within the exterior walls of the Peckels's Minneapolis home have interacted and phenomenally created the dwelling-places and intimate spaces shared in text. This local history gives the readers an inside perspective of how the Peckels family made themselves at home in the world.

Various narratives of life in the Minneapolis area were shared by all of the Peckels children (of the third Minnesotan generation). The stories were not only about the house and the comfort it offered during winter months, or the enjoyment they had outside in the stifling summer months. It is this composition of notes that will transform the Peckels clan from a mere interviewed study group into a precious recital of space and time embraced by a family for generations past and generations to come. These are their stories.



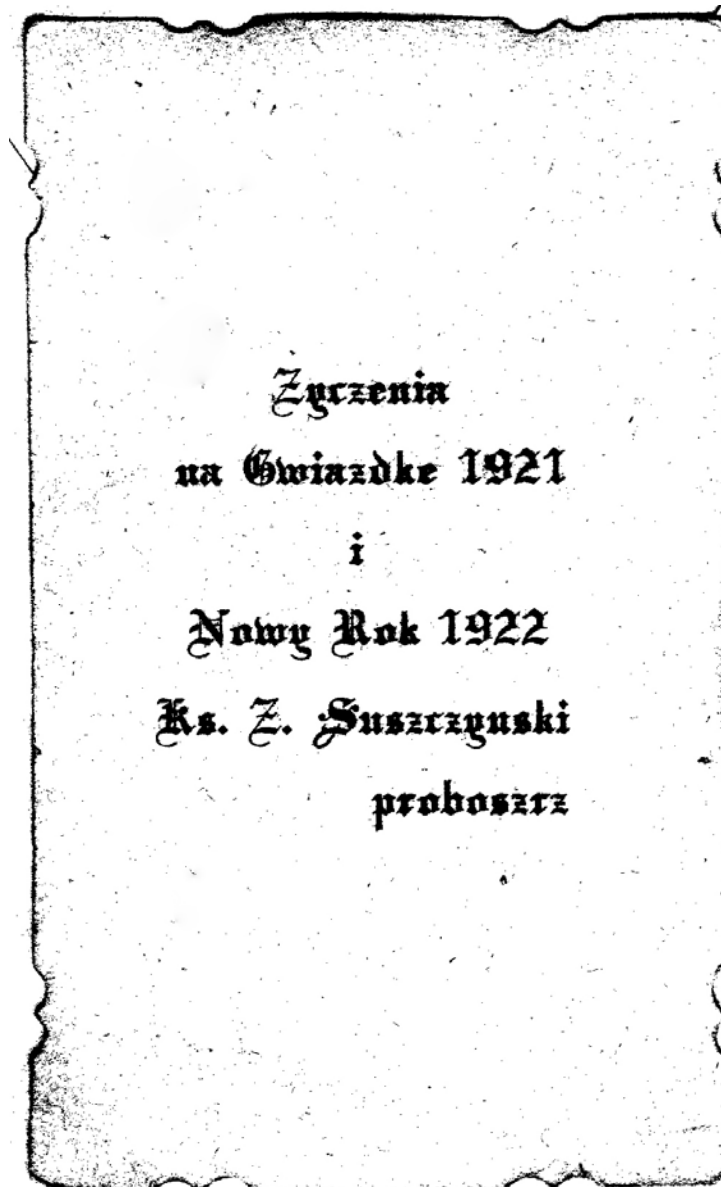
OSSEO, MINNESOTA (DEC. 2005, AJ PECKELS, PHOTOGRAPH, 4" X 6" (10.16CM X 15.24CM))

BURIAL OF ARGANIUS JOHN PECKELS (1916 – 1962) AND JEANETTE CATHERINE PECKELS (1919 – 1998)

"...When Jeanette Peckels did the laundry, she used to always take her wedding rings off, (because of all of the suds); they'd slip off from the soap and everything... So she'd leave them [rings] sitting on the table in the basement [of the Peckels's Morgan Avenue residence]. It was either Mike or Jimmy [Peckels]... [He] took her ring and buried it in the backyard. Her diamond [ring]; they never found it. Somebody will find it some day and wonder where it came from... I wonder what else [children's toy cars, and so on] they'd find buried out there! [Chrissy laughed]..." (Excerpt from interview with Chris Goodin (2006))



POLISH PRAYER CARD (1921, 3" X 2" (7.62CM X 5.08CM))
CHRISTMAS 1921/NEW YEARS 1922



IV. Mother of eleven: Jeanette Peckels

There were so many seemingly simple stories that recount volumes of private life in the Peckels home. The Peckels children shared narratives of their parents, their aunts and uncles, and their siblings. The interview section taken from the time with Chris Goodin and Janet (Tootie) Gephart are priceless fragments of memory; these stories and corresponding images slowly construct the interior living space that once belonged to this family.

i. Interview with Chris Goodin (August 2006)

Auntie Chris, Auntie Tootie and I were all sitting around in chairs in Uncle Kenny's cabin chatting about various family members, looking through photos I had scanned into my laptop computer; we laughed and had a great time telling stories. This following snippet is just one of the many stories Auntie Chris contributed during our session together. I remember it was a Sunday morning, just after a big family breakfast...

Chris was briskly dashing around helping everyone with everything (cleaning, cleaning, tidying the area), and it was difficult to trap her so we could unwind and talk for the thesis. Once the dreams and memories came back to her, they spilled out like notes on a music sheet and came to life as if they'd been on the tip of her tongue the entire time... since she was a little girl!

CG: "I remember when I was little they [her brothers and sisters] gave Grandma [her mother Jeanette, my Grandmother] her sewing machine for Christmas... We were all excited and we had a great big bow on it and she was sitting on the sofa (I think it was)... and [they told her] 'Cover your eyes. Cover your eyes.' She had her hands on them... [Auntie Chris covered up her eyes with her hands pretending to wait for a gift to be brought before her.]

"'Okay, you can look now...'

"'Oh! Oh!' [Chris had revealed her eyes and placed her hands flat to her cheeks with an expression of surprise, imitating Grandma Peckels's expression as it had been years ago, still fresh in her mind]... Just the expression on her face; I can just see it! In fact, I think I have a picture of her! That was really cool. It was always fun to give her stuff because she was always so surprised, you know?!

"It was so good to be able to give her something, [a gift] that she would *never* [truly emphasising this word] buy herself... *ever!* Because she never bought anything for herself; it was always for the kids, you know? She would go without, than go buy something for herself.

"So you know, even to give her nice clothes, or to know that we were going to a wedding or something and she didn't have anything to wear... a lot of the times [the kids] would buy her something to wear, you know, to give it to her. And now, I think back, when you were a kid [talking, I suppose about herself, and making it possible for me to also think about my own mother], I always think, your mom is so big [metaphorically speaking, of course]... oh she's so big! "Then it was really surprising... after she died and we were going through her clothes, (some of them Barbie took with her)... she was so little, you know? She was just tiny!"

ii. Interview with Chris Goodin (August 2006)

CG: "I remember Mom [Jeanette Peckels]... When she used to get mad at the kids [Chris or her siblings] she'd have her finger; she always had her one finger. [Chris acted out Grandma Peckels's angry mood from memory. She slightly narrowed her eyes and pursed her lips forward; Chris picked up her right hand and pointed her index finger towards me; I laughed nervously, I felt for a moment that I was in trouble with my aunt.]

"I remember she used to holler at me, and she used to [point] and she'd say: "You, you, you..." [My auntie began to scold me acting out the part of her mother; she shook her pointed finger at me emphasising each "you" she sputtered.]

[Then suddenly, she was herself in child form; Chris innocently shrugged her shoulders.] And I would go [say] 'What, what, what?' And I'd start laughing, and she *couldn't, I mean she could not stay mad* and she'd start laughing too. All you had to do was laugh and she couldn't, she just couldn't do it [reprimand her children]. [Chris laughed a bit and sighed.]

To build a house from memories past, is to build a musical composition: every word, every note, a string of content, a section wind instruments, each play their part in constructing basic pieces of work, whether a song or a home. The text and images gathered has opened a door to an intangible history: walls construct, windows erect and stairways unfold when these family dreams come to life in text. These stories belonging to the Peckels unlock a private life had in Minnesota for all readers to inhabit, even if momentarily.

THE MOST WONDERFUL PERSON: POEM, JANET (TOOTIE) GEPHART, CA. 1995

IT ALL STARTED IN LITTLE FALLS SOME SEVENTY-EIGHT YEARS AGO,
THE STORY ABOUT A WONDERFUL PERSON I WANT EVERYONE TO KNOW.

ON A COLD NOVEMBER NINTH, IT REALLY WAS A CHILLER,
WAS BORN A DARK CURLY-HAIRED BABY GIRL TO JOHN AND VICTORIA MILLER.

BEING THE THIRD ELDEST CHILD OF THREE GIRLS AND SEVEN BOYS,
THERE WAS A LOT OF WORK TO DO AND NOT TOO MANY TOYS.

BUT IN THE WINTER DOWN NINTH STREET, ON A TOBOGGAN SHE WOULD SLIDE;
HAND MADE BY HER FATHER. BOY, WHAT A RIDE!

LONG TRIPS TO THE CITY TO SEE DOCTORS AND SUCH / WERE VERY TIRING, BUT SHE NEVER COMPLAINED MUCH.

THE YEARS WENT SWIFTLY BY, AND INTO A YOUNG WOMAN SHE GREW,
THEN MET AND FELL IN LOVE WITH HER SWEETHEART, OH SO TRUE.

IN JUNE OF NINETEEN-FORTY, THE YOUNG COUPLE THEY WERE WED;
LOOKING FORWARD TO THE FUTURE, AND THE HAPPY YEARS AHEAD.

LOTS OF JOY AND LAUGHTER, AND HARDSHIPS THEY KNEW TOO.
BUT WITH FAITH AND STRENGTH FROM ABOVE, THEY SOMEHOW MADE IT THROUGH.

THEN SUDDENLY ONE DAY, HER HUSBAND, HE WAS GONE / GOD HAD TAKEN HIM TO HIS KINGDOM FAR BEYOND.

LEFT ALL ALONE WITH A LARGE FAMILY TO RAISE, SHE ALWAYS DID THE BEST SHE COULD;
NEVER LOOKING FOR GLORY OR PRAISE.

SHE NEVER WAS TOO BUSY, SHE ALWAYS WAS AT HAND / TO DRY A TEAR, TO COMFORT, TO LISTEN, TO UNDERSTAND.
I HOPE THAT SOMEDAY I CAN SOMEHOW BE / HALF THE LOVING PERSON SHE HAS BEEN TO ME.

AND WHEN HER TIME HAS FINALLY COME, THIS MOTHER OF ELEVEN,
I KNOW GOD WILL SURELY HAVE A PLACE FOR HER IN HEAVEN.

SO IF YOU HAVEN'T GUESSED BY NOW, THERE COULD BE NO OTHER;
THE MOST WONDERFUL PERSON IN THE WORLD IS YOU, MOM.
MY MOTHER.



CA. 1955, PHOTOGRAPH, 2.5" X 2.5" (6.35CM X 6.35CM)
JEANETTE PECKELS HOLDING DAUGHTER, CHRISTINE GOODIN

"...One time we went to church, it was in the winter time, and you know how they plough the streets, but they don't? [The snow] piles up along the corners [gutters], you know? Well, the kids, [laughing already] they used to make little ruts [in the piled up snow] for sliding down, you know, go up the little hill at the end and slide down into the street... Well Mom [Jeanette] was going to do this, [Chris was barely able to get the words out] and she fell on her butt! She went down [the snow rut] and fell right down, walking home from church! [Chris giggled.] All the kids were with her; I think it was just the little kids! Uh, so many stories... [My aunt sighed, still smiling]..." (Excerpt from interview with Chris Goodin (2006))



NORTH MINNEAPOLIS, MINNESOTA (CA. SUMMER 1957, PHOTOGRAPH, 2" X 3" (5.08CM X 7.62CM))

LEFT TO RIGHT: BILL PECKELS, CHRIS GOODIN AND MIKE PECKELS IN WASH TUB

V. Building a home: Arganius Peckels

After further interview material had been contributed by Ken Peckels, he wanted to make it clear that this residence was not always a sound home. When Ken Peckels was only three or four (roughly in 1946), he, Ed Peckels, baby Janet (Tootie Gephart) and parents, Arganius and Jeanette, moved into the North Minneapolis house on Morgan Avenue. The eldest members of the Peckels clan had just moved out of a brand new house located in the Camden suburb; this house was host to indoor plumbing, central heating, hot water and electricity, the best accommodation for the 1940s. When the Peckels pulled up to their four-lot property, Jeanette cried.

The sight of a dead horse next to the property's water pump greeted the family. The interior of the house was filthy and covered in dirt, mainly due to the fact that there was a massive hole in the roof, caused by a lightning strike, and nearby chickens had housed themselves in the kitchen. The wood-burning stove was the house's only source of heat and the toilet was located outside in a thunderbox (outhouse).

Ken Peckels declared that he was quite young when they moved into the Morgan house, but there was one memory marker that stood out the most at this time; his father told his mother: "...Don't worry about it; I'll have it fixed up in no time, Jeanette."

Arganius did successfully remodel the Peckels home; the additions included a master bedroom, indoor plumbing and a bathroom, and extra upstairs bedrooms. Many familial hand-crafted pieces and woodworks belong within the Peckels clan's possession, with a majority of these items professionally tailored by carpenters: Arganius J. Peckels (his siblings and their children, including his nephew Arganius (Archie) Peckels, an inventor), and his sons: Eddie Peckels, Kenny Peckels, Mike Peckels, Jimmy Peckels, Bill and Jerry (Chico) Peckels.

Arganius J. Peckels rebuilt the Morgan Avenue house to suit the Peckels family needs. Together with Jeanette, they transformed their secure house into a sound home.



LEFT: DATE N/A, JAMES F. PECKELS, STONEWARE, WOOD-FIRED/OXIDE GLAZE, 6" X 3" (15.24CM X 7.62CM)



RIGHT: CA. 1980, JAMES F. PECKELS, FURNITURE: PINE/VARISHED, 33" X 54" (83.82CM X 137.16CM)



JEWELLRY BOX

(DATE N/A, ARGANIUS J. PECKELS, HAND-CRAFTED WITH BRASS FITTINGS, 8" X 8" X 5" (20.32CM X 20.32CM X 12.7CM))

VI. The basement: Jimmy Peckels

All the Peckels children are quite inventive and creative, each applying their skills and knowledge into what they love best. From what I can recall about Jimmy, he was a great artist. He was Maria-Kay's Godfather (Maria is my big sister), and he always made her gifts for her birthday and Christmas.

My family has always been big on home-made gifts. I continued this tradition as well, honouring Jimmy in a screen-print I designed a few years ago (2004), and gave a print to each of his siblings for Christmas last year (2007).

Jimmy also loved to hunt and fish. It was quite ironic that he fished as he was allergic to fish! His hands would swell when filleting them, his eyes would water and face would turn red. I remember seeing him at Kenny's cabin filleting fish and coughing and wiping his eyes stoically.

I thought he was crying and asked Dad what was wrong... that's when I learned of his allergy for the first time. Jimmy loved to fish and would give the meat to the family. Everyone shared and Jimmy was no exception to the rule.

One of my more recent visits to Uncle Jimmy's burial place was in the winter 2005. I couldn't find his gravestone because it was covered in snow. I called out for him asking 'Where are you Jimmy?!' As I said this, I slipped over something on the ground and almost fell over!

I looked down to see what caused my near fall, and saw my boot had cleared the snow from his gravestone perfectly! He was a funny man, and he carried a hell of a laugh! The Peckels boys were and continue to be a good-humoured and mischievous bunch. We all miss the Peckels brother Jimmy, but his memory is carried on through family narratives and imagery; one particular story takes place in the Peckels basement.

i. Interview with Chris Goodin and Tootie Gephart (August 2006)

CG: "The boys [her brothers] were always building something... and they loved to hunt and fish! [One day] Jimmy's [decided he's] going to build a duck boat.

"Well, you know it was kind of cold outside, and I'm sure Eddie had the garage full of cars [Eddie is a retired mechanic now], so he built it in the basement.

"It was a beautiful boat. He hand-painted it and everything... It was absolutely gorgeous. So the paint's all dry; it's ready to go... they couldn't get it up the stairs!"

[Chris, Tootie and I burst out in fits of laughter!]

AJP: 'Oh, Polish!'

TG: "Uh huh!"

CG: "Jimmy forgot to take into account how big the stairway was [still laughing]!"

AJP: 'Well, he was inspired!'

TG: "Yeah..." [Tootie let out a slow sigh thinking of her brother]

ii. Interview with Tootie Gephart (August 2006)

TG: "Once, when we were little kids, we were all [gathered] in the living room watching TV, and [then] all the lights started flickering in the house...

And I think it was Eddie or Kenny, I'm not sure which one [brother] it was, but we went and looked [to see what caused the flickering], and Jimmy had [shoved] a little kid's butter knife in the light socket [located] in the bathroom, and he couldn't let go of it!

[Tootie hooted.]

"Eddie got his [Jimmy's hand] knocked down from it [socket]... And um, he was okay, but he was white-as-a-ghost...

"I don't remember everything that happened after that; I remember Mike sat down with Jimmy ('til they got done with whatever they had to do). Mike said 'I didn't know what to say to him so I sang *Casper the friendly ghost*.'"

[Tootie sighed and laughed a bit more.]

"That's kind of humorous... Jimmy was always getting hurt though; always, always..."

iii. Interview with Chris Goodin (August 2006)

CG: "There used to be these tricks locks [when my aunt and her Peckels siblings were young; 1950s and 1960s]... and you could only unlock them behind your back...

"So [one day] he [Jimmy] was going to be cool; he put it [the trick lock] on his nose and he couldn't get it off! It was locked, hanging on his nose!

"He was walking around like this [my aunt quickly and inconspicuously cupped both hands and covered her nose], so you couldn't see him!"

"They [her family: parents (Arganius and Jeanette Peckels) and siblings] brought him down to the General Hospital and they [doctors] couldn't figure out how to get this lock off; it was so embarrassing! [Chris giggled.]

"So this one doctor said, 'Let me try something...' He stood in front of Jimmy [then turned with his back towards Jimmy's nose and lock], put his hands behind his back, and he got the lock off! They [the hospital staff] gave the lock to Jimmy as a memento...

[Chris laughed.] "On the way home... he threw it out the window!"



MINNEAPOLIS, MINNESOTA (DATE N/A, PHOTOGRAPHS, 6" X 4" (15.24CM X 10.16CM))

LEFT: JANET GEPHART AND JAMES F. PECKELS RIGHT: JAMES F. PECKELS

VII. The laundry room

Auntie Chrissy had so many stories about Grandma Peckels that I had never heard before; it meant so much to listen in on how she dealt with eleven kids! I remember asking her about my dad when I was little: ‘Was my dad a trouble maker? Did he ever fight with his brothers and sisters?’ and thousands more questions that I pondered over and required answers for in my youthful mind...

But Grandma Peckels was loyal to her children and never told me what misdeeds my father and his siblings got up to living at their Morgan Avenue address. My aunts and uncles however, were more than happy to share stories from their childhood; but not in a tattling way, they wanted to share their lives, both the good and the bad.

Interview with Chris Goodin (August 2006)

CG: “One time when Mom [Jeanette Peckels] was pregnant with one of the kids [Chris’s siblings], I think it was even before I was born; maybe I was the baby. Umm, [Chris paused].

“She [Jeanette] was doing the laundry (again), so to keep the kids out of the basement she used to put hooks on the doors [little metal latch-like hooks], and while she was downstairs, one of the boys hooked the lock and they couldn’t undo it! So she [Chris’s Mom, my grandmother] had to crawl, *pregnant*, through the basement window [in order] to get out!”

VIII. The garage: Eddie Peckels

Uncle Eddie and I sat down in the living room up at Uncle Kenny’s cabin just after breakfast, and right before the annual brunch serve of bakkas had begun. Bakkas are a traditional Polish sweet-bread. When the bakkas are fried, a small hole is pushed through the centre of the flat piece of dough to assist in cooking the dough consistently from its edges to the centre.

On Saturdays, the aunts and uncles whipped up a large batch of bread dough. Then they let it rise over night, and on Sunday afternoons, before everyone has begun to pack up to head back into the Twin Cities [Minneapolis/St. Paul] region, the Peckels clan enjoyed the deep-fried bread covered in sugar and cinnamon/sugar.

During this interview, a few of my aunts were walking around giving out pieces of bakkas to the Peckels family members sprinkled about Kenny's property [in McGregor Minnesota]. Eddie got his hands on two or three hot pieces of bakkas and through the latter portion of the following interview, there were frequent pauses because Eddie was eating his sweet-bread while sharing his passion for mechanical work and restoration.

Interview with Eddie Peckels (August 2006)

EP: "When I was young, I was into everything mechanical: electric trains, model airplanes, cars... anything that was mechanical. I fell in love with old cars. (And) I like to tear them down: disassemble them, rebuild them like the originals and drive them. That was a big thrill; to make/rebuild an old car and make it look like new. And uh, consequently, when I got older I became a mechanic and continued on in the same areas. I retired as a mechanic! And I *still* like to fiddle with things."

AJP: 'Where about was your shop?'

EP: "Forty-first and Fremont [North Minneapolis, Minnesota]."

AJP: 'Do you have photos of that shop?'

EP: "Yep. I have a collage of pictures."

EP: "... I was also into motorcycles and I... and cars. I had [showcased] motorcycles and custom cars in shows in Northeast Minneapolis, Austin, Rochester Minnesota, etc. The drag strip was up by Coon Rapids on the old [County Road] 242 and [at] the Twin City Speedways..."

AJP: 'How long did you have that shop in the Twin Cities [Minneapolis/St. Paul]?'

EP: "Thirty years."

[Eddie took a small number of bakkas off of the serving tray my aunt had been carrying around... at this point in the interview, the answers seemed a bit shorter than the earlier portion... I knew once he had that food, the interview was as good as over! Bakkas are so tasty; especially when they're still hot from the frying. I wanted to eat too.]

AJP: 'Did you sell it?'

EP: "I sold it in 1997; I retired that year..."

AJP: 'Is it still a...'

EP: "It's still a repair shop! I sold it to a Hmong Mechanic, and he's still there making a living."

AJP: 'Do you like what you've done with your cars? Would you still keep doing it [repairing/restoring vehicles]?'

EP: "I still have one car I've got to finish; it's a '34 Chev. [1934 Chevrolet]; that's my last car. I hope I get it done [restore the car] before I kick... Now my thing is electric trains. I rebuild/restore electric trains, and I buy and sell and trade [trains] at other shows... and sell them on EBay."

AJP: 'What's your favorite car you've done up [restored] so far?'

[There was a long pause... my uncle continued to eat the bakkas he held in his hand.]

EP: "'67 Mustang [1967 Ford Mustang]."

AJP: 'What color did you get it done in [painted]?'

EP: "It was a, umm... A Dodge-truck-red; I think it's kind of an orange-red. [The interview ended here; my Uncle Eddie was really enjoying his bakkas!]



LEFT: CA. 1945, PHOTOGRAPH, 3" X 2" (7.62CM X 5.08CM) – YOUNG EDWARD PECKELS



RIGHT: DATE N/A, PHOTOGRAPH, 2.5" X 4" (6.35CM X 10.16CM) – EDWARD PECKELS REPAIRING U.S. MILITARY VEHICLE



NORTH MINNEAPOLIS, MINNESOTA (PHOTOGRAPH CARD, 5" X 7" (12.7CM X 17.78CM))

REAL ESTATE ADVERTISEMENT CA. 1997 – EDWARD PECKELS'S OLD AUTOMOTIVE REPAIR SHOP SOLD IN 1997

IX. The Peckels kitchen

Many stories told by the Peckels siblings either took place in the kitchen of their old Minneapolis home, or were about food. Many images included throughout the thesis are pictures taken in kitchens; even Uncle Eddie was recorded while eating bakkas and talking about his automotive repair days. The kitchen theme seemed to pop in and out of all other home related stories and was one of the most popular places for memories of laughter and trouble to occur.

One often hears and sees the phrase "Home is where the heart is," depicted on wooden craft items, door hangers and so forth; but in this instance, I feel that the heart of the Peckels home was located in their kitchen.

i. Ice windows

Bachelard (1994, p38) cites Baudelaire as follows: "*Une jolie habitation ne rend-elle pas l'hiver plus poétique, et l'hiver n'augmenté t-il pas la poésie de l'habitation?*" This translates as beautifully as dreams to text: "Isn't it true that a pleasant house makes winter more poetic, and doesn't winter add to the poetry of a house?"

My father, Bill Peckels, and I were up at our cabin (in Pequot Lakes, Minnesota) for the night going through art stuff and looking through old photographs and negatives. During one portion of that long evening, we took some time out, drank a few coffees each and Dad told me a series of stories over a period of a couple of hours. Dad loved their old house in Minneapolis, as all of the siblings had. This is one of his memories:

Interview with Bill Peckels (September 2006)

BP: "In the wintertime it was always the best because, (we didn't have a [clothes] dryer; we had to dry the clothes outside), during the day the clothes would dry outside, but right at night, you'd go out there and bring the clothes in the house because they wouldn't dry [he laughed loudly]...

" They were like people!"

[My dad enunciated these words so clearly to ensure I knew what he had meant by the phrase; typing it down just before still spread a smile across my face! His eyes had a light in them like a little excited child telling a story to an adult!] Long-johns [thermal underwear] and pants and all [were] *stiff*! [My dad's still laughing. He was having trouble continuing on for a moment... I imagined stiff versions of my Dickies overalls and shirts and socks coming in a warm winter house frozen stiff off of the clothes lines, and giggled to myself!]

"...and Grandma had hooks from one end of the house to the other end of the house that you could hang the lines on (inside), and she put newspapers on the floor and we had a little space-heater down there... and in the morning the house smelled so good because all the humidity off those clothes, you know, the moisture drying off of them?"

[I'm sure I nodded thinking affectionately of clothes fresh out of the dryer at our house... with that intoxicating combination of warmth and fabric softener scents drifting lazily off of the towels and clothing items.]

BP: "And the glass (window glass) had so much frost on it; it was so thick, you could put your hand on it, like this here:

[Going through his childhood morning routine during the winter months as if no time had passed since he was living in the house... my dad held up his hand to an invisible window pane covered in a sheet of ice and placed his palm with each finger spread out onto its freezing surface, holding his position].

"It would melt your hand print [into the surface], you know what I mean?"

[My dad then removed his hand from the window pane to reveal his invisible hand print mimicked in the ice and on the glass.

Billy continued to smile and laughing lightly.]

"We were drawing all things on them [on the windows] in the morning and Grandma [his mother Jeanette Peckels, my grandmother] would come up to you [a sibling or himself] and say 'Here,' and give you a spatula! 'Scrape the windows off.'

So we'd scrape the frost off the windows and dry them off so the wood [the window framework] wouldn't rot... oh God! She had a lot of spatulas!"

ii. Cooking with Jeanette Peckels

The Minneapolis Mill District, or Mill City, was established along the Mississippi River in the later 1800s, and by 1876, there were eighteen flour mills set up in the Minneapolis region (TMHS 2003a); these mills were only minutes from the Peckels house located in North Minneapolis.

One of the largest flour mills in the state of Minnesota was the Washburn-Crosby Company formed in 1879. It produced ten thousand barrels of flour every day by 1880. They advertised their product as Gold Medal Flour, after winning the one and only Millers' National Association's exhibition in 1880 (TMHS 2003a).

The character, Betty Crocker, was created around 1928 by the General Mills incorporation (a company directed by James Ford Bell from Washburn-Crosby in 1928); this inception was designed to advertise flour goods and promoted "domestic comfort and harmony..." (TMHS 2003a, p124)

Interview with Chris Goodin (August 2006)

CG: "I always remember the baking. Baking bread, you know, after a while she had to wear gloves because her hands were always so broken-out [Jeanette Peckels suffered from extremely severe eczema on her hands]. But she still baked.

"When we were little, she used to bake bread [once per week]. And then it got to be not just once a week [she made bread], but twice a week... and then, when Jimmy, Mike and your dad [Billy Peckels] were all at that age, you know, where they eat unstoppable...

"She was baking bread twice a week and was still not enough.

"So then, she just started buying it because she [Jeanette Peckels] just couldn't keep up; she was making so much bread.

[Auntie Chris laughed.]

"Of course, when your dad [Billy Peckels] would make a sandwich, each slice would be about an inch thick and he put peanut butter in the middle; and that was your sandwich! [Chris laughed again.] You know, everybody used to fight over the heels of the bread; that was always the best part. Fresh-baked bread and you'd cut off the heel, oh... [My aunt sighed]. That was the best part.

"Grandma Miller [Jeanette Peckels's mother, Victoria] baked bread a lot too, and you [Chris or her siblings] didn't *dare* wash those pans. You were in deep doo-doo [in trouble] if you washed her bread pans.

They went [the cooking method went as follows]: take the bread out [of the oven], let the pans cool, and then stack 'em back in the oven. You did *not* wash those bread pans. They were black but they sure made good bread. [Chris chuckled.] They [the loaves] slid right out!

"I remember the great big flour can we used to have under the sink. It was a great big... [she paused to estimate its size], it must have held, (I'm trying to think), it must have held 50lbs of flour. You know, you figure a sack is 5-10lbs, aren't they? It must have held 50lbs of flour... She'd [Jeanette Peckels] always sift the flour. (You know, one of the kids [Chris's siblings] still has Mom's sifter; no flour can though).

"I remember as kids we'd have... we always had to do the dishes, right? Everybody *hated* to do [wash] the dishes. And well, we had to do the dishes, and you'd get all done with [washing] them and somebody would come up with something that didn't get washed... and you had everything put away, so you'd sneak it under the sink. [Chris giggled at revealing this secret.] And [you would] stick it [dirty dish] in the drainer....

[Chris imitated her mother asking if the dishes were finished... as her childhood response was]: 'Oh no, they're done; they're all done.'

"And the next person went out [into the kitchen to wash the dishes] and they'd pull the drawer out and it's full of dirty dishes!"

AJP: 'You scabs!'

CG: "Yeah; exactly!" [Chris was laughing harder now, but got back into character, reminiscing on her chore of dish-washing.]



WASHBURN-CROSBY COMPANY (MINNEAPOLIS) ADVERTISEMENT

(DATE N/A, MINNESOTA HISTORICAL SOCIETY (2003b), POSTCARD, 5" X 7" (12.7CM X 17.78CM))

iii. Canning with Kenneth Peckels

I lived with my uncles Kenny and Mike Peckels for nearly three years at Kenny's house in Shoreview Minnesota. I have never met a person with a kitchen protocol as precise as Ken Peckels's kitchen methodology; he was a mad cooking genius and laid down many rules about which foods belonged where in the fridge, cupboards, and which types of foods were the healthiest for my Uncle Mike and me.

While living at Kenny's, I endured many late night studio-art sessions at the University of Minnesota (Twin Cities Campus). On these nights, I would get home and Kenny would make sure to fill me up with something nourishing from his kitchen before I went to bed. Other occasions, while studying in my bedroom, lazy wafting scents of freshly baked bread would fill my nostrils and drag me up the stairs for some more of Kenny's baked goods.

His cooking generosity went beyond those whom he lived with; Kenny made homemade bread, jams, sauces and many other foods and often handed these goods out at holidays, such as Christmas, for his siblings and their brood to enjoy. Having the opportunity to live with and experience these memories with Kenny, I knew I would indeed interview him on something he seemed very passionate about; Kenny's kitchen and food.

Interview with Kenny Peckels (August 2006)

AJP: 'I've got to ask you about canning [produce], what is your process?'

KP: "It depends on what you want to make. I usually grow all of my own stuff [fruits and vegetables]. You just wash it off [clean the produce], you boil it, you know, to prepare it [the foods] for canning: cook it down. Then you can it in fruit jars."

AJP: 'And you have to sanitize the fruit jars?'

KP: "Oh yeah [he said assertively]. You've got to put them in scalding water; [boiling them] with the lids. [Then] you just let them drip [dry] out, put them down [on the bench], fill them with the stuff that you've cooked to put into it, you know... Like when I make the spaghetti sauce: peppers and tomatoes, garlic, celery and onions..."

[I've watched Kenny can his spaghetti sauce while living at his Shoreview residence: After the produce has been cooked down to the correct consistency, Ken would take out one sanitized jar from the boiling water with a pair of tongs, he'd allow the excess water to drip from the hot jar, and then slowly pour in the hot saucy contents. He'd line up the full jars, one by one, along the bench, wiping each jar clean for storage in the basement pantry].

[Ken Peckels continued:]

KP: "Then you can it; just put the lid on it [the jar full of contents], and after they cool down, it [the lid] creates its own vacuum.

"But when you do pickles, or you cold-pack them [jars], you've got to wash them [jars and vegetables in this case] and put them [contents] into the jars. Pour the brine in it and put the cover on. Then you've got to cook them [the jars] in hot water in a cooker [deep enough] where it covers the jars up; you've got to cook them in a hot bath for eight minutes."

AJP: 'That's with everything inside the jar?'

KP: "Yep. That's what gets it going... Then you take them out and it [the heat] seals the jar."

AJP: 'What 'get's going?'

KP: "It [the heat] gets the brine and stuff to start working its way through the pickles; it's gotta break down a little bit."

AJP: 'Do you make jams like Grandma [Jeanette Peckels, Ken's mother] used to?'

KP: "Yeah. You can make them with sugar... and just cook 'em down [generally raspberries, blackberries, rhubarb, etc], then you've got to check them in the water to see if it's the right texture you want, like when you make tomato jelly, or which ever... everyone is different [and call] for the [varying] amounts of sugar you put into them. When you cook them [fruit] down, you cook them down just to get the water out of them and the steam that comes off of them is the evaporation of the water. And the fruit and the sugar [breaks down] and stays there [in the pot]... That's about it for canning."



LEFT: MINNEAPOLIS, MINNESOTA (CA. 1953, PHOTOGRAPH, 4" X 2.5"
(10.16CM X 6.35CM))

KENNETH PECKELS ON HIS FIRST COMMUNION

RIGHT: CROSBY, MINNESOTA (2006, PHOTOGRAPH, 4" X 6"
(10.16CM X 15.24CM))

KENNETH PECKELS AND KATHLEEN DUBOIS PREPARING BAKKAS AT AN
ANNUAL PECKELS WEEKEND.

"...Some salesman came to the door [when Kenneth was little], and
Kenny must have walked to the door... like you do... you know?
Someone was there; and [he] asked him [Kenny] what his name was...
He said, 'My name is Tubby, but my mama calls me Tubby-Wubby...'
[Kathy laughed, thinking of her brother Kenny]..." (EXCERPT FROM
INTERVIEW WITH KATHY DUBOIS, 2006)

Breads

DATE BREAD

Jillane
12

1 large loaf

1½ c dates
1 Tbsp fat
1 tsp soda
½ tsp salt
1 c boiling water

1 large egg
1 c sugar
2 c sifted flour
½ c nuts, chopped

1. Wash dates, remove stones and cut in half.
2. To the dates add salt, soda, fat and boiling water.
3. Let stand until cool.
4. Beat egg. Beat in sugar 1 Tbsp at a time.
5. Add egg and sugar mixture to date mixture.
6. Combine the sifted flour and nuts (if used) and add to date mixture.
7. Mix well, but do not beat.
8. Pour into greased or lined loaf pan.
9. Bake at 350° for 50-60 min.

Breads

BANANA BREAD

12

1 loaf

½ c fat
1 c sugar
2 eggs
3 Tbsp buttermilk or sour milk

3 bananas, mashed (1 c)
2 c sifted flour
1 tsp salt
1 tsp soda

1. Cream fat.
2. Work sugar into fat slowly.
3. Add well beaten eggs and mix thoroughly.
4. Sift flour, soda and salt.
5. Fold flour into fat and sugar mixture alternating with milk and mashed banana. Do not beat.
6. Turn into greased or lined bread pan.
7. Bake at 350° for about 1 hour.

TOP LEFT: DATE BREAD RECIPE,
(DATE N/A, CARD, 3" X 4" (7.62CM X
10.16CM))

FROM THE KITCHEN OF JILL PECKELS

BOTTOM LEFT: BANANA BREAD
RECIPE

(DATE N/A, CARD 3" X 4" (7.62CM X
10.16CM))

FROM THE KITCHEN OF JILL PECKELS

X. Food with feeling

Multiple studies based on the connections of food and memories have been conducted as they are a likely phenomenological link. Holtzman (2006, p367) acknowledged that: "Some food literature (particularly outside anthropology) relies on the notion of sentimentality for a lost past, viewing food as a vehicle for recollection of childhood and family." In Alexeyeff's article (2004), it was declared that participants were host to their own distinctive aesthetics when dealing with food as gifts and exchanges, particularly around special holidays.

Within this particular study group, it is apparent that the kitchen, its utensils, basic ingredients and family recipes connect the Peckels siblings both to their childhood and to the present, particularly special family get-togethers and holidays. Many narrative accounts of life in the Peckels kitchen were recorded and preserved in this chapter. Chris Goodin recalled her mother's countless bread-baking sessions, her grandmother's bread pans and the consequences of washing them.

Bill Peckels still laughed about the vast amount of spatulas his mother stored for those cold winter months when the children were required to scrape the ice off of the windows. Hidden dishes in the sink area were a tell-tale sign that the children were not big on washing dishes, yet, somehow managed to make a fun sort of game out of the chore, leaving the next siblings to clean up after them.

In the interview with Eddie Peckels (Section VIII in this chapter), where he describes his passion for restoring classic cars and motorcycles, he was recorded while eating traditional sweet Polish bread. This interview was taken at Ken Peckels's cabin based near McGregor Minnesota. It took place over the annual Peckels weekend, where on the last morning, the bakkas dessert bread is fried and shared while family members begin to pack up and part ways, some until Christmas.

This Peckels weekend is an example of food and storytelling, as childhood tales are shared even without a recorder present. With special food and family present, this is how I knew as the recorder, that I would be able to ask questions and get typical/natural answers from family.

The basic ingredients to a family kitchen and its food are not its materials required for cooking and baking, it is the origins of the food and the memories created from sharing this food with others. Bakkas at the annual Peckels weekend is one example of this connection. Ken Peckels applied his mother's cooking techniques in his own recipes. He shared these talents with his extended family through gift-giving at special family events, specifically during the Christmas season. Chris Goodin also applies her passion for baking and shares homemade caramel, peppermint bark, sugar cookies and many more sweets during the Christmas holiday season.

The most significant place in the Peckels home lies within the kitchen walls; the memories, the dreams, and the food all created a phenomenological ideal of home and those emotions have been brought forth through narrative and food. These memories and their impact on the individuals who have shared them within the text above go beyond mere words or lyrics or poetry; these narratives and the feelings and emotions that are expressed within them transform the Peckels house into a home of intimate spaces.

XI. Family Recipes

When gathering family recipes to apply in this section, I was wary that the Peckels/Miller family may be hesitant to contribute such personal material. But I later realised that these recipes tell the story of Peckels past, just as their personal narratives do in previous chapter sections. When I received the recipe cards, I at first did not take notice of the contents on the cards; they were simply ingredients to make classic family dishes, as recommended by my father.

Later, I noticed that these recipes provided an outline of how much food was consumed at the Peckels house hold. Dozens of loaves may have been eaten by the Peckels siblings every week, but what of the other food? Main meals or desserts; how much food was necessary for these family recipes? Some of the recipes were from the kitchen of Jeanette Peckels; others were original Miller family recipes.

When I was a child I longed for Peckels Christmas parties, first for sweets and Peckels hot dishes/casseroles, and then to see family (I was quite shy as a child and preferred to hide with my cousins and play away from adults). Christmas was hosted at our house (both in Minneapolis and Big Lake) and at Chris and Rich Goodin's home (generally at the beginning of December nowadays).

I remember enjoying Christmas away from our house; less cleaning and preparing to assist with. If Christmas were to occur at Auntie Chrissy's house, it was difficult for Sophia and me to separate ourselves from Mom and Dad, even at the door. But as the cold wore off and we warmed to familiar voices and laughter, I recall noticing a variety of affectionate smells wafting from the kitchen.

Most of the time grabbing food was a bit tricky, as the kitchen was always over-flowing with people entering and exiting with platefuls of food. Sophia, our cousins and I specialised in trying all of the sweets before the casseroles and hot dishes. I admit, I was there more so for the sweets and little grab bags of treats handed out by Auntie Chrissy. But after our bellies were full of chewy date treats, chocolates and caramels, there would be a transition from the kitchen to spend time with the family.

At every holiday get-together I most looked forward to my hug with Grandma Jeanette. All of my aunts and uncles, and sometimes my own father, would get my sister Sophia and my names mixed up (sometimes on purpose to stir us up), but Grandma Jeanette (despite having over two dozen grandchildren) never forgot who we were.

Grandma always asked us questions about school and life that were easy to answer, to calm our nerves as well. Grandma was the light and life of the party, and I will never forget these times with family and special foods. She made everyone of her children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren feel extraordinarily joyful. I can appreciate why the above personal narratives about home, family and food are so extraordinary to my aunts and uncles.

After reviewing the memories provided by family and applying them to my own childhood accounts, I began to notice the personal influence in the recipes that follow. Take a look as to how many pounds of meat are required for one hamburger rice dish prepared by Jeanette Peckels, or how many cups of rice are needed; she did have to feed eleven children, and the recipe today feeds an extended family of well over fifty members.

I also noticed that the older recipe cards have aged in colour, and there are watermarks and food smudges on them. These pieces of paper are remnants of kitchens that no longer exist, but represent traditions in food that are observed today by their ancestors, my family.

Instead of re-writing the recipes and typing them into the chapter, I chose to leave each in its original format. Each aunt or uncle, or even my grandmother, have their own hand-writing and that is something that personalises the following recipes. I miss seeing my grandma Jeanette's hand-writing. These cards, although they are only recipes and not the actual food each family member had prepared for us to share, their individual hand-writing brings the ingredients to life for me; it is what connects the recipes to my family. The immense amount of ingredients necessary, the watermarks and food smudges, and their hand-writing... in essence, they are telling their own stories through food.

And finally, I was introduced to a side of my Grandmother that I had never seen before; I did not know my Grandma Jeanette Peckels was such a funny lady in the kitchen; I always imagined her to be a serious baker who wanted no distractions. Until researching family recipes and getting my hands on some of the family's old cards, I should have known I was completely incorrect. From what I can remember about Grandma Jeanette, she wanted everyone involved, she loved to laugh and she appreciated the times spent with our family.

Notice the little German boy and girl at the top of a couple of Jeanette Peckels's recipes cards, they read: "Kissin' wears out, Cookin' don't." It appears that kitchen humour never ran short in the Peckels family home; nor did the fun my grandmother provided to her children through food and stories.

Here's what's cookin'
Hamburger Rice Hot
Dish
Serves 10 +



Recipe from the
Kitchen of
Jeanette

2 LBS ground Beef

2 TBIS Vinegar

3 C chopped ONION

1 tsp SALT

1 C " green PEPPERS

1 tsp Worcestershire Sauce

5 CANS Tomato Soup

1 Bay leaf

2 1/2 CANS WATER

8 cups Cooked Rice

Brown hamburger, onions &
green peppers

Bake at 400° for 30 minutes

HAMBURGER AND RICE HOT
DISH RECIPE
(DATE N/A, CARD, 7" X 5"
(17.78CM X 12.7CM))
FROM THE KITCHEN OF
JEANETTE PECKELS



From the kitchen of...

JEANETTE PECKELS



Hungarian or Banana Peppers

Thoroughly wash peppers. Make small slit in each one in two places. Put the peppers in a brine made of 1 gal. water to 2 cups of salt. Weight to hold peppers under brine. NEXT DAY drain well & pack peppers into sterilized Kerr jars. Make a pickling solution of 1 gallon water, 1 cup salt, 1 cup vinegar, 1 clove garlic,

= over



1 grape leaf & 1 bunch of dill. Bring the solution to a boil. Pour over peppers to within $\frac{1}{2}$ inch of top. Put on cap, screw band firmly tight. Process in boiling water bath 5 minutes.

HUNGARIAN OR BANANA PEPPERS RECIPE

(DATE N/A, CARD, 7" X 5" (17.78CM X 12.7CM))

RECIPE FROM THE KITCHEN OF JEANETTE PECKELS

Here's what's cookin':

Tomato Soup

Recipe from: Sis

1 pk. tomatoes or 8 quarts
Cut up.

12 onions - 8 if large.

1 stalk celery

6 whole cloves

8 bay leaves

2 large green peppers

cut up all vegetables and boil
till tender.

Put thru sieve.

Save 2 cups to cool.

Return to heat and add:

1 C. sugar

1/4 C salt

1/2 C margarine

1/2 C. flour mixed with the juice

Boil till thickened or flour is
cooked.

seal in jars and put in hot
water bath 10 min. after
water boils.

Serves: 8 qts.

TOMATO SOUP RECIPE

(DATE N/A, CARD, 7" X 5",

(17.78CM X 12.7CM))

RECIPE FROM THE KITCHEN

OF GERTRUDE (SIS)

SHERWOOD

Here's what's cookin' Hash Brown Casserole Serves

Recipe from the kitchen of Maudie & Eva



1-32 oz. pkg. Frozen Hash Browns

1 Can cr. of potato soup

1 Can cr. of celery soup

$\frac{1}{4}$ c. chopped onion

(Some gr. pepper if desired)

1-8 or 12 oz. Carton sour cream

$\frac{1}{2}$ tsp. salt

$\frac{1}{4}$ tsp. pepper

parsley flakes or paprika to

sprinkle on top.

(over)

Thaw hash browns enough to separate
pour both soups, onions, salt & pepper
and sour cream. mix well.

Pour into 12 x 9 greased pan.

sprinkle parsley flakes or paprika on
top. Bake uncovered $1\frac{1}{2}$ - 2 hrs in

300° oven.

Be sure you have $\frac{1}{2}$ in space on top
of pan. so they don't run over in oven.

HASH BROWN CASSEROLE
RECIPE

(DATE N/A, CARD, 7" X 5",
(17.78CM X 12.7CM))

RECIPE FROM THE KITCHEN
OF EVA MILLER

Here's what's cookin':
Hot Apple Cider
Serves: _____



Recipe from the
kitchen of
Jeanette



| | |
|---------------------|------------------------|
| 1/2 cup Brown Sugar | 1 tsp. Whole ALL spice |
| 1/4 tsp. SALT | 1 tsp. " Cloves |
| 2 Qts. Cider | 3" Stick CINAMON |
| | Dash of Nutmeg |

COMBINE Br. Sugar, SALT & Cider
TIE SPICES IN SMALL piece of cheesecloth
ADD to Cider

Slowly bring to boil - COVER & SIMMER
about 20 minutes.



HOT APPLE CIDER RECIPE
(DATE N/A, CARD, 7" X 5"
(17.78CM X 12.7CM))
RECIPE FROM THE KITCHEN
OF JEANETTE PECKELS

XII. A closing note

Although the particular object of this chapter was quite clearly the childhood house of the Peckels siblings, it was not described as such. The intimate interior spaces of this home were more appropriately formed around the dreams and memories shared by the siblings themselves. Coincidentally, establishing a language between these family members was the bulk of text in this chapter; a basic regional history was included in order to tie the significance of the German-built houses in specific Minnesota regions, folk art imagery, and a simple found beneath the kitchen sink.

These pieces of brick, wood and glass, or lyrics and key changes: photographs, folk art and personal narratives all create a home within the Peckels house. The personal insight and memories transform this house into an intimate family living space where, if the walls could sing, they would share the narratives included.

The kitchen would become a warm, dry place with wafting waves of baked bread lofting about the room; the sink would become a keeper of secrets, stashing eleven children's dirty dishes. The basement was: an artist's sanctuary, a roadblock for boats and its walls and stairs would feel the weight of thousands of loads of laundry going up and down, carried by Jeanette Peckels. The window would remember her clambering through its angled corners with a pregnant belly. These visual personal narratives would never exist other than within an intangible object's walls, corners and stairs; a shell of a house, but the memories and dreams of the Peckels siblings come to life through text, imagery and above all, narrative.

The house, quite obviously, is a privileged entity for a phenomenological study of the intimate values of inside space, provided, of course, that we take in both its unity and its complexity, and endeavor [sic] to integrate all the special values in one fundamental value. For the house furnishes us dispersed images and a body of images at the same time.
(Bachelard 1994, p3)

The house may have been divided in this chapter by rooms and family members telling their stories, but the Peckels home was more than just pleasurable stories about family and a place to stay warm during the brutal Minnesota winter months, it

became a memory marker of the past where my father and his siblings could always approach for comfort and consistency no matter how far away from home they may have ventured in their adult lives. Jeanette and Arganius Peckels were the foundation for that household, and as their children got older Jeanette instilled her sense of home within the minds of her children and their children.

I grew up alongside my Peckels cousins in North Minneapolis and we watched our parents grow up and mature, as we also did. I was witness to the rich chemistry shared amongst the Peckels siblings and could not wait to share their story with the world, but more than that, to safeguard their lives in text in order to demonstrate how valued each and every life is beyond the house and walls that are stained with age and ancestry.

After Jeanette Peckels passed away on January 22, 1998, our world changed. The mother of eleven children, dozens of grandchildren, and even great-grandchildren had left a void in our extended family's home. Sweet stories and images were shared by my father and his siblings with such compassion that the narrative treasures contained in this combined research remind all of us that people cannot find themselves at home in the world without the assistance of their family.

My grandmother and her elders showed the Peckels children a step by step, ingredient by ingredient, that the house is not simply made of objects or images, but the Peckels home had been created and preserved through memories and dreams.

The Peckels siblings have taken Minnesota history to a new level... beyond the bricks and infrastructure of a house, within the buildings discussed in this chapter there inlays an intimate space of the home... a place where history becomes life and objects become precious to the people who share their stories on these pages.

Albert

John
Frank

Albert and Anastasia (Goligowski)

1/22/1976 | 1/22/1980

George

[b. 11]

Raymond

[b. 8]

Rose m. Trowbridge

[b. 8]

Anthony

[b. 4]

Urban

[b. 8]

[b. 11/30/1904]

[b. 1/4]

[d. 12/30/1975]

[d. 5/4]

Rita m. Ba

George

Chapter Four: Mississippi River

I. Legends and Lore

In the state of Minnesota, there are enormous roadside statues and various oddities which create a sort of Minnesota tourist roadmap: Paul Bunyan the Giant Lumberjack and Babe the Blue Ox (Bemidji, Brainerd), a colossal walleye (beside Lake Mille Lacs), and the world's largest twine ball (Darwin) to name a few (Thorkelson 2003).

In particular, Paul Bunyan and Babe the Blue Ox play a leading role in Minnesota folklore for both parents and children alike. There are many tales told about Paul Bunyan and how he has influenced the Minnesota region. These tall tales even include how he and Babe created Minnesota's 10,000 lakes (Bang Printing 1968):

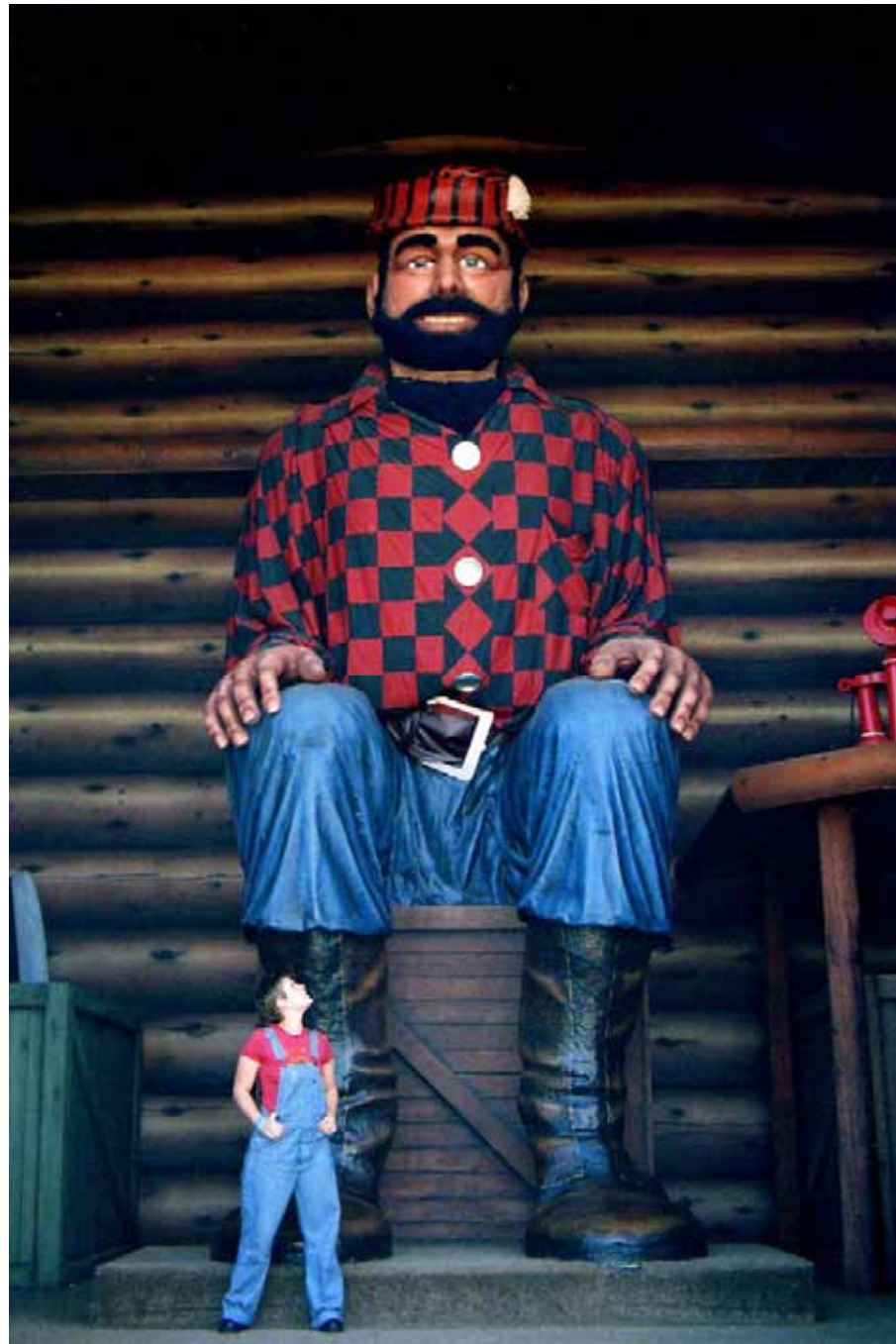
"...As a child Paul played with an axe and crosscut saw like other children played with toys. On his first birthday his father gave him a pet blue ox named Babe.

"Babe grew to be seven axe-handles and plug of tobacco wide between the eyes and as a snack would eat thirty bales of hay... wire and all.

"Paul and Babe were so large; the tracks they made gallivanting around Minnesota filled up and made the 10,000 lakes."

This legend tells of Minnesota folklore but does not include how Minnesotans have enjoyed these lakes, the Mississippi River and all the activities that occur in the locations. The folklore is, however a part of all our Minnesotan childhoods and belongs alongside my family's memories of the Minnesota outdoors.

My art is still influenced by these old stories, just as it is by my family's narratives of place. I have included a couple of Paul Bunyan and Babe the Blue Ox images in this chapter, as many a tall tale fishing story could compare to the legends of Paul and Babe!



BRAINERD, MINNESOTA (2006,
AM KETTER, PHOTOGRAPH,
6" X 4" (15.24CM X 10.16CM))
TALKING PAUL BUNYAN, AJ
PECKELS: THIS OLD FARM/PAUL
BUNYAN LAND

These Paul Bunyan and Babe linoleum cuts are drawn from original imagery found on the wooden nickels used at Paul Bunyan Land located near of Brainerd Minnesota. This landmark amusement park once lived in the city of Brainerd but was moved to This Old Farm just outside of the city limits (to make way for shopping centres and other money making attractions, that are all year-round accessible, whereas Paul Bunyan Land is a summer attraction and remains closed for six months out of each year).

I designed each print with roughly draw lines, to imply more of a childhood memory for myself, rather than something I think of as an adult. I visited Paul Bunyan Land during my last trip home (2006), and had to venture to its new location. For me, this amusement park did not have the same presence or feeling as it had in Brainerd. It was as if the memories I retained from this place were no longer a part of it. It was this feeling of loss that influenced the implied lines rather than exact lines of the wooden nickel images of Paul and Babe.

I felt that the memories I held as a child would never be the same now that the place was no longer where it once belonged. This may not be the same for every Minnesotan, but for me, it had changed my perception and emotions I once attached to a small amusement park within the city limits of Brainerd. As I mentioned with the *You Remind Me* print (2007) in Chapter Three: there are markers on my roadmap which all hold separate meanings and remind me of different times in my life. Regardless of where Paul Bunyan Land place exists now, in my mind as a young child, I will hold it where it once belonged, alongside the images I created to keep the amusement park in Brainerd City.

I hang onto the old memories of Paul Bunyan Land in my mind and display what I remember of the old place in the following *Paul Bunyan Coin* (2007) and *Babe the Blue Ox Coin* (2007). Just as with these images, and additional artwork in this chapter, they are made as reminders to me so I can again find my way back home to the people and the places that make the artwork special to me and my family. This chapter delves into many different sections which centre on the Mississippi River and 10,000 lakes of Minnesota; places which were 'created' by Paul Bunyan and Babe the Blue Ox.



LEFT: PAUL BUNYAN COIN (2007, AJ PECKELS, LINOLEUM CUT, 3" X 3" (7.62CM X 7.62CM))

RIGHT: BABE THE BLUE OX COIN (2007, AJ PECKELS, LINOLEUM CUT, 3" X 3" (7.62CM X 7.62CM))

II. The mighty Mississippi and Minnesota waters

The Mississippi River is the longest river in North America; it starts as a dribbly stream from Lake Itasca in Minnesota (Ash 2004). This great river, 2200 miles in length, cuts the United States into two parts; emptying into the Gulf of Mexico out of the State of Louisiana (TMHS 2003a).

Photographs and art work of the Mississippi River were completed as early as 1851 in Minnesota. St. Anthony Falls near Fort Snelling was photographed frequently, and became one of the far north trading posts (French; mainly fur) in the United States in 1805 (TMHS 2003a).

The cities of Minneapolis and St. Paul were settled and founded along the Mississippi riverside establishing military and business ventures, just as Fort Snelling had done. Minneapolis/Fort Snelling later competed with the St. Paul milling companies when the logging industry boomed in the 1880s (TMHS 2003a). Flour mills (such as the Washburn, Crosby and Co. and the C.A. Pillsbury Co.) and textile mills (such as the Minneapolis Cotton Manufacturing Co.) were all established along the prime riverside location of Minneapolis (TMHS 2003a).

The Mississippi River was ideal for transporting goods; raw lumber from the northern portions of Minnesota and other local materials (farming goods, etc) were easy to send along the River. People also travelled by riverboat throughout the metro area (of Minneapolis/St. Paul). The name Mississippi is originally an Ojibwe term, it means 'great river,' (Fedo 2002, p100). The Mississippi River was also great for fishing, and still is in most regions throughout Minnesota.

Within Minnesota, there are many more bodies of water in addition to the Mississippi River; there are over 12,000 lakes; or bodies of water larger than ten acres (Ash 2004). Lake Superior, one of the Great Lakes bordering the United States and Canada, also creates the northeast Minnesota boundary. "...Minnesota lakes cover nearly 5,000 square miles; about the size of [the State of] Connecticut," (Ash 2004, p23). With such an abundant supply of water, fishing and water recreation is possible all seasons of the year.



LAKE SUPERIOR, DULUTH MINNESOTA

(2005, AJ PECKELS, PHOTOGRAPH, 8" X 10" (20.32CM X 25.4CM))

Common types of fish Minnesotans enjoy catching and eating include: "...walleye, pike [northern pike], trout, muskellunge (muskie), sunfish and other types of fish," (Ash 2004, p29). In addition to the fish mentioned by Ash (2004), crappies and bass (large mouth and small mouth) are also great catches in many lakes in Minnesota.

In the winter months, Minnesotans fish through holes on many lakes throughout the state. Scores of fishermen even own or rent ice-fishing houses during winter months, in order to stay for long periods of time on the ice.

Back when the lumber industry was in full swing, (from 1839 through the 1930s (TMHS 1970-71b)), the lumberjacks and logging companies utilised the Mississippi River as means for transporting logs from the northern regions of Minnesota down into the milling districts of Minneapolis/Fort Snelling and to the State's Capital: Saint Paul, Minnesota.

Explorers from centuries ago have searched up and down the Mississippi and in and around the waterways in Minnesota. Legendary stories have been written about these visits, even about Paul Bunyan the Giant Lumberjack, but what does the Mississippi River mean to the people who have settled the regions around it?

The narratives and their corresponding photographs are considered an inclusive heritage approach (Anderson 1997) to viewing/understanding the Mississippi River within Minnesota's boundaries for its settlers. This textual approach allows the reader the opportunity to observe a cultural connection to place and items from a firsthand/personal perspective. The goal of this chapter is to apply objects that are place-specific to Minnesota, and to utilise family interviews as a key connector to object and people, people and place.



LAKE SUPERIOR, DULUTH MINNESOTA

(CA. 2004, J DUBOIS, PHOTOGRAPH 8" X 10" (20.32CM X 25.4CM))

MADELINE AND TAYLOR DUBOIS

III. Logging in winter

In Minnesota, the lumber industry was set in motion in 1839. By the early 1900s, two and a half billion feet of board was cut each year. With such large amounts of wood being cut and not replaced, the lumber industry began an obvious decline in the 1930s, after over half of the State's original timbers had been cleared (TMHS 1970-71b).

During the height of lumber movement, many families committed their lives to the industry; including Jake Peckels and his siblings. It turns out that logging was also a winter activity (THMS 2003a). According to Bill Peckels, men were hired to manually push the logs down the Mississippi River during the winter months.

Within the winter months, lumberjacks also used sleds and skids to transport logs (TMHS 2003a). Jake Peckels, grandfather to William Peckels, worked in the logging industry for years. I sat down with Bill Peckels and he shared what he could recall about these experiences his grandfather endured prior to Jake Peckels's death in 1982:

Interview with Bill Peckels (September 2006)

BP: "To my knowledge, Grandpa Jake was born in Staples Minnesota, I'm guessing in 1889 [James Jacob (Jake) Peckels was born in Staples on February 17, 1892]; then migrated north to Virginia Minnesota.

"He can remember when they left Staples (Grandpa would've been four or five); it was in the fall of the year... they forged the river. So that means they broke their horse and wagon down [in order to cross the river]. I think there were eight kids in his family.

"When they got over [the river] it started to snow, so they set up for the winter right there. And he can remember on the other side of the river, (the Sioux were moving out of North Dakota through Minnesota, migrating to Canada), and the whole winter on the other side of the river was all tipis; from the American Indians.

"Isn't that something?"

AJP: 'So his family migrated to the U.S.?'

BP: "His mother... yeah, he had to of...

[Jake's parents: Anna (Cushner) and John Peter Peckels were Luxemburg natives and migrated to the United States roughly sometime in the 1880s.

During the 1880s and 1890s massive amounts of peoples migrated to Minnesota. Some of my Polish and German family descendants came during these population surges in the region.

A majority of these settlers included: "...Scandinavians, Poles, Bohemians, Czechs, and Slovaks..." (Meier 1981)]

AJP: 'What about what Jake did when he was older? Did he work in the Iron Range then?'

BP: "Actually, logging was a big industry back then... when you want to work for someone and you knew what you were doing so you'd get paid good money.

"You didn't want to look like a fool; I'm sure all of his brothers were in logs and the logging industry. What he did... he'd sit at home and pound roofing nails through his shoes and he'd roll around on a barrel in the yard [gaining balance] until he felt comfortable... until you know, he could get hired.

"He said the first place he went to, he showed up in his corks [shoes], that's what they were called, and the guy looked at him and he says, 'You go down and get yourself a pair of shoes or a pair of boots tomorrow. You're not wearing those on the job!'

Because the roofing nails would pop up through the shoes and make his feet sore... [Billy laughed]!

[Pausing... taking a sip of his coffee, Bill thought of Grandpa Jake, and his stories and continued]...

BP: "... he was on a line that went from northern Minnesota..."

AJP: 'Like the Duluth area?'

BP: "Uh... I don't think that way... They stayed on the Mississippi River. He'd ride the logs all the way down to Nicollet Island; to the mill. And that was where he got paid. When you handed in your shipment, you got your money."

AJP: 'How did the logs get down the river? Wasn't the best time for transporting logs during the winter months?'

BP: "Yeah, they still cut timber, but wouldn't put it in the water 'til it was December because then it would be cold enough to where the logs couldn't keep it [the river] open... you know, the industry more or less slowed down... they stockpiled the stuff down there [in Minneapolis], so they had plenty of wood to cut.

"But again in the spring of the year the water was so high, they could really push the logs down there [to the mills in Minneapolis]. They had to be careful too because the water was so high; they could have accidents with the logs there, too..."

AJP: 'How would they get the logs out if the were jammed [from ice, etc.]?'

BP: "They wore corks, (which were felt/wool boots with spikes in the bottom), to walk on the logs with. [Other clothing items included]: black wool underwear (long-johns), wool pants, wool shirt, wool coat, wool cap, wool gloves [as Bill extended his arms from their resting position on the kitchen table, and slipped each hand into invisible wool gloves]...

"And in the winter time, if the logs jammed up, they [lumberjacks] jumped right into the water! (Usually, where they jammed up it was shallow anyway; waist-deep to thigh-deep). And they'd sit there and start pushing the logs to keep 'em going."

AJP: 'Did they get hit by logs?'

BP: "Yep. All along the river they had these little one-man shanties; so when they [lumberjacks] were going along the river and the end of the day was near... if you saw a shanty, you'd go ashore.

"You'd spend the night there... dry your clothes out. And there was always food and stuff inside those places [shanties] for the guys travellin' down the river."

AJP: 'What happened when their clothes got all wet in the winter time? Didn't they get cold?'

BP: "Actually, the water was cold. Once they got out of the water, it was usually cold enough [in the open air] to where it would freeze the outside layer of the felt- the wool, and that [ice] would stop wind from blowing through it [their clothes]... and they'd warm right back up again!"

AJP: 'They'd wear the ice on their clothes, or did they bang it off when it froze?'

BP: "Just worked! [He bellowed and laughed loudly, the way he always does when Bill tells stories]! Whatever happened; happened! You had to wear them [your clothes] until the end of the day..."

[My father settled down and finished his story:]

BP: "Hard life..."

Minnesota winters are rough; working and surviving the cold Minnesota months back when Jake Peckels lived, and in present times, people still find ways to cope with such harsh conditions. As Thorkelson (2003) and Peckels (2006) have both illustrated, there is a pride in living through Minnesota winters.

Minnesota waterways provide residents with both, work and pleasurable opportunities: food and transport supplies, skiing, boating, ice-skating, fishing contests and other local celebrations are all ways communities in Minnesota appreciate the waters that surround them; creating a unique Minnesota lifestyle.



RICE, MINNESOTA

(2006, AJ PECKELS, PHOTOGRAPH, 8" X 10" (20.32CM X 25.4CM))

LUMBERYARD



LEFT: CA. 1910s (PHOTOGRAPH, 3" X 2" (7.62CM X 5.08CM))
JAMES JACOB (JAKE) PECKELS

RIGHT: CA. LATE 1970s/EARLY 1980s (PHOTOGRAPH 3" X 3"
(7.62CM X 7.62CM))
EDWARD PECKELS AND JAKE PECKELS



MISSISSIPPI RIVER, MINNESOTA
(CA. 1865, BF UPTON (MINNESOTA
HISTORICAL SOCIETY (2003a, p55),
PHOTOGRAPH, 3" X 2" (7.62CM X
5.08CM))
LOG JAM ALONG THE MISSISSIPPI
RIVER

IV. Minnesota waters and the Peckels family

Chris Faust, a Minnesotan photographer, researched people connections to the Mississippi through a series of photographs of the River (TMHS 2000). He applied an overall goal to the meaning/definition of his photographs: he wanted all readers to understand that the Mississippi River is an *accepted* inclusive object of Minnesota. This chapter has applied Anderson's (1997) inclusive approach to a narrative history through writing and images, in order to prove that through the assistance of participating clan's members and local history sources: it is possible to obtain an exclusive and unique history of the Minnesota region.

Anderson (1997) wrote of objects and their connection to place; analysed different types of objects, some that are place-specific (irreplaceable to one region), and other objects that are simply coincidental. Anderson (1997, p8) stated that: "...the very portability of objects underscores their independence of specific location..." Indeed, photographs without a personal connection to place would be considered a voiceless approach to observing local history.

Regardless of whether or not photographs can be viewed separately from their captured landscape, it is the power of private traditions and a family's connection to a particular place that creates an undetectable relation between portable objects and their carriers to said place.

Thus, these objects are not coincidental; they are not 'independent of their specific location (Anderson 1997).' The photographs and personal narratives are a part of place and have captured a particular region in Minnesota through text. The images and memories demonstrate how this family made themselves at home in Minnesota.

V. Little Falls and the Mississippi River

Bill Peckels, a Minneapolis native, was interviewed about a particular place along the Mississippi River; the Little Falls Dam. The Peckels/Miller family have been living/visiting and fishing the Little Falls region for generations, and he tells one such story in the following interview segment:

Interview with Bill Peckels (September 2006)

[It was late one cool fall night in September when the following conversation was recorded. We hopped into his old Ford truck, as we had done so many times before, for a drive up north and to check on our family's cabin in Pequot Lakes. We made some stops on the way up, and while at the cabin, my father and I stayed up telling stories well into the night that evening.

We went through some boxes of art supplies and old photographs and negatives, and we got on to telling stories. We sat down at the dining room table, armed with coffees and no interruptions. It was such a great night being there, just my dad and me.

I believe the last time we were there alone, I locked the both of us out of the cabin and Dad had to cut a hole into the side of the wall in order to unlock the front door! Thankfully, that did happen a second time on this trip. I was also grateful for the opportunity to spend some time alone with my father, as I didn't get the chance to interview him until the very end of my trip.

I was appreciative that he was so patient with me, and he took plenty of time out of his busy schedule to hang out alone for awhile. I love hearing stories about my parents' childhood. But on this evening I recorded our conversation, which took a bit of setting up because I did not want to miss a thing. My father is one of the most animated storytellers I have ever met.

Even before we began to record this evening's session, we had been talking about my father's childhood journeys to Little Falls Minnesota, the town where both of his parents came from. When we initiated the interview, I asked what he and his Peckels siblings would get up to in Little Falls while visiting their grandparents, and other family and friends. Eventually, we got on the topic of fishing along the Mississippi River.]

BP: "You know, the only place I can remember fishing up there [Little Falls MN] was, I went on 37 Acres... a *couple of times*, [stressing these words, as it must have been only rare occasions for him and/or his family].

It's a lake up there; it's called 37 Acres because that's how big it is [he laughed]... it gave up nice *northerns*, [the northern pike is a type of larger fish common to this region; it is a good feed].

"But I can always remember going down to the River [Mississippi], right behind Sherwood's Farm or down to where Little Elk [River] came into the Mississippi, above the dam [the Little Falls Dam]. And uh, oh God... we got everything there!

We caught walleyes, we got northerns. We got bass, we got crappies, we got sunfish... we caught everything there. And we used to go down there fishing, (on the side where the granite's sticking in the water... you know, how the ledge is? Where you took the picture...?"

[Dad was helping me at this point; trying to get me to visualise the stretch of riverfront he was talking about in my mind...]

[On today's trip up to our cabin in Pequot Lakes, we took the opportunity and stopped off in Little Falls Minnesota. I had not been there with my father for years. The state highway route had been changed to bypass Little Falls completely; so it was quite exciting to go back and visit the Mississippi River hangout with Dad. Every time we visit a place where my dad used to spend his childhood days, his eyes always light up like a little boy's and he gets really wound up. I love seeing him when he is in one of those moods.

On our journey to the cabin, we also went to our family's old residencies in the town of Little Falls. At one of the houses, there still stood an old red manual water pump and a long forgotten green shed in the backyard, built by great-grandfather John F. (Marcienkewicz) Miller.

We also drove past my Dad's old hang out places in town and down to the dam on the Mississippi River. I couldn't believe how large the slates of granite were along the riverbank; each piece was rectangular, roughly 4ft – 6ft (1.22m – 1.82m) in either direction, and was at least eighteen inches thick. These cut pieces of rock appeared as if they had crashed into the river's edge with tremendous force, creating a jutting ledge for fishermen to cast off of while fishing the river. It was these slabs of rock ledges my father was referring to.]

BP: "Crayfish just love it [these slates of granite overhanging the water's edge]. You'd look down there and the whole side of the granite [beneath the surface of the Mississippi] was just covered with crayfish... little crayfish, like this you know.

[Bill Peckels held up his right hand showing five thick carpenter's fingers; distancing his thumb and forefinger a few inches from one another. He displayed the size of the crayfish for my visual benefit.]

My dad and my uncle [Arganius Peckels and Les Sherwood] would go down there (into the water where the crayfish were hiding), and would go underneath 'em...

[Bill used both hand this time to show me how they caught crayfish. He set down his coffee mug and stood up. Then he bent over at an angle and with a quick repetitive scooping movement of both arms, he was slopping up imaginary crayfish and water onto the granite slates].

"And... BANG!"

"They'd throw them [the crayfish] up on top of the rocks up there, (you know like the rock that we were standing on [earlier that same day]), all these little crayfish were all over... Oh!"

[My dad was definitely getting into this story, his eyes always seem to light up when telling stories from his childhood; especially about his parents... he looked like an excited little kid who was about to go fishing!]

'Put 'em on your hook!' You know! And their pinchers are so small, they can't hurt you... 'Put 'em on your hook!' [A large smile spread across his face.]

"[After hooking the crayfish for bait] you'd throw them out there [casting your line] and... BOOM!"

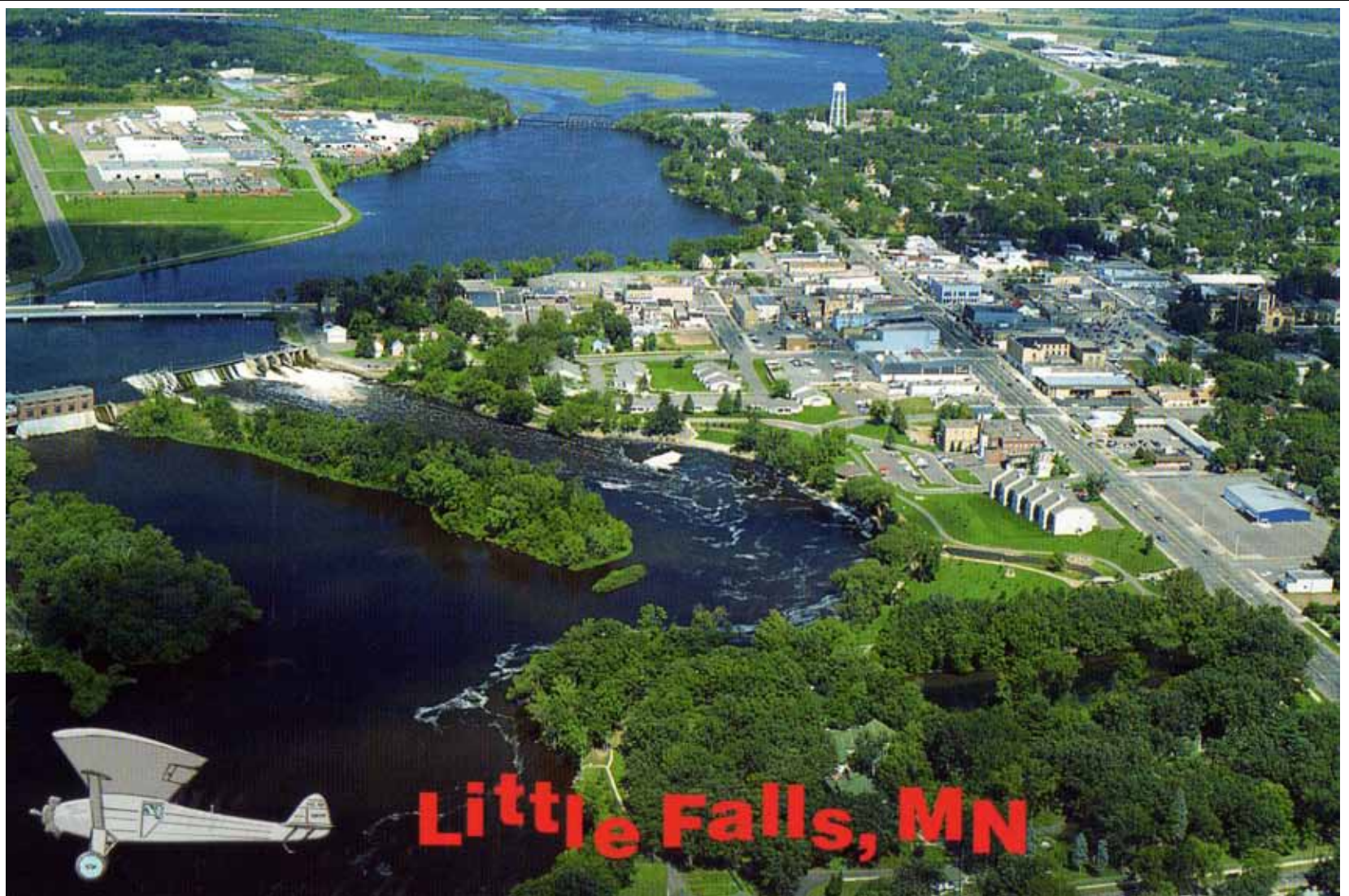
[Bill clapped his hands together, and imitated the sound a bobber makes when a sharp bite on the line takes the bobber under the water!]

"Boy, they would jump! BOOM! BOOM! BOOM!"

"When the sunfish were out there... we pounded 'em!"

"And then, for bait, for uh, other river bait, my cousins had a farm that was right on the river... and they had a low spot on it [their property]. When we were going to go fishing we'd go back there [to the low spot on the farm] with frog boxes and catch about twenty to thirty frogs... you know, put 'em in a box."

"That's what we used for bait!"



LITTLE FALLS, MINNESOTA POSTCARD

(DATE N/A, DJ NORDGREN (NMN, INC. CROSSLAKE, MINNESOTA), POSTCARD, 5" X 7" (12.7CM X 17.78CM))

Little Falls was residence to Camp Ripley, the Minnesota Military Museum, the Minnesota Fishing Museum, and home to pilot Charles A. Lindbergh (home/museum). In its belly runs the Mississippi River and the Little Falls Dam, or better coined: *Little Falls, best dam town in Minnesota*, (Ash 2004, Risjord 2005).

VI. Little Falls imagery

When I was in Minnesota (2006) visiting and interviewing family for this study, I showed an image of Arganius Peckels fishing along the Mississippi River to the Peckels boys (Eddie, Mike and Bill Peckels), but there was a debate amongst my father and his brothers about where the actual image was taken.

My father believed the photograph was taken along the Mississippi near the Little Falls Dam. I asked him if it would be possible for us to drive up to Little Falls from Big Lake (nearly an hour drive along HWY 10), and visit the town and its dam. So we drove to Little Falls early in September 2006, and stopped by the dam. It was obvious from the dam's scenery and its unique bridge design that the photograph was taken near the Little Falls Dam. I brought along my camera for this visit, and took a few photographs of the Little Falls area and its dam.

After I got the film developed I realised that I was not just taking photographs of a place my family knew, I actually documented the interview later recorded that night with my father. The images and narrative became inseparable and have been included in this chapter. I was so thankful for the recorded session with my father, it seemed like one of those lucky moments that I will always have with me, and had the opportunity to share it with others.

The first of four images is a panoramic view from the right-hand side of the Little Falls dam (Image I: Little Falls Series); it is the perspective of the countless granite slabs mentioned in the interview with Bill Peckels (2006). This outlook on the scenery gives each reader a chance to see the dam from the same perspective of local fishermen who frequent this fishing-hole; such the Peckels family.

The day was overcast when this photograph was taken. There was a distinct cool and crisp snap to the wind that blew off the Mississippi River water, as autumn had just begun to blanket the Minnesota skies. The water was low at the dam, in the fall months, the Mississippi River lowers significantly, and in the spring, when all the snow melts, it roars through the passages of the Little Falls Dam.

The second image is a magnified view of the granite-slab-fishing-point (Image II: Little Falls Series). One can envisage the water and crayfish once thrown onto this surface by Peckels boys, sloshing across the angled plane... water and slippery translucent freshwater crayfish sliding off of the proud and sturdy surface back into the dark Mississippi depths.

The third photograph was taken of Arganius Peckels near the dam in Little Falls. This photo was the image up for debate amongst the Peckels boys. If one were to look closely, the unmistakable protruding man-made geometric design of the dam walls and suspended cable-bridge are evident visual connectors to the Little Falls Dam, detectable in the background of this image.

Arganius Peckels appeared quite comfortable and relaxed, (calm facial expression and loose body-positioning), as if surrounded by a familiar atmosphere near the Mississippi River and Little Falls Dam. His expression would suggest this was one of many visits made to this location, as described by my father (2006). But this image alone is not enough for this particular chapter; a visual connection over time was captured by a photograph taken nearly forty years after this particular picture...

The final picture shows Bill Peckels positioned on the massive jutting pieces of rock (Image III: Little Falls Series); there he stood with his daughter at the base of the dam; a place nearby his childhood fishing hole. The most intriguing part of this photograph was its background imagery; Bill Peckels stood across from the location of his father, Arganius Peckels, in a photo taken over fifty years earlier.

He was so proud to show his daughter the old stomping grounds. I could imagine as he ventured with the Peckels siblings and his father along the Little Falls banks of the Mississippi... The combination of these four photographs allowed each reader/viewer the opportunity to experience images that surpass time and unlock an intangible heritage.

This intangible history recorded now has placed the Peckels family along the Mississippi River within the boundaries of Minnesota. The town of Little Falls (Morrison County) was where Arganius and Jeanette Peckels married (June 17, 1940).

Frequent visits to the Miller family in the Little Falls area were a usual occurrence during the Peckels clan's younger years. Fishing played an essential role in these visits for Bill Peckels, and continued to replay in his memories and dreams, as vividly described above. The photos intimately bonds Peckels to place, to an intangible past and to his father.

When Bill Peckels reflected on his life as young man he recalled the moments in Little Falls Minnesota along the Mississippi River. The Mississippi River was more than a place to fish; it was a place where Peckels could dream of his childhood and family. The images assist the reader in envisioning Arganius Peckels along the riverbank, a pictorial heritage wrapped in narrative.

Bill Peckels connected the Little Falls Dam to his father and to his childhood. The combination of the above photographs allows the reader an intimate panoramic view of the Little Falls Dam along the Mississippi River, once possible only within the depths of dreams belonging to Bill Peckels, now captured in text for generations to enwrap themselves.

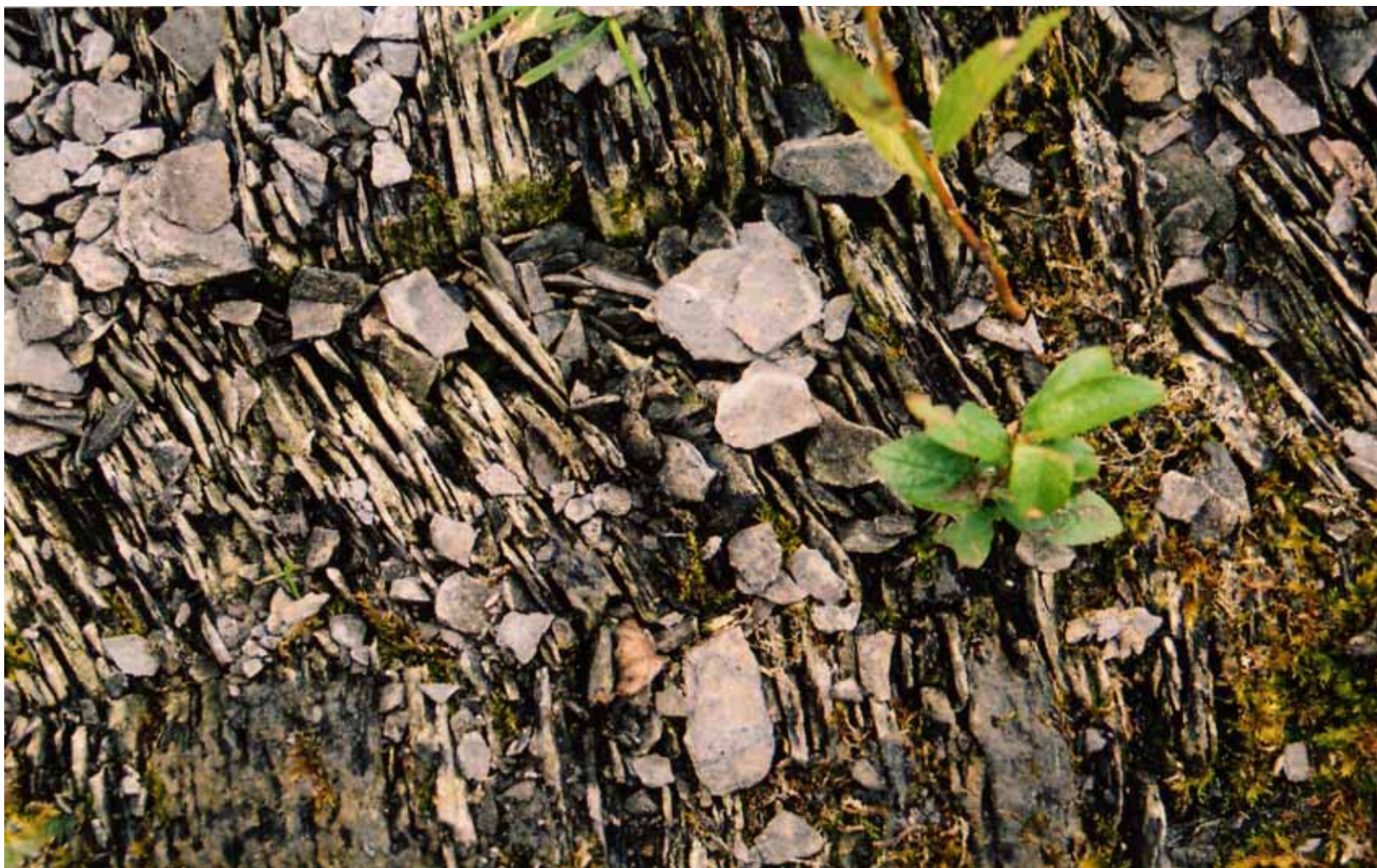


LITTLE FALLS, MINNESOTA

(2006, AJ PECKELS, PHOTOGRAPH, 4" X 6" (10.16CM X 15.25CM))

IMAGE I: LITTLE FALLS SERIES

The first of four images is a panoramic view from the right-hand side of the Little Falls dam; it is the perspective of the countless granite slabs mentioned in the interview with Bill Peckels (2006). This outlook on the scenery gives each reader a chance to see the dam from the same perspective of local fishermen who frequent this fishing-hole; such the Peckels family.



LITTLE FALLS, MINNESOTA

(2006, AJ PECKELS, PHOTOGRAPH, 4" X 6" (10.16CM X 15.25CM))

IMAGE II: LITTLE FALLS SERIES

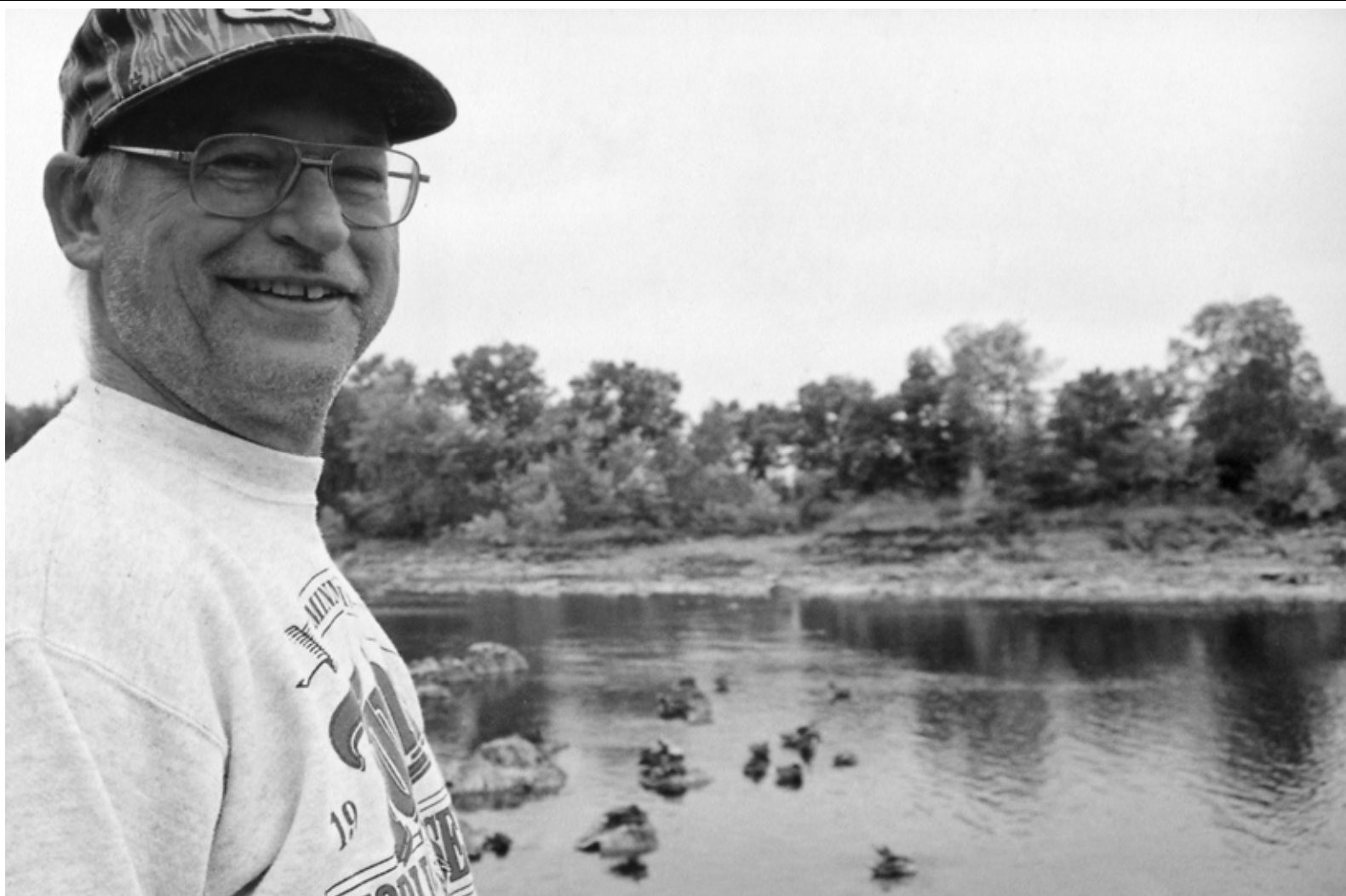
The second image is a magnified view of the granite-slab-fishing-point. One can envisage the water and crayfish once thrown onto this surface by Peckels boys, sloshing across the angled plane... water and slippery translucent freshwater crayfish sliding off of the proud and sturdy surface back into the dark Mississippi depths.



LITTLE FALLS, MINNESOTA
(CA. 1950s, PHOTOGRAPH, 3" X 2"
(7.62CM X 5.08CM))

IMAGE III: LITTLE FALLS SERIES

ARGANIUS PECKELS FISHING ALONG
THE MISSISSIPPI RIVER



LITTLE FALLS, MINNESOTA

(2006, AJ PECKELS, PHOTOGRAPH, 4" X 6" (10.16CM X 15.25CM))

IMAGE IV: LITTLE FALLS SERIES

The final picture shows Bill Peckels positioned on the massive jutting pieces of rock; there he stood with his daughter at the base of the dam; a place nearby his childhood fishing hole. The most intriguing part of this photograph was its background imagery; Bill Peckels stood across from the location of his father, Arganius Peckels, in a photo taken over fifty years earlier.

VII. An intangible heritage in written format

It has been said that:

The fate and survival of a person's culture is in his or her own heart and soul, and if individuals are not prepared to make the time to protect their own culture, they cannot expect others to do so... (Carmichael, Hubert, Reeves, and Scanche 1994, p216)

As read in the (above) interview with Bill Peckels, there was such an enthusiasm attached to his memories of the Mississippi River in Little Falls, it was necessary to include an exclusive series of photographs which portray a clan's connection to place, and place to object.

Throughout the chapter, themes and ideas were expressed by Anderson (1997), the idea of inclusive heritage: incorporating a private history in a public accessible history, was supported by integrating private interviews and public information in one body of written work. This method of writing allowed each reader outside (general/assumed) and inside (personal) views of history. Special private objects were applied to support the inclusive approach to writing in this chapter; these objects are of intangible and pictorial heritage-design.

The approach to this chapter embraced above terminology and methodology in order to place both the narrator and reader within a narrative embracing past and childhood along the Mississippi River. The river then transforms from object to an invisible intimate space shared by Bill Peckels and his father, Arganius Peckels. This method successfully blended local history to inclusive heritage in order to provide a unique insight to the waters that flow through the state of Minnesota.

The era explored in the interview is precious to Bill Peckels (and his family) and there was a distinct correlation in the reading to fishing the Mississippi River. The series of photographs exposed a deeper meaning than just an association to the Mississippi River and its endless possibilities and activities; there was a connection to family and heritage indescribable to any except this Minnesota family.



MINNEAPOLIS, MINNESOTA

**(CA. 1960, PHOTOGRAPH,
3" X 3" (7.62CM X 7.62CM))**

BILL PECKELS

**KD: "...Billy, the animal-lover,
the fisher, the hunter... ever
since he was little. I can
remember he'd take corn or
bread-balls down to the lake or
creek [Shingle Creek in
Minneapolis] and fish. He'd
come home and his nose would
be sunburned, you know? Just
peeling after peeling..."**

**AJP: 'He said [referring to Bill]
he could picture himself
floating down the Mississippi
River, whistling to the tune of
Popeye...'**

**[Kathy giggled and looked
closer at the photograph...]**

**KD: "Oh really?" [She laughed.]
(Excerpt from interview with
Kathy DuBois, 2006)**

VIII. Minnesota Wild Series

The *Minnesota Wild Series* consists on three prints: *Walleye*, *Painted Turtle*, and *Loon*. All three animals rely on Minnesota waters and have been carved into watery scenes. The bodies of the fish, bird and turtle have been lengthened and shaped in accordance to the square linoleum; shaping each image to fit poetically into their given spaces. Their names have also been etched into the images.

First, I chose to display a walleye, as a majority of my childhood memories along Minnesota shores take place with a fishing pole and bait bucket in tow; fishing with the family. To me, fishing was how I got to spend time with my father and his brothers. The Peckels boys are always going on fishing and hunting expeditions. I went pheasant hunting one time and decided it was not for me; thus choosing a fish to connect me and my family to the waterways in Minnesota.

The *Walleye* displayed large sharp teeth, which these fish do possess, but not to the dramatic measures shown in the print. I wanted to show that this animal, no matter how distorted (teeth, body length and extended fins), is still a fish, so I emphasised the scales on its body. The water then swirls around both the fish and its name in order to trap the moving animal in motion on this particular piece of art. The same walleye depiction was also applied in the *Nowiny Minnesokie* print (discussed in Chapter two).

There are so many species of turtles in Minnesota it was difficult to decide to which to portray in the second image. Snapping turtles, mud turtles and painted turtles stood out the most in my memory bank when deciding upon a turtle to incorporate into this series.

While driving to/from high school during the spring months in Big Lake, painted turtles (occasionally snapping turtles) would cross the road to lay eggs; I would make my sister Sophia Peckels get out of the car (I was the driver) and help the turtles cross the road. By the time I finished high school, there were less turtles crossing the road, which was extremely

disappointing as I believe the decline in turtle movement was due to new housing developments built near waterways and the increase of cars driving along the lakeside roads; there were so many dead turtles.

I could never shake the sadness surrounding the loss of all of the wild life along the roads in Big Lake; thus I chose to portray the painted turtle in my *Minnesota Wild Series*. The painted turtle is covered with bright linear patterns that draw through face legs and shell. Unfortunately, the red and yellow colour in the lines that paint across its face and legs are not visible in the print. As the turtle is portrayed underwater, these colours would have been saturated by the green-blue waters anyway, so the image worked out well overall.

The final image in this trio series is a loon. The word *loon* is of Norwegian origin and means "...wild, sad cry," (Ash 2004, p14). Loons are the state bird of Minnesota and can be found on coffee mugs, postcards, shot glasses, and so on throughout shops in Minnesota. The reason I included the loon, however, is not because of its status in Minnesota, but all of the memories I have of Minnesota waters and the ever-present loon gracefully swimming above and below their surfaces.

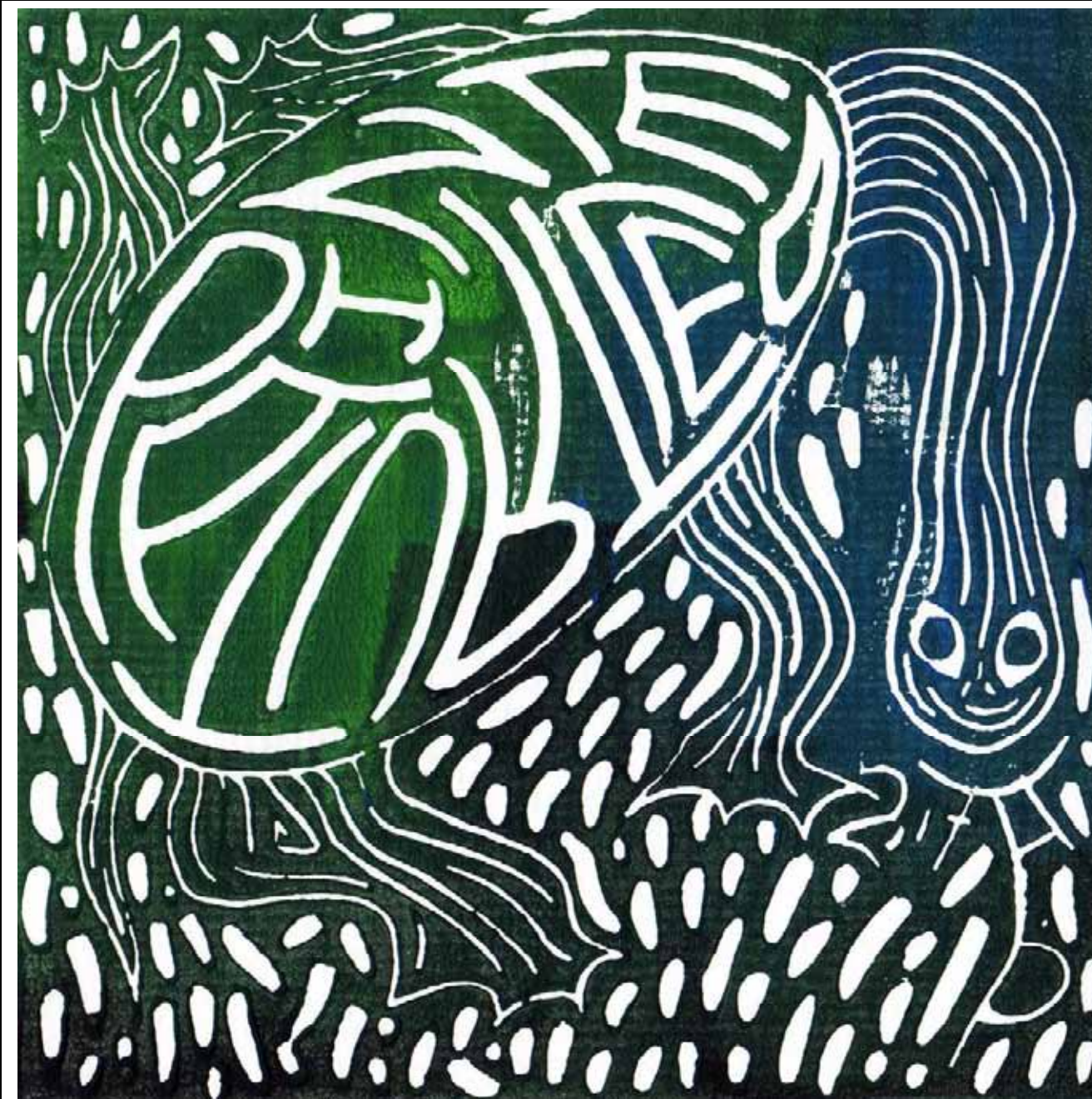
While out in my father's fishing boat, especially towards the end of the day, we could often hear loon cries echo across the lake. I never had the chance to see a loon up-close as they tend to avoid boats, until I visited friends with the Ketter family up north early one summer. I was riding a skidoo out on the lake with one of the Ketter crew, and came across a mother loon with three or four loon hatchlings swimming around and clambering over their mother's back; they would dive off into the water, swim beneath the mother and resurface on the other side. We kept our distance and watched in silence.

Loons can hold their breath and swim short distances beneath the waters; I chose to portray this loon doing just that in the print. Their feathers are bold black and whites, their eyes a piercing red and cries echo across lakes during early morning and dusk hours. The red over the loon's face and beak symbolises their eye colour as the loon swims open-eyed in a circle within the image.



MINNESOTA WILD SERIES-
WALLEYE

(2007, AJ PECKELS,
LINOLEUM CUT, 4" X 4"
(10.16CM X 10.16CM))



MINNESOTA WILD SERIES-
PAINTED TURTLE

(2007, AJ PECKELS,
LINOLEUM CUT, 4" X 4"
(10.16CM X 10.16CM))



MINNESOTA WILD SERIES-
LOON

(2007, AJ PECKELS,
LINOLEUM CUT, 4" X 4"
(10.16CM X 10.16CM))

IX. Beyond imagery and folklore

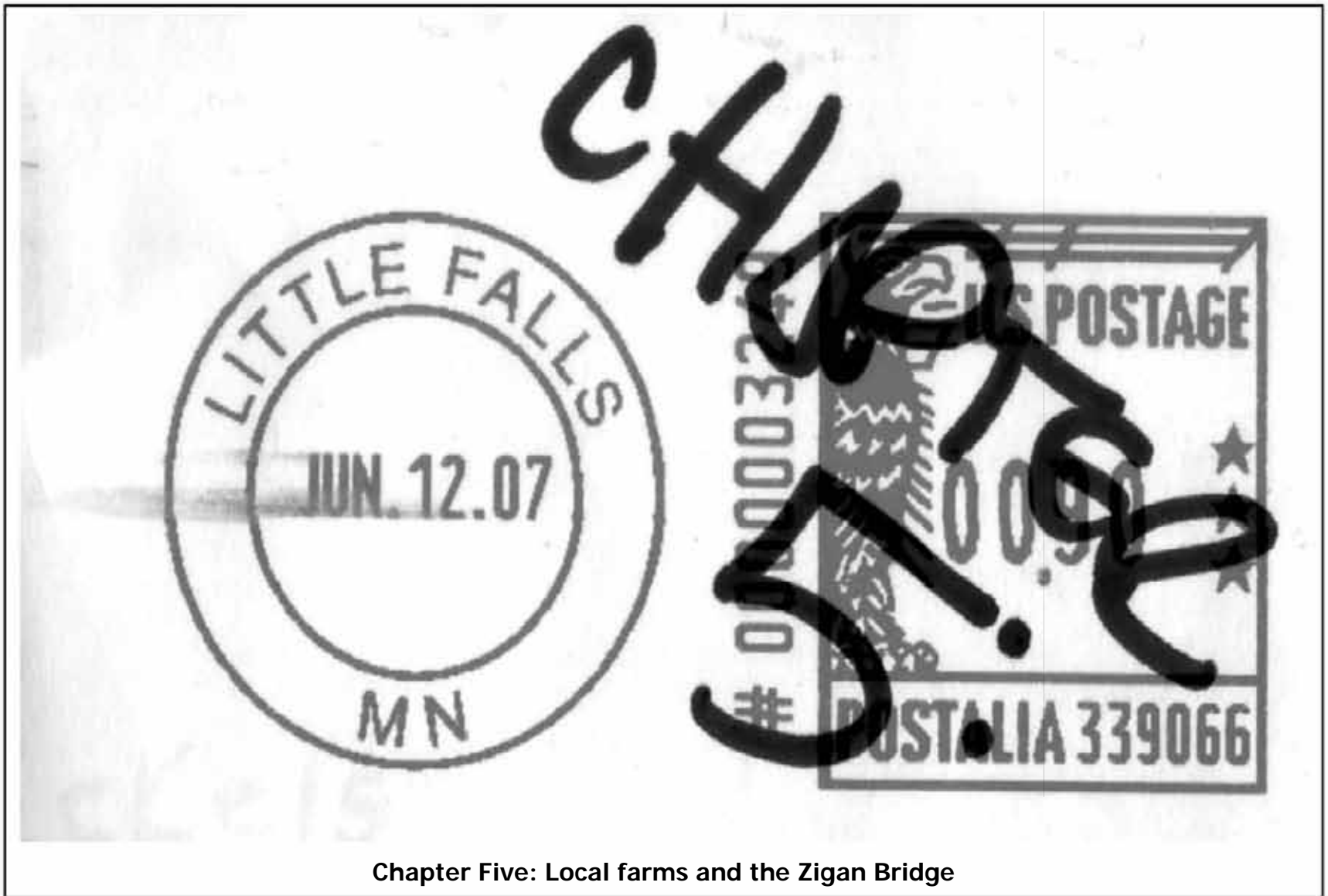
My father and his family have had a personal connection to the Mississippi River. This locale is not the only place fished by Bill and the Peckels/Miller clan, but while in Minnesota gathering research, the place resonated with recalls of the past. The Mississippi River plays a role in recalling the past within the Peckels family, and their stories have been shared in this chapter. Bill Peckels has shared an intangible history and it has been put forth with photographs; the images come to life.

When we stopped in at Little Falls and the dam, my father spoke wildly of his family and the fun and trouble they got into as children visiting the region and their family. I could sense the happiness surging forth from my father as he told me stories he recalled about Little Falls Minnesota.

When my father, or any of his brothers and sisters told stories about their past, their demeanour changed. It is difficult to describe, but during interview sessions it was obvious they were not just telling stories, but my aunts and uncles were re-living these events in their minds and expressing themselves visually with motions and even acted out certain portions of their memories brought-to-life.

By putting myself in my father's shoes and stood across the river where my grandfather once fished; I understood at once the importance of the Little Falls Dam and its personal attachments to Bill and the Peckels/Miller families. The aged black and white portrait of my old man sitting on the front lawn, whistling away, is the image that comes to mind when I listen to him tells me stories about the Mississippi River and the Little Falls Dam. I picture him and I can only imagine my grandfather teaching him everything he knew about fishing; the fishing techniques my father once taught to my sisters and me.

This chapter has carried me back in time to my father's childhood and has given me a new appreciation to the Mississippi River and its surrounding lakes, which were ploughed into the ground by Paul Bunyan and his blue ox pet Babe, so many years ago. These Minnesota memories are a true inside history of the regions waterways.



Chapter Five: Local farms and the Zigan Bridge

Chapter Five: Local farms and the Zigan Bridge

The Zigan farm near McGregor Minnesota is host to a bridge originally designed and built by Donald A. Zigan in 1966. This bridge is a perfect yet inadequate mark of life and connection of these people to their farmland. A bridge, a doorway or set of steps are ideal symbols in which people often refer to when connecting the present with the past; the Zigan Bridge, however plain it may appear in a photograph, will never truly portray an intimate connection the Zigan clan share with its surrounding land and waterway.

This wooden passageway on the Zigan Farm has survived unsympathetic Minnesota winters; it was nearly swept away and engulfed by the rising spring river water, losing its floorboards, but never being completely taken by the Wild Rice River. Without the cooperation of the Zigan family, the local history of the land, activities and objects would be lost; these items would merely be shells of the past which would no longer contain intimate knowledge and a personal heritage.

Bachelard wrote:

How concrete everything becomes in the world of the spirit when an object, a mere door, can give images of hesitation, temptation, desire, security, welcome and respect. If one were to give an account of all the doors one would to re-open, one would have to tell the story of one's entire life. (Bachelard 1994, p224)

This chapter allows an intimate view of life on or near farmland in two regions of Minnesota. The first farm story comes from the old Brooklyn Center suburb. Barb Peckels shared her experiences of a life encircled by farm and city and how the places evolved physically and pictorially, but remain the same in her dreams.

The subsequent dreams and memories plummet into the depths of the Wild Rice River which passes through the Zigan farm; the bridge built on Zigan property overlooked these waters and led way into a broad series of narratives. These narratives prove how personal recounts of space can connect its place and people to a local history, and preserve a way of life through an object, such as the Zigan Bridge.



COON RAPIDS, MINNESOTA

(2005, AJ PECKELS, PHOTOGRAPH 8" X 10" (20.32CM X 25.4CM))

BACK ROW: (left to right) BILL ZIGAN, DON ZIGAN, AND ROBERT ZIGAN

FRONT ROW: (left to right) BARB PECKELS, DONALD A. ZIGAN, CHERYL ZIGAN

I. Zigan Bridge

Once a year, every year, for as long as I can remember, my family and I would travel to McGregor Minnesota and visit the Zigan farm. Each summer Father's Day weekend was designated to spend with Grandpa Zigan and his family. Most of the time we spent at the farm was hanging out with our family outside: four-wheeling, walking to the gravel pit in search of agates, jumping on a gigantic trampoline, and catching crayfish or cast-fishing off of the Zigan Bridge along Wild Rice River.

During these visits, the Zigan family would share stories from the past, eat and drink and laugh for a whole weekend. These weekends are the fondest memories I hold with the Zigan family. I only have two photographs I carry with me from all of the time we spent there; one with my father, Bill Peckels, and little sister, Sophia Peckels, and the other of my cousin Mallory Zigan and I sitting on the Zigan Bridge.

Most of my time was spent fishing the waters, with my cousin Mallory Zigan. We were never hard to find, as we always seemed to be on a mission to catch the biggest Northern Pike in the river! I painted the *Zigan Bridge* image from memory. The trees in the representation were placed in approximate locations, as we often climbed their branches to retrieve wild lure castings. As we grew, we became quite good fishermen; we could cast adeptly through the branches and miss all the rocks and weeds along the river banks, although we never caught the biggest fish.

I have not been to the Zigan Farm for over eight years. I did visit the Farm once was during the autumn months with my father and uncles, they were pheasant hunting. It was this trip that was one of my most memorable, as it was so different to the others: it was quiet; we spent most of our time indoors if we were not hunting the fields, and my Grandfather was not there. He always seemed our reason to be there; celebrate his birthday and Father's Day all at the same time. It was his weekend and we shared it with him, as a whole family. This visit seemed the easiest to illustrate as there was no one around to include in my image; the fields were empty, there were no trampolines in the yard, no kids arguing over fishing poles or bait, no dirt bikes or four-wheelers to tear up the terrain... It was peaceful. I painted this fall scenery into my image of the Zigan Bridge.



ZIGAN BRIDGE

(2007, AJ PECKELS, MULTI-MEDIUM (TEMPERA PAINT, INK, WATERCOLOURS), 8" X 10" (20.32CM X 25.4CM))

II. Bonanza farms in Minnesota

The Minnesota landscape has been farmed prior to, and since its statehood in 1868. In 1862, the United States established a new act, in order to promote migrants to settle newly established states, (such as Minnesota); this decree was called the 1862 Homestead Act.

This bill allowed families to care for one hundred and sixty acres of land over a set period of time (TMHS 2003a). It was the Minneapolis mills attributed to the vast wheat fields that were introduced throughout the State by the late 1870s (Risjord 2005). Because Minnesota land had such fertile soil other crops also became quite popular and were farmed throughout the states, such as corn and green peas (Ash 2004).

The Earl Brown farm in Brooklyn Center Minnesota, now one of Minnesota's historical sites, once neighbored the Zigan home. This farm soon disappeared, as did many other farms throughout the state, to make way for Minnesota's growing population. The Zigan family was fortunate enough to enjoy the old Earl Brown farm and its neighbors before the community was replaced by an interstate highway.

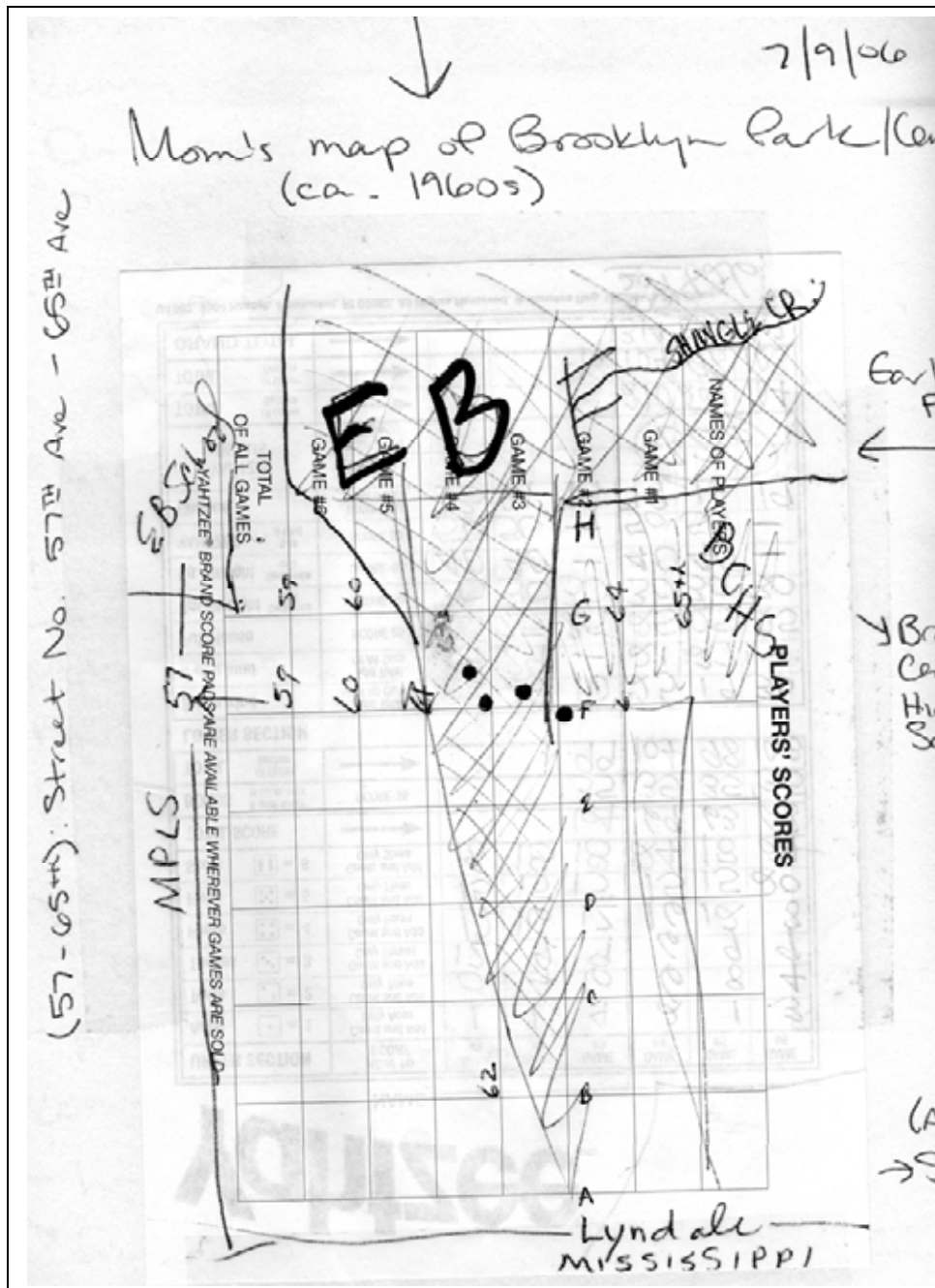
The Zigan home was located in the metro-suburb of Brooklyn Center Minnesota. Their house was surrounded by empty neighborhood plots where houses were to be built and they bordered the Earl Brown Farm, (a now famous Minnesota farmhouse in the centre of the booming Brooklyn Center business district, directly off of Interstate Highway 94). Later on, the Zigan house was purchased and relocated into a community in the State of Wisconsin, as a major highway was to be built in its place. There were three Zigan boys and three Zigan girls living in their Brooklyn Center home, who lived with, for a majority of their father Donald A. Zigan.

Barb Peckels, while interviewed at her house in Big Lake Minnesota, took the time after the recorded session to draw a map and write out some facts about her life in Brooklyn Center. The following are her written words map; imagery she recalled from her memories and dreams of a place that no longer exists as it once was when she was a child.



ITASCA STATE PARK,
MINNESOTA
(CA. 1954, PHOTOGRAPH,
3" X 2" (7.62CM X 5.08CM))

ADELLE DECHEINE HOLDING
BARB PECKELS, DON AND
BILL ZIGAN



Note from Barb Peckels (September 7, 2006)

6324 Fremont Avenue-

We moved in the house in Brooklyn Center when I was five days old. October 10, 1953. (I was born in St. Paul). I believe our house was the first one built and bought in our neighborhood.

Brooklyn Center grew up around me. I was pretty much raised a farm girl (turned city [girl] within years). Brooklyn Center was a growing town! We grew up together, with my music...

III. The Earl Brown field: Brooklyn Center of the past

The Zigan home situated in old Brooklyn Center, Minnesota, (a community just north of Minneapolis), was surrounded by farmland for years. The Zigan kids got to experience both, farm and city living, simultaneously. It has been said that: "The telling never ends. For the storyteller, there is always one more text to be revealed... one more story to be told: 'a story not of a beginning or an end, but marking only a position on the spiral,'" (Knudsen 2004, p32, Grace p180). The following interview with Barb Peckels described such a life.

Interview with Barb Peckels (September 2006)

AJP: 'Where did you grow up?'

BP: "Brooklyn Center."

AJP: 'What was your address?'

BP: "6324 Fremont Avenue North."

AJP: 'Does that address still exist?'



LEFT: BROOKLYN CENTER, MINNESOTA
(CA. 1957, PHOTOGRAPH, 3" X 2" (7.62CM X 5.08CM))
BARBARA J PECKELS

RIGHT: BROOKLYN CENTER, MINNESOTA
(CA. 1959, PHOTOGRAPH, 2.5" X 2.5" (6.35CM X 6.35CM))
LEFT TO RIGHT: MARY KAY ZIGAN AND BARB PECKELS

BP: "No... because the freeway took the house and... actually, somebody bought it and moved to Osceola Wisconsin."

AJP: 'How old were you when the house was bought?'

BP: "I was moved out. Yep. [It was] after my first trip to Australia, [the house] was gone (shortly there after...)"

AJP: 'What year [did the house get moved out-of-state]?'

BP: "1973, 1974... it left... Grandpa [Zigan, my grandfather, her father] would know better because he was in the house and he had to move. I wasn't [living] there..."

[Grandpa Zigan confirmed that the house was moved for Interstate Highway 94 to be constructed in 1977 or 1978 while in conversation over the phone with me in April, 2007.]

AJP: 'Were there farms around you [your house] in Brooklyn Center, [referring to the time period prior to the Interstate Highway construction in the mid to late 1970s]?'

BP: "Yep. When we moved there [to Brooklyn Center], there was a farmer next to us with a cornfield... which I got lost in when I was little... only once. Never went in it again... I don't know how old I was, all I know is I was little and I went into the cornfield, (I was told *not* to go into the cornfield)! Well, you go in the cornfield..."

[Mom and I began to laugh at this point in the taped sitting. Throughout the plethora of interview sessions conducted with my parents, aunts and uncles, a pattern became obvious at this point: everything my grandparents told all of their children *not* to do; the Peckels and Zigan kids did anyway... I believe this trend would continue with their own children (my generation), and someday amongst my own children...]

BP: "And once you get into the [corn] stocks far enough, you can't see anything!"

AJP: 'Were you with anyone else?'

BP: "No... I was just by myself. I was probably chasing something... the animal-freak [Barb, in other words, is fond of caring for and playing with animals] I am..."

AJP: 'How long were you stuck in there, [in amongst the corn stocks]?'

BP: "I don't know... it seemed like an eternity when you're little. It was like a maze, and I couldn't get out! When I [eventually] got out, I never went back in it again. The cornfield was as wide as the freeway, [referring here to the Interstate Highway 94 that was built over the neighborhood where my mother grew up], it was a big-ass cornfield! [Barb began to laugh again.] Yeah... yep."

"[The cornfield], it was right on the other side of the driveway. And umm... we called the farmer 'Grumpy' because he always got mad at us and he always yelled at us if we went through his yard.

"But we had to walk to grade school, and that was probably half a mile away, or whatever. And we'd walk through the yard sometimes and he'd be a yeller.

"The other farm that was next to us was Earl Brown Farm. It was a *huge* farm. We used to climb the fences and go to the barns and look at the sheep and the cows, and whatever we could before we got yelled at and had to leave."

AJP: 'That's the only [remaining] farm in Brooklyn Center now, isn't it?'

BP: "I think so, yeah. I think the University of Minnesota had something to do with it; restored part of it. Now it's a convention center or something. Earl Brown, yep..."

"I used to catch mice and bring them home, you know? Take off my shoes and put them, (the mom and the baby mice), in my shoe. Bring them home; my mom hated it.

"I remember I brought a nest [of mice] home, and had to put them outside. I put the nest in a little fruit jar and stuck it in the bushes. [I] went to school the next day, came home, and there were just bird feathers there. I think a bird ate them."



BROOKLYN CENTER, MINNESOTA

(CA. 1963, PHOTOGRAPH 1" X 1" (2.54CM X 2.54CM))

ZIGAN SIBLINGS

**LEFT TO RIGHT: CHERYL ZIGAN, BARB PECKELS, DON ZIGAN,
MARY KAY ZIGAN, ROB ZIGAN**



SYDNEY, AUSTRALIA

(CA. 1972, PHOTOGRAPH 3" X 3" (7.62CM X 7.62CM))

LEFT TO RIGHT: BARB PECKELS. TERRI TOMBERS. RANDY JOHNSON

JUN • 68



BROOKLYN CENTER, MINNESOTA
(1968, PHOTOGRAPH, 2.5" X 2.5"
(6.35CM X 6.35CM))

MARY KAY ZIGAN WITH HER RABBITS

"...Mary Kay liked to draw; she liked puzzles. I don't like puzzles... And later in life we'd buy ceramics and paint them.

"She painted a great big tiger (about a three foot [in length] tiger); that was really cool. She painted my Buddha [statue]. She didn't have much. She was a wildlife nut too [both Barb and Mary Kay cared for animals]...

"[She] raised rabbits for my uncle though, to eat. [Mary Kay] managed a pet shop at Shopper City (old store... 1960s)..." (Excerpt from interview with Barb Peckels, 2006)

IV. A place that exists only in dreams

There are only bits and pieces and dreams of life within the Brooklyn Center home. As explained briefly above, the land where the Zigan home and surrounding homes were built on was sold to the State of Minnesota and the Interstate Highway 94 took their place.

The only remaining familiar site to the Zigan children is the Earl Brown red barn, distractedly located in amongst the Brooklyn Center business district. The map provided by Barb Peckels is quite rough and one could say has been drawn through the inner child of Barb Peckels, recalling a place that no longer exists, a dream place.

Asking a child to draw his house is asking him to reveal the deepest dream shelter he has found for his happiness. If he is happy, he will succeed in drawing a snug house which will be built on deeply-rooted foundations... it is warm indoors, and there is a fire burning, such a big fire, in fact, that it can be seen coming out of the chimney.

(Bachelard 1994, p72, Balif 1949, p137)

Donald Zigan, father of the Zigan siblings, spoke of his life as a young man; this epoch story of origins place Donald Zigan and his ancestors in amongst other Polish and German migrant settlers new to the Minnesota region.

I recorded Grandpa Zigan at Billy and Karen Zigan's house in September 2006. My mother and father (Barb and Bill Peckels) listened alongside my eldest sister (Maria-Kay), one of my nieces (Ariyana), and the occasional check-in of my Grandmother, Mary Zigan. Grandpa boldly spoke of his life up to the time he became a family man and moved into the Brooklyn Center area.

I was very lucky to get to have this time with my Grandpa, as he was quite the social butterfly at family events. No one told his own story the way he did. My grandfather passed away in August, 2009. He never got to see the completed thesis about our family. I hope that this says it all about Donald A. Zigan; a brave and strong father, husband, brother, uncle, grandfather and great-grandfather.

He was as sharp as a tack when it came to recalling dates and information in the following interview. My grandfather is one of the strongest men I have ever had the pleasure of sharing my childhood experiences with, he's over eighty years young and still chucking along his path of life... did I mention with only half of his heart?

After I visited Minnesota in 2006 I got a phone call from my mother telling me that Grandpa had a heart attack at his home. He did not want to bother my Grandmother, who was out running errands, so he waited nearly four hours until she arrived home, at which point they went to the hospital.

Even when I called him at the hospital to see how he was holding up, he was being modest about his condition; needless to say, before the doctors could perform surgery to repair his heart, half of his heart died. My grandpa has not let this condition affect him. He is amazing, and this is his story, told by none better, but himself.

Interview with Donald A. Zigan (September 2006)

DZ: "My mother was born in Long Prairie Minnesota. Grandpa Neumann [her father, my great-great grandfather] came from Germany, and he evidently had money when he came because he bought the farm [located in Browerville Minnesota], in the 1890s, you know? He bought the land, but then he got them to build on it, you know? Right out the back he built a nice house and nice barn, you know?"

Barb P: "Is that where Pete and Ollie lived?"

DZ: "Yeah... He [Great-great Grandfather Neumann] had seven sons and three daughters, [a Catholic family]. Of the seven sons only two married, five were bachelors. One son that married had two daughters, and the other son that married had one daughter and one son. So out of seven boys, there was only one Neumann [to carry on the family name].

"My dad's side [my great-great-grandfather Zigan]... Grandpa Zigan's dad came from Hungary through Poland. He migrated... but I don't know who was first; Grandpa Neumann and Grandpa Zigan... (Great-Great-Grandpa Zigan it would be)...

"You know, that's strange... out of seven sons, one Neumann [there was only one son to carry on the Neumann name]. And he, Uncle Mike [Neumann], worked on Boulder Dam... He [Mike Neumann] left home when he was young, maybe late teenager- eighteen, nineteen or early twenties; he went to Boulder Dam and married a gal, and they moved to the State of Washington.

"And somehow, when he died, when it was his wife, [she] was the only [Neumann] left, you know, and two kids... I don't know who ever kept track of them. You know, they lost touch. So I don't know where he is [buried] or what happened to them...

"Grandpa Zigan [my great-great-grandpa]... all I can remember about him was he had a saw..."

Bill P: "From the mill?" [I was thinking possibly a lumber mill?]

DZ: "No, no... you know... just... [He was having trouble describing this saw owned by his grandfather]

Bill P: "Custom cut lumber, grooming...?"

DZ: "Yep, yep. And Grandma Zigan and her parents [my great-great grandparents] lived out at Pine Island Lake. That's all that I know about them, you know? It's a *long* way back..." [My grandfather casually laughed. I can't believe he knew this information... these people he briefly described would have been the first Zigans in our family to come to Minnesota.]

Bill P: "What was your Grandma's maiden name?"

DZ: "Zigan?"

[Bill Peckels nodded.]

DZ: "[Her maiden name was] Goligowski [Polish]. Grandma Neumann's last name was Schneider [German]."

Bill P: "You were an early leave-homer too, weren't you?" [My dad began to laugh, already knowing the answer...]

DZ: "Uh hmm..."

AJP: 'Didn't you leave at a young age and join the military? You changed your last name [surname] and age didn't you?'

[I didn't realise Grandpa was hesitant to talk about all of this, because he so frequently reminded me of his four years, nine months and twenty-three days he served for the United States as a young man.]

DZ: "Could you repeat the question?" [I coyly repeated myself...]

[Both Grandpa and my dad starting laughing, and Grandpa cast me his classic, loving but angry, eye-squint glance... that's the look I got from him for as long as I can remember.

It means, varying on the occasion of course: 'I'm never playing cribbage with you again, Alesha,' (because I beat him a few times at the game, not to brag, Grandpa). It could also mean, 'Watch your step,' or 'Watch your mouth, Granddaughter...' He'd lean his shoulder-blades into the back of his chair, slowly crossing his arms over his chest. Then his head would slowly creep back and the eye-squints of anger and a gentle smile would spread over his face... every relative of Donald A. Zigan knows this look!]

DZ: "Yes. [He had joined the military at a young age; in fact, he was only sixteen years old.] *Because* I was under-age, [he adjusted the spelling of his surname and his age when applying]... half of my family spelled it [his surname] one way, and half spelled it the other way anyway..."

AJP: 'So, when you joined the military you spelled it [surname] C-Y-G-A-N [instead of Z-I-G-A-N]?'

DZ: "Yes, Cygan, C-Y-G-A-N. I was sixteen. My dad's brother Al and his whole family spelled it [surname] C-Y-G-A-N. (I go visit my first-cousin in Arizona and he's a Cygan, you know?)"

Barb P: "I remember in Browerville [Minnesota], down the road, to the left, of Grandma's [my great-grandma Zigan]... we had cousins over there named C-Y-G-A-N. And we were told, 'They're your cousins, but they spell their name different.' I never got it, you know?"

DZ: "Yeah... yeah. [I think he wanted to get back to his military experience.] So because I was under-age, I just went by the other... spelling and said I was 18.

"I spent four years, nine months and twenty-three days [in the service]... [Didn't I mention that just above?] In 1941, they [the United States government] passed a law [that] you *had to volunteer* a year's service, or they were going to draft you. That was it, you know? If you didn't volunteer for a year, that was it.

"Well, a bunch of us guys belonged to the National Guard in Long Prairie Minnesota. And we were under-age (sixteen, seventeen), you know? Two, three guys from school you know? And other guys from Browerville would go there once a month to meetings, and you got maybe, I don't know, ten dollars a month. There were no jobs or anything, and we were going to school. So that's one of the reasons we went.

"And then in February 1941, our unit was called in the National Guard was called to a term of active-duty (this was before Pearl Harbor). And I could've gotten out of it... all I'd have to say was, 'I'm sixteen, I don't wanna go...' But you have a year to look forward to anyway [once a male turned eighteen after the new law passed in 1941].

"If I get out of this now, when I'm eighteen, they're going to say, 'Hey, you're in for a year!' But that never went very far because war was declared. We were an ANTI-Aircraft Unit on the West Coast [of the United States].

"We were stationed on Treasure Island in the middle of San Francisco Bay on December 7, 1941 when war was declared. I had a friend, and we were in Chinatown in San Francisco when they said, 'Hey! We're at war! Get back to Base!' [Grandpa said these words with a lowered voice, impersonating the fellow who yelled at him and his friend.]

"And uh... we were there on the West Coast for I don't know, probably a year and a half, maybe two years. And then the worry about Japan bombing San Francisco led up and we went back to Kansas (Camp Phillip Kansas). They trained/changed us from and ANTI Aircraft to Infantry.

"We were there for three months or whatever, and we went to Fort Meade Maryland, to go overseas. And [when] we had all of our overseas equipment issued, they (who ever was [in charge] a general), or who it was said, 'Hey! You guys that are Corporals and

Sergeants and Non-Commission Officers, don't have enough infantry training to go overseas!' "The Privates are all in, but I was a Corporal then, and Corporals and Sergeants didn't go [overseas to fight] because we were rookies, you know, in the infantry... So, they sent us back to Texas for more training.

"While we were in Texas for more training, they [military officials] decided that we would be good trainers, so we trained guys in the Infantry. That was our job. We trained guys that were drafted and they'd come, and they'd be with us for seventeen weeks. And then they'd go overseas! Here we were, stuck in Texas... couldn't get out! We volunteered for Paratroopers, *anything* [laughing at himself] to get out of training rookies! So we stayed there [in Texas] until after the war was over in Europe; then, they sent me to Fort Ord California.

"They gave me seventeen days at home between [stays in] Texas and California (Ford Ord, Monterey). When I got to Fort Ord I was there two weeks, and they said, 'You've got enough points to get out,' and I was discharged.

"I should've gone to Europe from Fort Meade... and from Fort Ord to go to the Pacific... both times [my grandfather could've been sent overseas they moved him]..."

Bill P: "You never got out of The States?"

DZ: "Nope. No! I was a Corporal at eighteen. I was a Sergeant... a couple of times!"

AJP: 'What did you do when you got out of the military?'

DZ: "When I first got out... you had (they called it) the 52/20 Club. So for fifty-two weeks you could get twenty dollars a week [from the government for services to the military]. That was your mustering out pay!"

[Both Grandpa and Dad began laughing again.]

DZ: "So every two weeks, we'd go to Long Prairie, get our checks for forty dollars and then we'd meet up with everyone from the service down there [in Long Prairie]... you know? Party and what not... so I didn't do nothing for the first year..."

CERTIFICATE IN LIEU OF LOST OR DESTROYED

Discharge



Department of the Army

This is to certify that

DONALD A CYGAN 20 753 465 Private
Company C 86th Infantry Training Battalion
22nd Infantry Training Regiment

*was separated from the military service
of the United States of America*

by Honorable Discharge

on 7 November 1945

at Camp Roberts California

Given by the Department of the Army,

Washington, D. C., on 13 April 1949

By order of the Secretary of the Army


EDWARD F. WITSELL,
Major General,
The Adjutant General.

THIS CERTIFICATE WAS AUTHORIZED BY THE ACT OF CONGRESS DATED 1 JULY 1902 (32 STAT 629 CHAPTER 1353 USC, SEC 199 TITLE 5).

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DONALD A. CYGAN
PRIVATE: 20 753 465

HONORABLE DISCHARGE:
NOVEMBER 7, 1945
CAMP ROBERTS,
CALIFORNIA USA

[My dad couldn't stop laughing at this point, and I think my grandfather was quite enjoying himself as well.]

DZ: "That's what we... we just laid around and did our 52/20 [laughing a bit too, then]. When that ran out, I went to work where my dad did, at the Browerville Milk-Drying Plant. He [my great-grandfather] was my boss and I didn't like that... [Grandpa cleared his throat and straightened himself up in his chair, as he protested.]

AJP: 'You didn't like that...' [I agreed, matter-of-factly.]

DZ: "It wasn't worth it! Every dirty job there was to do; I was *selected* to do it..."

[My dad was really getting a kick out of this portion of the story and continued to howl with laughter in the background, probably relating with my grandfather. I, however, quite enjoyed working with my dad when I had free-time a couple of summers... I wasn't very good at carpentry, so I was, in fact, left with the clean-up portion of the work for the day. I still enjoyed myself, all the same.]

DZ: "I quit that, went to St. Paul, [and] went to work for a few companies..."

At this point Grandpa Zigan talks about his life after the military, joining various companies throughout the St. Paul metro-area (including a butchers shop, but that didn't last long, as well as all of the other short lived jobs he described). Grandpa Zigan also worked out-of-state for the PT & T Company (Pacific Telephone and Telegraph Co.).

He worked as a lineman, repairing units throughout the States of: Kentucky, California, Nevada, etc. All of these jobs and parts of his life came before he moved into the Brooklyn Center home described briefly above.

Donald A. Zigan lived quite the life before moving to the Brooklyn Center Zigan home, and has lived reasonably well since the house was moved to Wisconsin. He married my grandmother, Mary Zigan, who was just a joy during the time this interview was recorded. She'd breeze in and out of the room, as if she'd heard his stories and knew them inside and out, she would giggle a bit as Grandpa continued... they would do these things quite often when I would come around!



LEFT: BROWERVILLE, MINNESOTA (CA. 1941, PHOTOGRAPH 3" X 2" (7.62CM X 5.08)) – DONALD A. ZIGAN

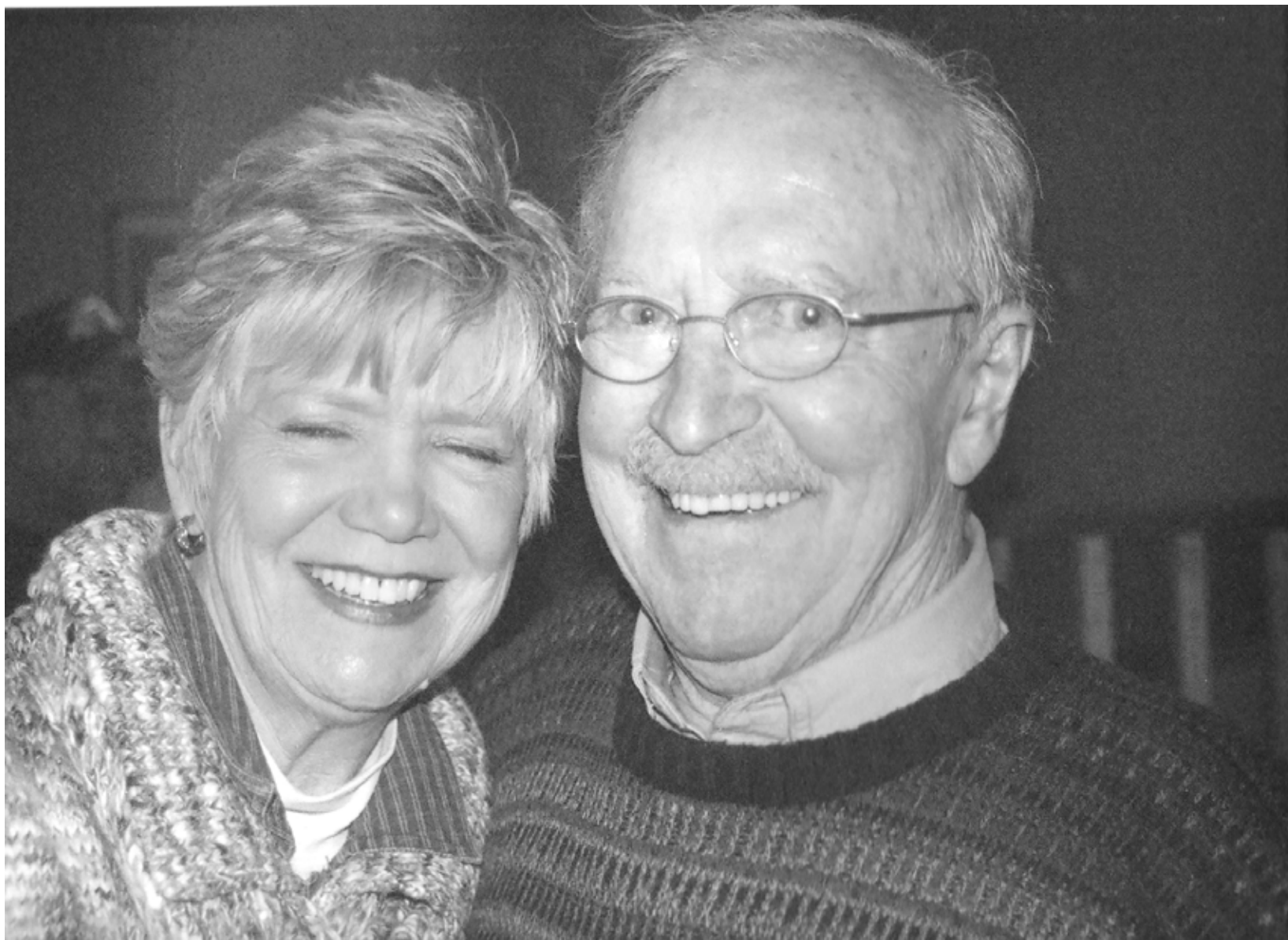
RIGHT: BROOKLYN CENTER, MINNESOTA (CA. 1950s, PHOTOGRAPH 4" X 2.5" (10.16CM X 6.35CM)) – ADELLE AND DON ZIGAN



CENTRAL MINNESOTA

(1974, PHOTOGRAPHS, 6" X 4" (15.24CM X 10.16CM))

MARY AND DONALD A. ZIGAN- WEDDING PHOTOGRAPHS



BIG LAKE, MINNESOTA

(2005, AJ PECKELS, PHOTOGRAPH, 4" X 6" (10.16CM X 15.24CM))

MARY AND DONALD A. ZIGAN

V. Elk River, Minnesota

There is another farm in Minnesota that reminds me of home and family. On the way out of North Minneapolis, as we drive westbound on I94, we pass through Brooklyn Centre, along the very highway that replaced my mother's old neighbourhood and the Earl Brown fields she recalls from her past. This interstate highway takes you westbound through Maple Grove and Rogers Minnesota. However, you can catch a bypass off of the I94 that will bring you to a westbound HWY 10.

Coming from our old home on 36th Avenue North, we would to drive west along HWY 10 to Elk River occasionally in autumn. While visiting Elk River, we would pick pumpkins to carve for Halloween at a farm near the Oliver H. Kelley Farm. It was always my favourite time of the year; pumpkin-picking, apple cider, cool air (not too cold thought), my birthday, and Halloween.

When we drove up to Elk River, that to me, was the beginning of fall and Halloween; it meant so much to me picking pumpkins. After we moved to Big Lake in 1997, we often drove back and forth to Minneapolis and passed these farms both ways on every trip; it was like driving by my past:

I went on a haunted hayride for my thirteenth birthday. Picture perfect: warm orange and yellow coloured gourds and corn stocks sprinkled the grounds for Halloween, hot chocolates and apple cider galore, scary costumed creatures jumping from the darkness of undergrowth and grabbing for the group of us hiding on the tractor-pulled trailer... There was a crisp bite to the wind as it leached through my thin layers of clothes: gloves, shirt, sweater, overalls and double-layer of socks.

It was piercing and wintry after the sun set behind the exposed tree branches that look like stretched arms which rake the perfect skyline with their jagged, pointed fingers. Each year, without fail, fall in Minnesota brings me back to the haunted hayride as the autumn months roll through, just like the haystacks on Kelley Farm; one day the stacks appear, and the next they are gone, and it is winter.



ELK RIVER, MINNESOTA

(2006, AJ PECKELS, PHOTOGRAPH 8" X 10" (20.32CM X 25.4CM))

OLIVER H. KELLEY FARM

VI. The Zigan farm, McGregor Minnesota

Before the Brooklyn Center residence of the Zigan family was sold and moved out-of-state, Donald A. Zigan purchased eighty acres of land in northern Minnesota, in 1963. The farmland and house/property are situated just outside of McGregor Minnesota. This property included an on farmhouse that stills stands just within the farm's property line along the highway. The farm spans over eighty acres of land, with the Wild Rice River cutting through it.

There are open fields and wooded areas within the Zigan farm; these areas are hunted by the Zigan boys in the fall of the year for deer. The Wild Rice River runs through the property and is fished by the many of the Zigan family members; these waters give up hearty sized Northern Pikes. The farm was the annual meeting place for the Zigan clan on Father's Day weekend; where everyone gathered to celebrate Donald A. Zigans birthday.

The Zigan Bridge is referenced in the following interviews and letters submitted by various family members. Although this object was merely constructed for functional purposes, an intimate connection emerged and I concluded that the bridge was more than a simple item found on the Zigan farm.

This object symbolised a past lifestyle and a family who have chosen not to let memories slip away and be forgotten beneath the deep crimson slopping waves of the Wild Rice River. The bridge, the river, the land, the farm house and all activities that took place on farm grounds all mean nothing without the Zigan family folklore and local history.

Interview with Barb Peckels (September 2006)

My mom and I were sitting in the garage at the Big Lake house, and I asked her to tell me some of her favourite stories about the Zigan farm. I asked her questions about how the farm came to belong to her family, how big it was, where it was located, and so on. This is what she told me the following:

BP: "My dad's farm, he bought that when I was ten years old, up in... ten miles south of McGregor Minnesota. [It consisted of] eighty acres; Wild Rice River runs through it. And it had an old farm house on it, and a barn, a wood shed, a pump house, a garage and a

sauna. And the whole farm [house] was furnished with dishes, silverware, the wood stove... curtains, beds, everything in the whole place... and he bought it for \$3,500.00 USD in 1963.

"Since then, my brother Robbie and my brother Bill, I think they each bought forty acres next to it [the farm property], so I think all together there's one hundred and sixty acres up there..."

VII. Lead the way home: A passageway to private local history

The following two interviews tell a story of bravery amongst the Zigan family at their farm in McGregor. The first interview took place nearly nine months after the second interview. Both stories reported by family members (Barb Peckels and Donald A. Zigan) tell the reader of how the river running through the farm property and beneath the Zigan Bridge has become a doorway to past and present activities and objects. Wild Rice River, the Zigan Bridge, family dreams; each portal leads the reader back in time to a personal history once known only to the Zigan clan:

While compiling interview materials about the Zigan farm, many Zigan family members referred to memories of Grandpa Zigan's (Donald A. Zigan) heroism; he saved his sons from a sinking man-made raft. I contacted my grandfather while he was away on vacation in Arizona (March 2007) to investigate what happened along the riverbank those years ago, but I left behind my digital voice recorder and was unable to carry out the interview. I asked him if he would think back to that time many years ago, and share it with me over the phone in another conversation; he said he would love to catch up again and tell his story.

Two months later (June 2007), I finally rang him back; my grandfather was ready and waiting to share this time with me. It took him one ring to answer the phone; he knew I would be waiting on the other end of the line. I had to record this conversation on an international dial; Grandpa was at his apartment on Sixth Street in Osseo Minnesota with the time of about 6:45pm on June 11 2007 (early summer, a hot day reaching 80 degrees Fahrenheit), while I was calling from Cairns Queensland at about 9:45am on June 12 2007 (early winter, outside temperature estimated to reach 24 degrees Celsius).

It is perplexing to ring home, knowing its morning here in Cairns and evening there in Minnesota, or vice versa; to comprehend that it is summer there and winter here, long days in Minnesota and shorter days here in Cairns. All of these conditions: thousands of miles/kilometres apart, reverse seasons, several hours' difference/different days, none of these distance markers could keep us apart, my grandfather and I connected on separate parts of the world in two different eras through digital recorder, and now in text. This story is how Donald A. Zigan saved his boys from drowning in the river at their farm property, keep in mind that neither Donald A. Zigan nor Barb Peckels knew how to swim:

i. Interview with Donald A. Zigan (June 2007)

DZ: "This was in 1965, alright; I bought the farm about three or four months before...

"It was a beautiful spring day, and it was the first time that we were really out there when the weather was nice [as the farm was bought during the late winter months of 1963]. The kids didn't know anything about anything up there and neither did I [being in amongst nature during the spring months]."

[Short pause]

DZ: "The river was really high because of the snow melt, but there were still some chunks of ice on it; [the river had risen] way out of its banks and into the field. So Billy [Zigan] and Donnie [Zigan], (Donnie was probably thirteen and Billy was sixteen (and [friend] Skip was the same age as Billy)), were up [at the farm] and they went to the other side of the river.

[The Wild Rice River runs through the farm property (roughly north to south) and intersects with the county road which rides parallel (roughly east to west) to the property boundary. There is a bridge along the county road that crosses the river way. In order to reach the other side of the property (cut off by the river) one can cross the county road bridge [prior to the Zigan-built bridge on the farm property] to access these fields; that is what the boys did in to get to the other side of the river in this instance.]

"They made a raft out of some old rotten logs they found over there [in the field across from the farm house]. They were monkeying-around [*sic*: means amusing themselves, keeping busy] out there all afternoon in the back water [water that had engorged the river

banks and flooded the fields] with this raft; it was fine because there was no current there. But when they decided to come home, instead of walking around the county road over the river, they decided to take this raft they had made down the river.

"And they had poles, push-poles [about ten-foot long each], and they pushed it [navigated the raft down the river]. Then, when they got to the main current of the river, their poles wouldn't even touch the bottom; the water was too deep; there was really a lot of current...

"They were stranded in the middle of the river hanging onto a tree. And Barb [Peckels] yelled and somehow she got my attention. She says "The boys are hanging onto a tree," [or something along those lines]. We had no boat; there was no way to get to them.

"Finally, [after] monkeying-around [I] found a rope. I went across the river and got by the bank; [I thought] I'd throw them this rope, hoping that they could grab that and pull them back towards the shore. Well, as soon as they grabbed the rope, the raft (which was not even big enough for one person), with the [added] pressure on the bottom of the raft when they grabbed the rope, it started sinking. So there they were, with the raft sinking underneath them in the river.

"Billy's up in the tree, Skip swims into shore, and Donnie is going down the river away from the raft. The only thing that I could [at this point]; there was a brush line by the bridge and it went into the water, I went into the water hanging onto this brush and snagged Donnie as he was going to go by: we got back to shore. If he had gone passed us, I don't know... there was no way we could've gotten him. He would've drowned, you know?

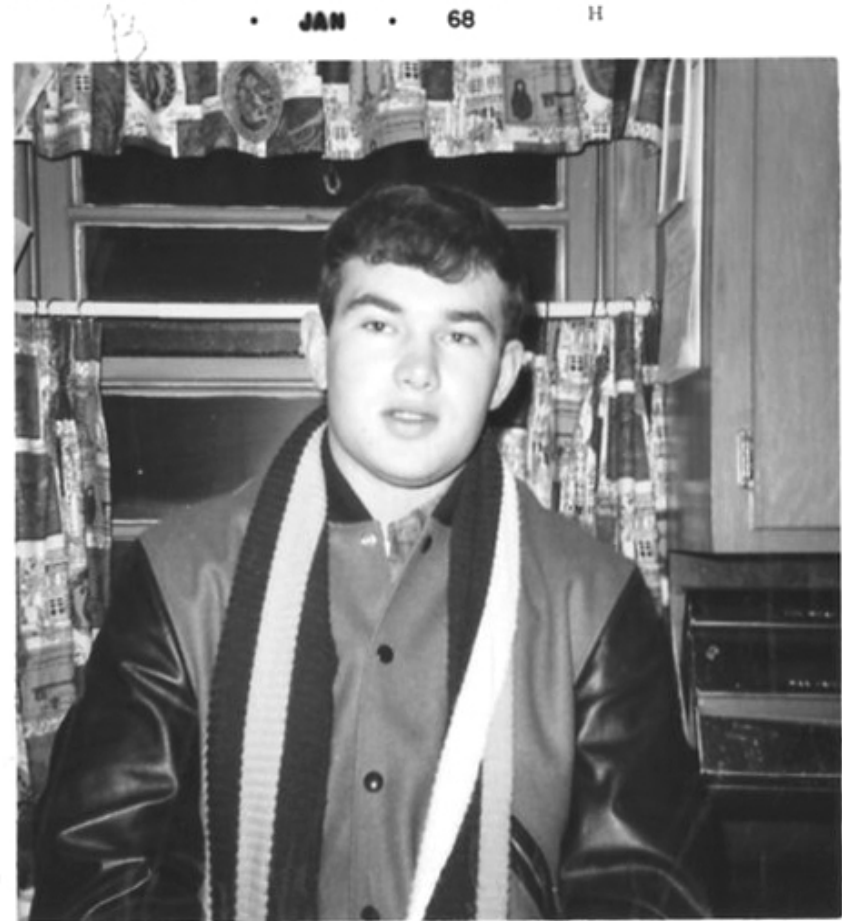
"But we got him back; and my glasses, *oh* [pause], somehow came off while getting him [Donnie Zigan] out of there. And uh, when we walked over the road back to the farm house, I asked him, 'How come he went over there on that dumb raft?' And he said: "Well, it was a short cut, but I found out that the short cut isn't always the right cut." [Grandpa laughed a bit.] That was his big answer.

"And then, uh, a couple of years later, Barb was fishing, and um, she could see my glasses in the river. (They're still in the farm on the mirror over there). She fished them out of the river a few years after that there... That was quite an experience the first spring that we were at the farm; could've lost the boys and all that, but it worked out okay.

"So that's about it."



LEFT: BROOKLYN CENTER, MINNESOTA (CA. 1963, ANNUAL SCHOOL PHOTOGRAPH, 1.5" X 1" (3.81CM X 2.54CM)) – DONNIE ZIGAN



RIGHT: BROOKLYN CENTER, MINNESOTA (1968, PHOTOGRAPH, 3" X 3" (7.62CM X 7.62CM)) – BILLY ZIGAN

The boys lives were not the only ones in danger that day; neither Barb [Peckels] nor Donald A. Zigan could swim. Don Zigan still threw himself altruistically into the water, clenching for life to nearby shrubbery, pulling his son to safety. He only lost his glasses that day in the Wild Rice River, and was very grateful that was all that had gone astray.

When my mother and I sat down for the following interview, it was testing to find a point of departure in her memory bank from which to travel the river of dreams connecting my mother to the past experienced at the Zigan Farm. After she told me about Grandpa saving her brothers from the swollen spring river, I found it essential to include these memories. I had never heard these stories up to this moment.

The Peckels and Zigans are quite close families; although the Zigans are harder to get a hold of than the Peckels. Nevertheless, I was quite surprised to hear these stories and become a part of their dreams during the interview process.

I was further immersed by the lives my parents and their siblings experienced, although I grew up surrounded by these people. It is a true gift to allow readers the chance to revel in such a private narrative of the local history.

ii. Interview with Barb Peckels (September 2006)

[I was hoping to gear this interview with my mother towards the river and activities that often evolved around its bounty on the Zigan farm property. I started out with basic questions in order to trigger the most memorable narratives.

I was hoping to get the most honest answers and access memories and wells of dreams from the past that meant the most to my mother; those images and thoughts that are the first to come to her head, are the most important to include in this thesis.]

A portion of the interview:

AJP: 'You fished out of the river, what kinds [species] of fish did you catch?'

BP: "Mostly Northern [Pikes], and they were black-looking [darker than the average northern pike in coloration] because of the [high] iron [content in the water]. The water was almost a dark red. And those Northern were black, and big snapping turtles were in that river. "We used to swim [play] in it too. We used to catch crayfish on the rocks [under the bridge built on the Zigan property]."

"The river in the spring would flood. My brothers Donnie and Billy can tell you a story about making a raft and going down the river... and almost drowning. My dad doesn't know how to swim and he tried saving them, and he lost his glasses.

"Who was I with when I found his glasses? I can't remember... I can't remember. I was telling them [the person she couldn't think of] the story near the river, and the river was really low [that year], and there were his glasses!"

AJP: 'How long ago was that?'

BP: "I don't remember a week ago, Alesha! [My mother began to laugh.] I don't know [still amused], I don't know; it was probably ten years after it happened, when we found his glasses... yep.

"The river used to come up into the back field [when it would rise in the spring months], behind the old farm house. Since then, they burned down the barn and woodshed, and garage and the sauna. They [her dad and bothers, my grandfather and uncles] re-built the sauna and the garage.

"Oh, the pump house is still there. The pump house and [farm] house are original [structures; the only one still standing]."

AJP: 'Do you have any fishing stories you'd like to tell?'

BP: "I remember catching a big Northern, probably a six-pounder. [Secured it] on a stringer, left it on the [side of] the boat. Went out the next morning, and there was nothing on the stringer but a head [of the northern pike]. Snapping turtle ate it. So we never left a stringer of fish out there anymore.

"I remember going down the river with my little brother [Robbie Zigan], and he was a BB-Gun freak, or a gun freak, [he enjoyed working with guns for hunting, etc], and he told me one time, he goes: "See that bird sittin' over there?"

"I went, 'Yeah...'

"And he shoots it and it was just a *puff* of feathers! Yep. I didn't like that [being the animal-carer, she was]. I told him not to do that again when I was with him...

"The river too, you could only go up so far because wild rice was growing it in [along the banks]; that's why it was [called] Wild Rice River. So you had to kind of push it [wild rice] with your oars [in order to get through the river], you couldn't use your motor and stuff, but you could go between the wild rice. So that was cool, about the river.

"There was a gravel pit across the road; it used to be an old dump. Everybody used to bring their stuff there. I remember when Dad [Grandpa Zigan] was cleaning out the farmhouse, he'd bring his stuff over there... and dumps back then were like thrift stores now, except you didn't have to pay anything [to take items home with you]. Just walk through and pick up other peoples' stuff if you wanted it. It was really cool.

"But once they [possibly county or state representatives] cleaned it up, it ended up just being a... the bears would come and dig around in there... so you didn't go over there anymore. It actually had garbage in it then."

[While I listened to my mother tell me the history of the gravel pit across from Grandpa Zigans farm, I couldn't believe it! The property evolved from an old dump, into garbage pit and then gravel pit... I used to go over there, (sometimes with my sister, Sophia Christine, and other cousins); mostly with my cousin Mallory Zigan [armed with BB-Guns to scare away any possible furry visitors, like bears] and we'd swim in the clay water ponds together... going after mud turtles and tadpoles.

Then to think, the land there used to house garbage? Well, the earth must have recovered well, caring for two sun-stricken kids in search of agates, tadpole and turtles... I can't imagine the gravel pit being an old dump or garbage pit.]

[To continue on with Barb Peckels's interview:]

BP: "The farm... we'd walk up and down that dirt road, County Road 4, as far as you could walk, and that's all you found was *agates!* More than you've got!

[My mom and dad, Barb and Bill Peckels, got me into collecting agates up at our cabin in Pequot Lakes Minnesota and in the gravel pit near the Zigan farm, or wherever there was a stretch of dirt road. The agate-hunting kept me busy most of the morning and late afternoon hours; as these times are the best for finding agates. During these parts of the day, the angle of the sun hits the stones just so; to where the agates glow on the ground like solid red ember-treasures speckled amongst dirt and other rocks.

We laughed, reminiscing on our vast collections of agates; the rocks brimming old glass jars filled with water (to allow the eye to see all of the intricate lace patterns agates portray)...

BP: "Yeah, it was agate-city [the old dirt road near the Zigan farm], and the gravel pit! Then, they [possibly county or state representatives] paved it. Yep.

"The next town up [from the farms location] was named Thor. That one used to crack me up. Thor. A turkey town... [Mom began to laugh again.] Yep, yep, yep..."

VIII. On the farm

While on my latest visit to Minnesota, I found it impossible to meet with all of the Zigans. The Zigan clan members are not as sociable as the members of the Peckels family. I did, however, get a hold of my close cousin Mallory Zigan. Mal and I have shared many dreams and memories together at the farm.

The farm was our special place. Mallory and I rode around on the lawn mower together, fished off the Zigan Bridge, searched for crayfish, turtles and tadpoles, and sifted through the gravel pit for agates.

When I was young, my summers evolved around Catholic Youth Camp and the Father's Day weekend at the Zigan farm. Mallory and I share fond memories of the farm just as our cousins and parents do, although, now we cannot forget how special places such as the Zigan Bridge are to our dreams and to our family. The Zigans have tangible evidence of this intimate space, their home, to share with all family members now.



**MCGREGOR, MINNESOTA
WILD RICE RIVER
(CA. 1996, BARBARA J. PECKELS,
PHOTOGRAPH, 6" X 4"
(15.24CM X 10.16CM))**

**ALESHA J. PECKELS AND
MALLORY ZIGAN
ON ZIGAN BRIDGE**

Alesha, here are the fun farm facts!

The farm is quite an interesting place. I remember walking into the porch, stove on one side, wood piled on the other. The skeleton key for the door was always hidden under newspapers above the wood. When you walked into the porch, you could feel a little dip in the floor where it had a hole previously but had been patched up.

When I walked into the house, it always smelled like an old house and stale cigar smoke. Walking into the living room, the walls had old, discolored wallpaper and pictures of wildlife from I'm not sure what magazine.

I also remember the upstairs where we slept; there was just a row of different beds lined up along one wall that my brothers and I always shared. Donnie and Jesse had their own room which I didn't ever really go in too often. One thing I'll never forget is the cellar below the house. There was a door on the floor in Grandpa's bedroom that lifted up and stairs leading to a small dirt hole, rather and as a child, I rarely wanted to venture into that cellar. Nothing was down there, it was just there.

The river was always fun as a kid at the farm. My dad had built a bridge going across it and we always fished off it or fished for crayfish in the rocks underneath. Those were some of my favorite times. I remember my dad had sort of engraved the bridge with the letters Z-I-G-A-N on the rails that I always looked for when walking across it. And there was the infamous birds nest under one side of the bridge that you could peek through the cracks from above and see if there were any eggs or baby birds yet.

There are many memories that I will never forget about the farm. Fishing off the bridge, hanging out with the farm, cruising around on the old lawnmower with Alesha just for shits and giggles; the pine trees that my brothers and I had planted for each one of us that we always wanted to outgrow each others and be the tallest tree... (Jake's tree got ran over somehow on the lawnmower joyrides, it was a tragedy).

I could go on and on... Many adventures were had at the farm though, that's for sure.

Love Mal

IX. Finding a home in the world

I felt extremely privileged to be able to take interviews and transcribe family narratives for this chapter, and overall for this thesis. The folklore shared by the Zigan family was something I had never heard before.

I learned many things about my own family while compiling narratives and imagery. For instance, I had no idea Grandpa Zigan could not swim. I knew my mother had trouble staying above water, but I thought for sure my grandpa would have been able to because of his countless stories of fishing along rivers, even as a young man in Browerville.

I am sure I have heard snippets of the story where Grandpa had saved his boys from the river, and I have probably noticed his old glasses on display in the farm house, but I never realised the extent of the dangers that occurred years ago. I was aware of the dangers that came with the Wild Rice River; the current was often strong when I fished its waters with relatives, its crimson shade often reminded me of its risk.

I find it interesting, even to myself, that as I stated in the beginning of my thesis the reason for my departure from Minnesota in order to remember things that are most important, things that I would overlook had I stayed home; this story is a perfect example of why it was best for me to write the paper from an outside world. This chapter reminds our family and me about where we come from and where our home will always be.

The intimate accounts of place shared by the Zigan clan allow any reader, including family members as well, the opportunity to journey through the farmland which surrounded this family many decades ago. I am so grateful some of our family's stories have been captured on paper for each relative to keep with them; it is tangible evidence of our story and our place in the world.

"The notion of journeying is a metaphor appropriate not just to indigenous art-forms but also to the outsider's chance of entering into other perceptions of both reality and creativity," (Knudsen 2004, p30).

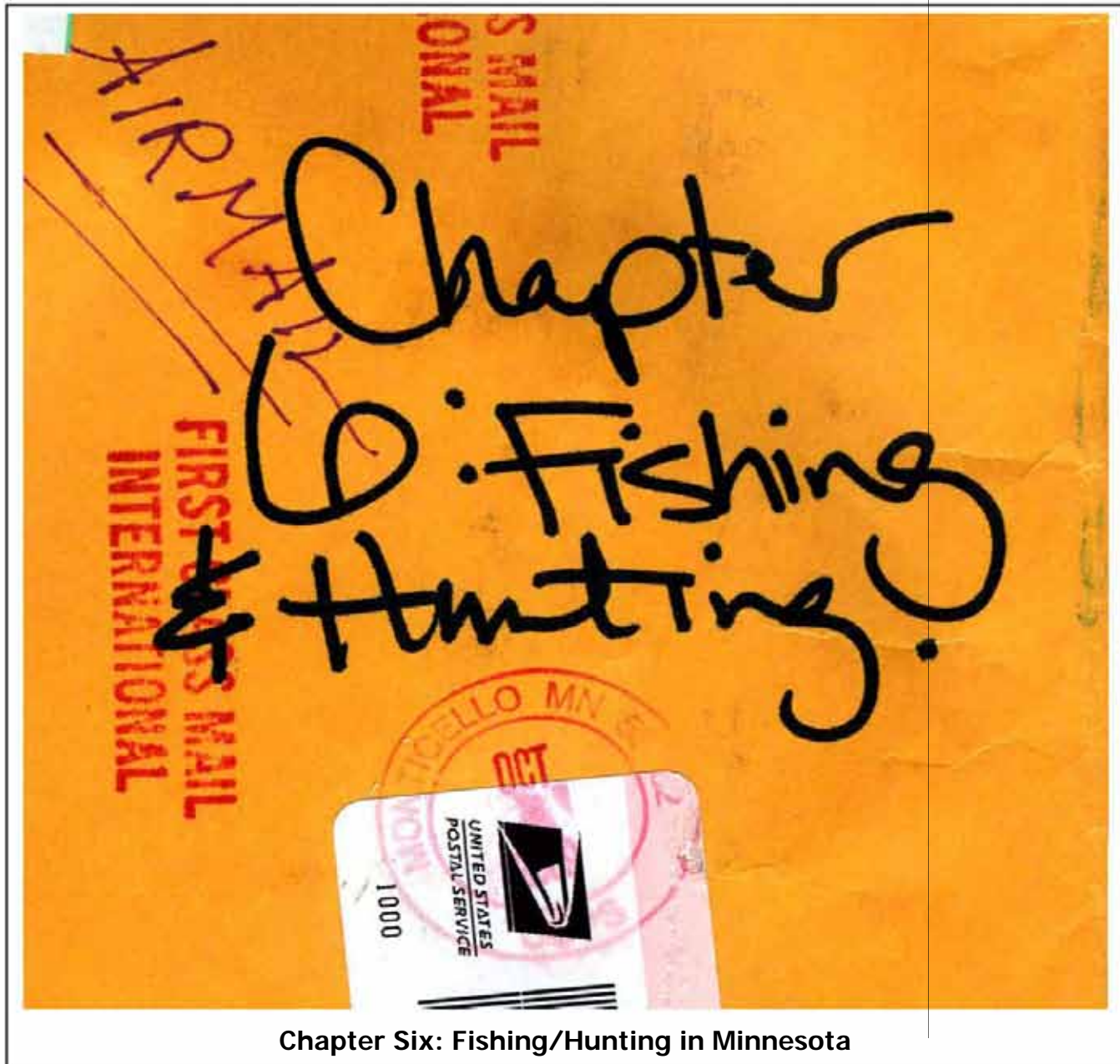
A philosopher, a painter, a poet and an inventor of fables has given us documents of pure phenomenology. It is up to us to learn how to gather being together at its center. It is our task, too, to sensitize the document by multiple variations. (Bachelard 1994, p234)

The sharing of narratives about an intimate space, such as the Zigan farm in McGregor Minnesota, allowed the Zigan family to contribute a personal local history to readers. The Zigan Bridge transformed through text and familial imagery into an intimate connection to the Zigan clan's past.

Dreams and memories of the past have transcended of fields of time into the present, crossed the Zigan Bridge and have been recorded to capture these personal narratives in a local historical format. These narratives prove how personal recounts of space can phenomenally connect place and people to a local history, and preserve a way of life through an object, such as the Zigan Bridge.

Through the Peckels and Zigan folklore, creative arts, activities, history and place, it is possible not only demonstrate how these Polish-German Minnesotans made themselves at home but experience it on a phenomenological level. Each reader has the opportunity to cross an unfamiliar bridge of spoken/written word and enter into a world that exists only for those who told its origins.

By connecting these oral histories with written local histories and lore, one can relate this clan's history to their own life, no matter their origin or place in the world. Shedding research barriers of origin, creed and location, each reader can relate everyday life situations experienced by the observed Minnesotan families to their own intimate spaces and regional folklore.



Chapter Six: Fishing/Hunting in Minnesota



GIRL ICE-FISHING

(2005, AJ PECKELS,
EXHIBITION
POSTCARD, 4" X 6"
(15.25CM X 10.16CM))

SOLO EXHIBITION:
OCTOBER 7, 2005 (AJ
PECKELS)

Chapter Six: Fishing/Hunting in Minnesota

I. Girl Ice-fishing

In a solo exhibition displaying works exclusively on Minnesota lifestyle, hosted in Townsville Queensland in 2005, I showed the image *Girl Ice-fishing* (AJ Peckels 2005). This image embodies all ideals of hunting and fishing passed down from my father to me; from his father to him. Hunting and fishing is a way of life in Minnesota.

There are over 12,000 lakes to fish on/along, not to mention the Mississippi River. Minnesota is a patchwork of farmland and wooded regions, also bountiful with sustenance that continue to supply Minnesota families with deer and moose meat, pheasant, grouse, duck, goose and even wild turkey.

For as long as I can recall, I have had a fishing pole in my hand, no matter the time of year. One can fish all year round in Minnesota, despite deep sheets of ice that cover the lakes. The *Girl Ice-Fishing* (AJ Peckels 2005) displays this winter tradition. It is freezing cold on the water; the shards of glass applied to canvas imply this frozen climate, as if the cold could branch its icy fingers off of the image and cover the wall it is supported by. It is this cold seems to penetrate every layer of clothing, your gloves, your boots and multiple coverings of socks.

Looking back, it was quite hard to concentrate on anything but the cold that surrounded our fishing party. We had multiple holes in the ice to choose from and wet our lines with, but when the fish were not biting, this seemed to offer no distraction to the blustery wind that blew across the flat frozen waters. Our Black Labrador was more interested in watching the bobber in the water, waiting for it to sink, hoping he would be the first to sample our days' take at the lake.

The only colours one could see, besides white snow and ice, and impermeable grey wall of clouds that covered the skies while out on the lake were dark clothes worn by other fishermen, hoping for the catch of the day. These colours cast their light across the lake and make one feel as if they are not alone; that what you are doing is worth something.

You supply food to your family and you are not the only ones suffering through the cold stiff joints and frost-bitten cheeks to do so; it is a way of life in Minnesota. When the fishing is good it makes it all worth it; when the fishing is bad, you cannot give up and must try again another day.

Fishing in Minnesota has been photographed since the nineteenth century (TMHS 1989). Historically, exhibiting the catch-of-the-day on film has been incorporated as part of the aesthetics of fishing. Today, bait shops across Minnesota own display boards covered in photographs of fishermen with their big catches showcased throughout all four seasons in Minnesota. Who are these people portrayed in old Minnesota fishing photos and why are they devoted to outdoor activities like fishing and hunting?

The goal of this chapter is to explore the social construction of place by connecting Minnesota to the traditional fishing and hunting events experienced by members of two Minnesota extended families, relating these activities to the importance of particular objects to family members, such as old fishing party photos and functional objects created and used by them.

Social construction can be defined as an "...experience of space through which peoples' social exchanges, memories, images, and daily use of the material setting transform it and give it meaning" (Low and Lawrence-Zúñiga 2003, p20).

One must realise, that without the personal heritage which ties objects to activities, only an exterior/material explanation of place and objects can be obtained. For example, Sheehy (TMHS 1989) explained the aesthetics of Minnesotan fishing photography:

Photographs from the nineteenth century before the advent of limits on catches show dozens of fish arranged symmetrically in rows, often with anglers and their tackle positioned nearby... In these pictures of plenty, the surrounding environment served as a measure of size and accumulation of fish, providing dramatic evidence of Minnesota's bounty.



LEECH LAKE,
MINNESOTA

(CA. 1896, MINNESOTA
HISTORICAL SOCIETY
(SHEEHY 1989, p50),
PHOTOGRAPH 3" X 2"
(7.62CM X 5.08CM))



NORTHERN MINNESOTA

(CA. 1957, PHOTOGRAPH, 4" X 6" (10.16CM X 15.24CM))

LEFT TO RIGHT: BARB PECKELS, DON ZIGAN, DONALD A. ZIGAN

Such images continued to be common in the early decades of the twentieth century when Minnesota resort owners routinely photographed guests with their catches, sometimes making the pictures into postcards advertising the resort.

Increasingly since the 1920s, however, fish have been photographed in the hands of fishermen and women, the human body becoming the measure of the fish and a symbolic message changing from a statement about the bounty of an area to a more individualized claim about the skills of the angler. (Sheehy 1989, pp 49-50)

Anderson (1997) discussed the techniques which historians and government officials use to gather materials and preserve culture in museums. According to the article, a typical approach of gathering data is based on aspects important solely to governing officials, and lacks more personal heritage established by the people of a region.

Writing on a place or object without heritage or content can make these local history items seem empty of meaning; their origins lie in functional purposes only (Anderson 1997, p5). This is not an effective approach to interpreting why the actions of fishing and hunting in Minnesota are meaningful to some of its people.

The report (TMHS 1989, Sheehy) accurately portrayed the evolution of the fishing image in Minnesota. What happened to the fishermen observed in those photographs described? By including a personal narrative exploring the importance and significance of fishing in Minnesota, this chapter goes beneath the surface of Minnesota imagery and history, it allows the reader an opportunity to view a pictorial heritage and immerse ourselves in its folklore.

An examination of the following photographs and personal items connected with fishing and hunting in Minnesota provides insights into the significance of everyday outdoors activities in relation to Minnesotan identity. Many images will be explored as special handmade objects from a Peckels family member have also been included.

These objects connect the Peckels to people and to fishing and hunting in Minnesota. They were fashioned with the very substance of place, such as wood and bone. This research has assisted in understanding how Minnesota identity is constituted at the local level among extended families.

By taking the personal photos and oral history of fishing and hunting throughout Northern Minnesota into account, this chapter considers the aesthetics behind the pictorial heritage; or heritage portrayed in paintings, photos, etc (Anderson 1997, p7). The objects, when combined with oral history, transform from simple photos of fishing parties/participants, into a unique endeavour, as will be seen on the following pages. This chapter looks at a particular family's fishing/hunting history on various levels: visual (through photographs), oral (through corresponding interviews), and analyses local functional art created and utilised in these common methods of leisure pursuit in Minnesota.

The collected written record and photos of Minnesota's past and recorded interviews from residential families connected a local history to its people, to place, place-particular activities and special objects. The photographs and corresponding stories provide insight into a family's heritage based on local resources; fishing and hunting in the Land of 10,000 Lakes have been incorporated into an everyday lifestyle.

The Peckels and Zigan families shared their heritage, exposing simple objects and family photographs beyond the barriers of a personal family history. These activities/objects have influenced the way of life for three generations of Peckels and Zigan clan members in Minnesota.

II. Fishing and hunting in Minnesota

The Minnesota DNR (Department of Natural Resources) embraces the protection of wildlife, both in and out of the water, at the core of its program. The Department of Natural Resources special branch: Division of Fish and Wildlife works with both, private and public land and lake access, to promote flora and fauna habitat protection throughout the State of Minnesota (MDN 2006).

The DNR also carries out annual surveys and censuses on local wildlife ensuring healthy population statuses: preventing over/under population of wildlife (MDN 2006). These censuses also take into account the number of fishing/hunting licenses permitted throughout each county in the State of Minnesota.

The Minnesota DNR pushes fishing education for all ages in Minnesota and is partnered with the Minnesota Fishing Museum to promote such education programs throughout the state. Fishing is such a popular pastime in Minnesota, there is even a museum devoted to the sport.

The fishing museum is positioned in Little Falls, where a majority of the Peckels fishing (and hunting) stories take place. Little Falls Minnesota, located in the Central region of the state alongside the Mississippi River, is home to the Minnesota Fishing Museum. It contains over eight thousand fishing artefacts.

Some of the fishing relics in the collection include: fishing poles, bobbers, lures, augers (for cutting holes in ice-covered lakes during the winter months), nets, and tackle tools and fish statues. These items were donated by Minnesota fishermen and women (Minnesota Fishing Museum 2006).

Many annual fishing tournaments take place in Minnesota. There is the St. Paul Winter Carnival hosted ice-fishing tournaments on White Bear Lake (Larson 1998). There are also annual fishing contests organised by individual towns, such as Big Lake Minnesota.

Minnesota even hosts its famous Eel Pout Fishing Contest, every February upon the ice-covered shores of Leech Lake in Walker Minnesota (Remick and Ringsak 2003). The town of Aitkin presents Fish Houses on Parade, where an annual procession of ice-houses clambers down the main street of the town every year on the Friday, in late November, the day after Thanksgiving (Remick and Ringsak 2003).



BUFFALO, MINNESOTA

(2006, AJ PECKELS, PHOTOGRAPH 4" X 6" (10.16CM X 15.25CM))

"...Minnesota has 90,000 miles of shoreline; more than the ocean states of California, Florida, and Hawaii combined. More people in Minnesota own boats than in any other state..." (Ash 2004, p23)

III. Great Northern Pike Association (GNPA)

The Peckels family once hosted their own fishing tournament for the Great Northern Pike Association (GNPA). The later tournaments were held over one weekend in June, while the earlier tournaments took place bi-annually. Towards the final tournament days with the Peckels and northern pikes, over one-hundred tournament goers would arrive for a weekend of fun and games in hope of taking home prizes for biggest pike caught or released.

Interview with Bill and Ken Peckels (September 2007)

[This phone interview was recorded on September 28, 2007. Bill and Ken Peckels discussed the joys of the Great Northern Pike Association (GNPA) fishing tournaments. I thought it would have been easier and more enjoyable to get both, Bill and Ken Peckels, to talk about the GNPA together, as they may assist each other in recalling memories from tournament days.

The actual recording was muted slightly in sections as Ken Peckels was patched into the phone conversation via three-way option, and some sections were inaudible. Nevertheless, the Peckels brothers discussed the tournament events with only a flare for storytelling they possess.]

BP: "I can't exactly remember what year we started [the GNPA was established ca. 1980]. But originally, it was Bill and Jennifer Gunewitz with Barb [Peckels] and I.

"...And then the Gunewitz stepped out, and I'm guessing we did it [worked the tournaments] with Kenny after about the fifth tournament."

KP: "There were two tournaments a year for the first couple of years..."

BP: "Right, right... Then after that Gunewitz kind of bowed out of it [GNPA], and Kenny and Jill [Peckels] got involved in it. It was really fun [hosting the tournaments], but the hardest thing was finding a place to have it."

KP: "Yeah, a lot of planning went into it..."



GREAT NORTHERN
PIKE ASSOCIATION
(GNPA) TOURNAMENT
LOGO

(CA. 1992, JAMES F.
PECKELS, SCREEN
PRINT, 7" DIAMETER
(17.78CM DIAMETER)

BP: "Exactly. You know? The combinations, this and that, you don't want to put the people [who enter in the competition] out [while searching for the lakes and resorts to host the annual GNPA]. You have to have a place to put the campers and people had their places [cabins] up there too, you know?"

[Bill had briefly explained that accommodating many people at GNPA tournaments had to be considered; as did the costs, permits, and so on.]

KP: "It was a lot of money!" [Kenny laughed.]

BP: "Oh yeah, oh yeah."

KP: "Yeah it was crazy [preparing for the fishing events]. I remember that one time I had that beer keg in the back of my truck...

[The interview became inaudible at this point].

[Before insurance and permit changes occurred, beer was catered to participants. Ken Peckels once kept a keg of beer in the back of his Ford pick-up truck.

This kept the keg mobile; they moved the truck when the campsite location would get too congested. The tournaments were very accommodating and worked hard at following rules and staying out of the way at resorts.]

BP: "Then the other one [tournament] at South Center [lake], many things happened at that one! Remember the time the guy [a participant] was backing down the hill to launch his boat?" [It was an extremely steep hill at this location.]

[Ken Peckels laughed loudly again.]

BP: "[He backed his truck down this steep hill] to launch his boat; (the trailer was fitted with bunks instead of wheels because it was a fiberglass boat) his boat fell off the trailer before he got to water! The motor hit the ground and broke the prop. [propeller] off..."

KP: [Still laughing hard.] It went straight down...!"

BP: "It [the boat] got busted up and shit!"

[A bunch of the tournament goers along with Bill and Ken Peckels assisted the participant in placing the broken boat back onto its trailer; needless to say, the fisherman had to fish along the bay area for this particular GNPA tournament.]

BP: "[Another time] Barb's friend was trying to pull the rest of the [his] big boat up on the trailer [after his wench-line broke]...

"It hit the ground and ate the whole prop. [propeller] off!"

KP: [Ken chortled and spoke inaudibly.] "...Crazy..."

BP: "Remember that time on South Twin [lake]?"

KP: "South Center [lake]?"

BP: "Oh, South Center it was. Joe [Jill Peckels's father] was down there, he was judging [the tournament]...

"There were so many boats at the landing I was standing there with an oar to try to keep them all from banging [into one another]. And uh, I was pushing on this one, it was just a regular fishing boat, I think it was Danny DuBois's.

"I had the oar on it and I had to push the boat off [the dock] a little bit, and the oar slipped off [the side of the boat]! There I went!"

KP: "Oh yeah, I remember that [Ken hooted as he spoke]!"

BP: "I was going for a drink!" [Bill was going to fall into the lake.]

[Both Ken and Bill Peckels were laughing quite loudly into the phone at this point.]

BP: "I cocked my legs and jumped! I flew right into the boat!"

KP: "Yep, I remember that! Didn't he [DuBois] think you tried to do that?"

BP: "Yeah, he says: 'You look like a dog jumpin' in the boat, Billy!' All fours [arms and legs]; just my feet got wet!"

[Ken was still laughing at his brother!]

BP: "That was it! Oh God! My knees got cut up pretty good..."

[Ken's response was inaudible; he was discussing tournament operations, aside from the fun that occurred along the way.]

BP: "Oh yeah, nobody went hungry at the tournaments. There was always plenty of food."

KP: "...And prizes."

BP: "Yep, a lot of prizes... A lot of photos."

The GNPA was a non-profit organisation. It was host to eighteen tournaments, with the last taking place in 1996. Finally, the Great Northern Pike Association tournaments had come to a close. There were too many insurance and permit fees for the organisation to cope with; it became too expensive, and as Bill Peckels said, "...too political."

Peckels (2007) went further and said: "... The thrill had gone, the fun had gone, why do it anymore?" The tournament memories were etched into the memories of the Peckels brothers, with only snippets shared above. Photographs, tees and trophies are all that remains of these times shared by the Peckels, family and friends.



SOUTH CENTER LAKE, MINNESOTA

(DATE N/A, BARBARA J. PECKELS, PHOTOGRAPH 8" X 10" (20.32CM X 25.4CM))

GNPA TOURNAMENT FISHERS



NORTHERN MINNESOTA

**(CA. 2000, PHOTOGRAPH,
6" X 4" (15.25CM X
10.16CM))**

**MARK DUBOIS WITH
STRINGER OF WALLEYE AND
BASS**



FISH BONES

(2007, AJ PECKELS, MULTI-MEDIUM (WATERCOLOURS, INK, LINOLEUM CUTS), 11.7" X 16.5" (29.72CM X 41.91CM))

IV. Fish bones

I created this piece for many reasons: the first thing I dream of when returning home is fishing with my father and my uncles, the second thing is my fear of fish, and the third is an art work my mother designed as a screen print. The incorporation of paints and ink is common in my artwork; each painting tells a story literally and subliminally.

The text work in the background is fragments of memories and casual thoughts associated with my family and my memories of fishing. These fragments include my father: the last time I was home (interviewing for the thesis in August-September 2006) Dad and I went fishing out on a launch boat at Mille Lacs Lake in Mille Lacs Minnesota.

Bill Peckels esteemed to catch Walleyes and I loved to try to hook them before he could; while out on launch at Mille Lacs Lake I caught the first fish, the most fish and the largest catch of the evening. My father was so proud of me; I'll never forget the smile on his face. As we were heading down the dock with our catch, I stopped and asked the launch conductor to take our photo, and he did. Some text in this piece of art described the emotions that went through my head while reminiscing on this memory.

Second, the linoleum-cut fish image was slightly intimidating in appearance: large jagged mouth and teeth, and globular piercing eyes; the image I see in my head when I imagine myself swimming in a lake. I love to fish but I am extremely scared of fish biting me while swimming in the dark blue Minnesota lake waters. I picture my feet dangling beneath the surface of the water and a large-mouth full of serrated teeth swimming straight towards my chubby little toes and frog tattoo. Fish in Minnesota are not as intimidating as I have shown them to be in this image.

Finally, for as long as I can remember I have been surrounded by fish imagery (Les Kouba and other Minnesota artists), fishing tournaments, t-shirts designed by family, photographs and so on. My uncle Jimmy Peckels created the shirt design used for the GNPA fishing tournaments, it displays a northern pike swimming through the water after a lure. My mother, Barb Peckels, also designed an image used on apparel: shirts, sweatshirts, shorts, and so on. She constructed a clever screen design

incorporating the word Minnesota and an image of fish bones. These things reflect in a sunset over a lake to create the full image. This screen was copyrighted circa 1985; the t-shirts were made and sold throughout the later 1980s.

The idea to incorporate the word Minnesota in my *Fishbones* print was to honour my mother's artwork and to remind me of how important fishing is amongst Peckels family members. Her *Minnesota Reflections* image and Jimmy's GNPA tees are still worn by Peckels family and friends today, over 20 years later. These images surrounded me as a child, as did the sport of fishing. To me, it was a way of life and still is today.

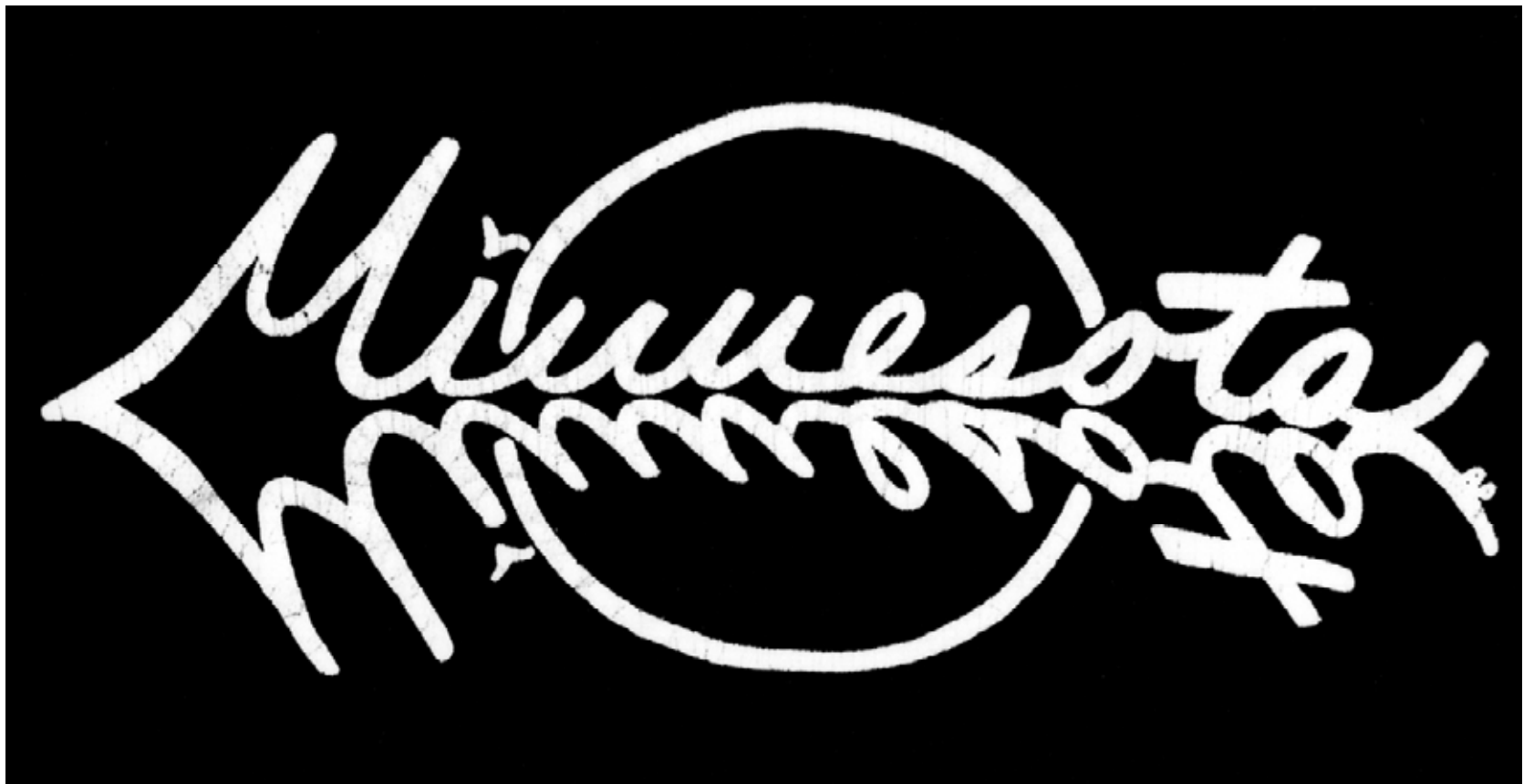
Before I moved to Australia I was given Jeanette Peckels's red hooded sweatshirt after she passed away on my father's birthday in 1998. This sweater had my mother's *Minnesota Reflections* image on the back and 'Jeanette' embroidered on the breast. My grandmother meant the world to the whole Peckels clan; after I won my first art award (2000), I dedicated my future art endeavours to Jeanette, and this image reminded me of my mother's screen print image and Jeanette simultaneously. I constantly think of my family when inventing art and this image is no different, its undertone breathes of family and our home.

Low and Lawrence-Zúñiga (2003) wrote on social construction of place and how the people and activities in an individual's surroundings influence their perception of life around them; my family has done just that when it comes to fishing the lakes in Minnesota. They have created extraordinary annual fishing get-togethers, mass-produced art work and icons on clothing, and hold countless photographs of tournament events and every day fishing trips. Some uncles even display their biggest catches on their walls in their houses and cabins.

This lifestyle is typical for the Peckels and I cannot escape it, even in Australia. When I call home to check in with my father and/or my uncles, I still hear about it: weather conditions, ice thickness, which lakes seem to be biting better than others, and so on. No matter how typical these items, stories and conversations may be for me, they are what inspire my art work and research.



LEFT: MILLE LACS LAKE, MINNESOTA
(2006, PHOTOGRAPH, 6" X 4" (15.24CM X 10.16CM))- BILL PECKELS,
ALESHA PECKELS HOLDING STRING OF WALLEYE FISH
RIGHT (TOP AND BOTTOM): BIG LAKE, MINNESOTA
(2006, AJ PECKELS, PHOTOGRAPHS, 4" X 6" (10.16CM X 15.24CM))
BILL PECKELS WITH WALLEYE



MINNESOTA REFLECTIONS

(COPYRIGHT 1985, BARBARA J. PECKELS, SCREEN PRINT, 4" X 7" (10.16CM X 17.78CM))

V. Peckels Bros. Hotsled

Fishing on the lakes during the summer never seemed like quite enough for the Peckels family. Winter dominated a large portion of the fishing year, although the lakes froze over during the winter months, it was no stop to this family. Ice-fishing was also just as popular as fishing during the summer months. Many Peckels siblings own their own ice-houses which get towed out onto the lake when the ice is firm enough, four inches thickness (ten centimetres) minimum.

Ken and Bill Peckels patented their own *Hot Sled* and sold it during the 1980s to many Minnesotans. It could get extremely cold while fishing on the lake without an ice-house for cover and protection. This invention served just that; it provided a warm place to sit and fish while out on the icy Minnesota lakes.

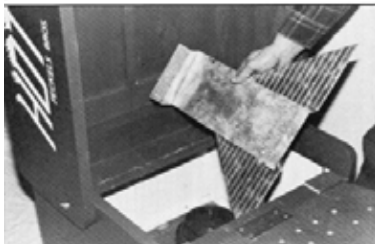
The advertisement included portrays the Peckels Bros. Hotsled and images guiding one through its use. It is basic in design and quite useful when out in the frozen environment. First, their lightweight sled design makes it easy for transport to and from the lake. The runners at the base of the sleigh and pull rope allow its owner to pull it smoothly across the snow-covered ground and ice.

There is access beneath the seat on the sled to light and place a lantern (non-propane), where the heat travels along the base of the sled seat to warm the backside of the fisherman. When the Hotsled is in its upright position, the back-rest portion of the sled can be angled so the fisher is blocked from the freezing wind gusts that often blow their way across the lakes.

I had not seen the following images they used to advertise their Hotsled until my mother pulled them out for me while compiling stories and imagery to use for this chapter. I remember my dad's sled sitting in the garage at our house in North Minneapolis, he would take it when he went fishing on his own; we probably kept him too busy as children when fishing! I can imagine Dad chasing us across the ice, back and forth to the truck to keep our toes from freezing; there would have been no time to sit and warm up when we were out on the lake with him, unless the fish were biting.



Recommended for 1 mantel red or 2 mantel green camping lantern only! (No propane).



PECKELS BROS. ADVERTISEMENT
MINNEAPOLIS, MINNESOTA
(CA. 1984, PECKELS BROS, FLYER,
11.5" X 8.5" (29.21CM X 21.59CM))

HOT FIRST ON LAST OFF SLED



**HOT SLED — THE COMPACT ICE FISHING COMMUTER
WITH UNIQUE FEATURES PRECISELY DESIGNED**

Lightweight

Approximately 65 lbs.

Pulls easy with durable
hardwood runners

Large storage capacity, under
the seat allows for enough
room for fishing gear.

Swift effortless set-up allows
for outstanding fishing mobility.





MINNEAPOLIS, MINNESOTA

(CA. 1984, KENNETH PECKELS, PHOTOGRAPH, 8" X 10" (20.32CM X 25.4CM))

PECKELS BROS. HOT SLED ADVERTISEMENT

VI. Hunting with the Zigan boys

The Zigan family have annually hunted deer for years on their vast 160 acres of property in McGregor Minnesota. For every deer they receive, the hunter who brought the deer down, (after emptying the deer of blood and organs that could possibly contaminate the meat after killed), would apply droplets of deer blood to their cheeks with pride; for they are the hunter who will bring the venison home to their family.

Andy Zigan, told a story of the Zigan boys (*three generations* of Zigan boys) up at the McGregor farm, and goes into some detail of the surroundings and the emotions and physical strain hunting can put on hunters during the brisk Minnesota fall months. He tells the story only the way Andy Zigan could tell it. Bill Zigan, the father of Andy Zigan, requested that Andy be the storyteller for his family as he was quite good at turning any situation in memory into humour.

I went out to Billy and Karen Zigan's house in Coon Rapids Minnesota (my aunt and uncle) for a Zigan family get-together in September 2006. I requested that Billy, one of the third generation siblings (the focus generation of this written work), assist me with the progress and data of this thesis, by allowing me to conduct an interview. He suggested that I talk to his son, Andy (my first-cousin), because he was quite the story-teller!

I was apprehensive at first because I did not believe Andy would agree to an interview, but he gladly jumped at the opportunity. He told me about how the boys put the deer blood on their face, well "smear it all over."

All of the third-generation Zigans: Billy, Donnie, Robbie, Cheryl and Mary-Kay delivered at least one boy into the fourth generation (my generation), except for my mom. My mother, Barb (Zigan) Peckels had three girls (including myself). Since we grew up without a brother of our own, I was envious almost, and cherished the Zigan boys and their adventures at the McGregor farm. I loved hearing their stories, and Andy Zigan, always threw in a comical element to every memory on account. This is what Andy told me:

Interview with Andy Zigan (September 2006)

AZ: "Okay, one time Grandpa [Donald A. Zigan] shot a deer [up at the farm near McGregor Minnesota], and he came back to the cabin and said, "You know, I shot one [deer] out there, can you find the [blood] trail and go get it?"

"So, Donnie, Andy [talking in third-person here], Jesse, Adam, and Bill went out to track the deer. Bill and Donnie told Jesse and me [Andy in first-person] to go tracking the deer and gave us all this tracking gear; so we did."

[Later in this interview Andy laughed at himself and commented on the fact that he kept changing between first and third person commentary... I thought that was funny too, so I left that in for Andy!]

"We got out to the field and found the blood trail. Donnie and Billy told Jesse and me to wait in the deer stands; Jesse was in Grandpa's stand and we were waiting up there for at least an hour, while Adam, Bill and Donnie tracked this deer. Eventually Jesse and I got frickin' cold because we only had tracking gear; we didn't have the gear we needed to sit in the stand and freeze our nuts off.

"So we got down from the stands and walked over and kind of started talking to each other. We said: 'Yeah what's going on? What do you think we should do? Where do you think they're at?' We don't know.

"We took off to the corner of the field where Jesse's stand is now... And Jesse and I were sitting there and we both had to go to the bathroom. So we were both sort of urinating when this buck came walking out. And it's got like a 10-12pt. rack.

"It was on the land that was not ours, and so we're like: 'What should we do? What should we do?' We decided we couldn't shoot it because it's not on our land, and it was really a tough decision for us. So we put our guns back down, finished urinating, we zip up and turn around and there's this buck crashing at us through the brush!

"We turn and look and said: 'Let's shoot that thing!' And it's barrelling at us, so Jesse and I pull up our guns, and I told Jesse, I said 'Shoot!' He said "I can't see it!" I said 'Shoot!' He said "I can't see it!" So alright I'm shooting! I shot and then Jesse shot. I shot and then Jesse shot, and then I shot.



GOODLAND, MINNESOTA

(CA. 1978, BARBARA J. PECKELS, PHOTOGRAPHS, 3" X 3" (7.62CM X 7.62CM))

DEER HUNTING PARTY: MIKE PECKELS, JIMMY PECKELS, CHICO PECKELS, BILL PECKELS

"We shot five times and finally dropped this deer! We gave each other high-fives, 'Yeah!' We were okay; we checked our watches, 'We'll just wait here for thirty minutes or so and let it bleed out, and we'll go over and check this deer out.'

"No more than two minutes after we had shot [the deer], we're standing there and there are people in orange walking towards us from where the deer was [the same direction the boys were shooting]. Well, turns out there are Adam, Donnie and Billy. They had tracked this deer in a complete circle and came back towards the field; they were pushing it right towards where Jesse and I were.

"We got down [from their designated positions] and ended up kind of where we weren't supposed to be. But the deer ended up in the right spot.

"So we shot at this deer... at the same time they heard bullets whizzing by them, and they all hit the deck because we were shooting straight at them; they were right behind this deer! And we had no idea they were behind it until a couple of minutes after that. It was pretty crazy... We got the deer and the deer had been shot six or seven times...

"So that was kind of funny."

Imagery and scenery take shape in different forms when told by different people. The Peckels stories were told with only a flare for narrative in which they possess. Andy Zigan proved in his interview session above that he was indeed a great storyteller as his father had assured me before the interview took place. The vast fields and forest belonging to the Zigan clan near McGregor Minnesota has come to life through narrative provided by its owners.

The land speaks to us in silence. We must listen, and then speak out about our special places and find ways to keep those places from being consumed by development. We must be the voices for the land. (TMHS 2002, Peterson px)

This idea of combining place and voice in text has allowed an intimate view of land and memories to be shared with the reader. These translations of land and imagery could be further applied to objects associated with Minnesota landscape and activities such as fishing and hunting.



MINNEAPOLIS, MINNESOTA

(CA. 2000, BILL ZIGAN, PHOTOGRAPH, 8" X 10" (20.32CM X 25.4CM))

AUGSBURG COLLEGE FOOTBALL GAME- LEFT TO RIGHT: ANDY ZIGAN AND ADAM MCBRIDE



PEQUOT LAKES, MINNESOTA

(CA. 1990, BARBARA J. PECKELS, PHOTOGRAPH 4" X 6" (10.16CM X 15.24CM))

LEFT TO RIGHT: SOPHIA PECKELS, ALESHA J. PECKELS, MALLORY ZIGAN, JACOB ZIGAN

VII. Wild game recipes prepared by Barb Peckels

Many Peckels Christmas events were hosted at the home of Bill and Barb Peckels. These festive get-togethers were catered by all family members (more or less a pot-luck event) because the extended family amongst the Peckels siblings averages over fifty people per year. Barb Peckels often prepared her legendary venison and pheasant dishes for the whole Peckels family to enjoy over the holidays.

When fish, birds (pheasant, grouse, duck and turkey), and deer have been obtained by family members, they are shared with other relatives. No parts go to waste: deer skins were donated by Ken and Bill Peckels to a shop in Monticello Minnesota in exchange for deerskin leather work gloves.

Rob Zigan used sinew and leather from deer to make dream catchers for family members. If excess fish were caught, they are shared amongst family. Jimmy Peckels was highly allergic to fish, but continued to fish, fillet and share his catch with family. Bill Peckels often gave his Northern Pike and Walleye fillets to Mary and Donald A. Zigan. Special wild game recipes used for family get-togethers by Barb Peckels have also been included.

Barb Peckels and many other relatives shared their homemade food with other family members over the wintry holiday seasons in Minnesota. Chris Goodin has handed out homemade caramels, date cookies, chocolate suckers, and peppermint ice and so on. As discussed in chapter three, Ken Peckels often makes homemade sauces for his siblings. Years ago, Bill Peckels used to give out homemade pickles.

Homemade foods and hot-dishes are not the only gifts made for family and friends in the Peckels family. Art work, crafts and functional household items made by Peckels siblings are also given out around the holiday season. The Peckels and the Zigans have contributed both stories about fishing and hunting in this chapter. All of these memories and images created a collective production, or social construction of place through activities and objects.



Creamed Fish

From the kitchen of...

BARBARA PECKELS



put boneless cleaned
fish in pan, add seasoning.
pour over fish heavy
whipping cream. ~~do~~ Not
cover. Simmer about
45 min. till cream is dissipated^{heavily}



CREAMED FISH RECIPE
(DATE N/A, CARD 7" X 5"
(17.78CM X 12.7CM))
RECIPE FROM THE KITCHEN OF
BARBARA J PECKELS

Pheasant a la King

From the kitchen of...

BARBARA PECKELS

boil clean pheasant in water w/
spices & boil till tender.
remove & debone bird. Strain water.
make sauce - Melt 2 tbs. butter
3 tbs. Flour, $\frac{1}{4}$ teas. Salt, some
pepper. Blend well. add slowly
stirring constantly 1 c. pheasant
broth bring to boil ad $\frac{1}{2}$ c. cream.
(repeat for desired amount of sauce)
 $\frac{1}{2}$ c. Sauté mushrooms, $\frac{1}{4}$ c. pimientos
1 c. cooked cubed pheasant. Add
to sauce. Serve on toast or
biscuits.

PHEASANT A LA KING RECIPE
(DATE N/A, CARD, 7" X 5"
(17.78CM X 12.7CM))
RECIPE FROM THE KITCHEN OF
BARBARA J. PECKELS





From the kitchen of...

BARBARA PECKELS



Venison Au Juis



remove all fat + membrane.
bake meat @ 350° w/ fr. onion soup
mix + water. 2 hrs. Cool. remove lard
from top. Add wanted spices. bake
again. ^{cool} break meat apart. remove
any more fat that appears.
heat + eat over biscuits.



VENISON AU JUIS RECIPE

(DATE N/A, CARD, 7" X 5"

(17.78CM X 12.7CM))

RECIPE FROM THE KITCHEN OF

BARBARA J. PECKELS

VIII. Blade-smith: Mike Peckels

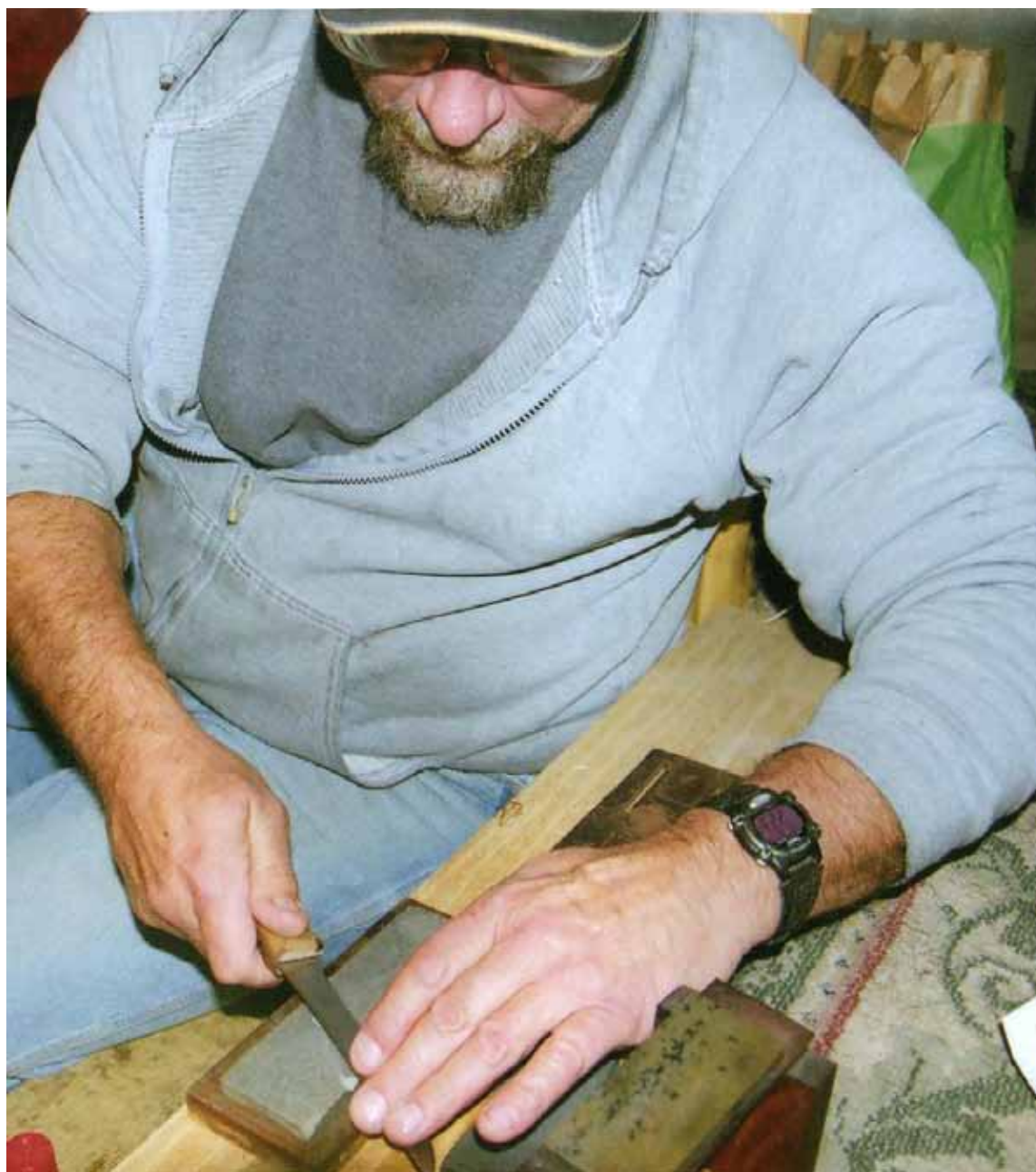
Mike Peckels, a Minnesota-born artist has been preoccupied by the contouring shapes and designs of knives for as long as he can recall. After creating make-shift knives of files and wood as a child, employment opportunities at local Minnesota sheet metal shops facilitated in bringing his knife-making objectives to life. Mike has made knives for his friends and brothers; different styles for different people- larger hunting knives, knives for skinning, etc. Each work is designed specifically and personally for the individual for whom the knife is intended. This object is a symbol of life and survival, a tangible memory of family. The knives discussed in the following interview demonstrate how deeply rooted ideals of hunting and fishing are to members of the Peckels ancestors in Minnesota.

Most hunting and fishing occurs for the Peckels and Zigan families **up north** in Minnesota, or the top two-thirds portion of the State of Minnesota (north of the metro-area). The Peckels boys grew up learning to hunt the land and fish the Mississippi River around Little Falls Minnesota while on trips with their parents, Jeanette and Arganius. Mike, one of the six boys and five girls, has interpreted these experiences visually and artistically through the designs of his own knives.

In August 2006, my father and I drove from our cabin in Pequot Lakes Minnesota to my Uncle Kenny Peckels's cabin in Aitkin County to stay for a weekend. All of my aunts and uncles, (my father's siblings) would be present. Being out on the lake and near family; these factors were prime-conditions for interviewing members.

I consider this collection of interviews to be the best gift my family has ever given me. The stories and life experiences shared in the following pages are personal, enwrapping, and give insight to the Peckels family of Minnesota; how hunting and fishing has become a part of their lives/lifestyles.

Uncle Mike had contributed a selection of photographs of his knives, taken by him, for use in the book back around Christmas 2005. I pulled one of the images up on my computer screen while sitting in Kenny's living room with Mike. The image's object is now recognised as 'Gator Man.'



**BIG LAKE, MINNESOTA
(2005, AJ PECKELS,
PHOTOGRAPH 6" X 4"
(15.25CM X 10.16CM))**

**MIKE PECKELS SHARPENING
A KNIFE BLADE**

Interview with Mike Peckels (August 2006)

AJP: 'This is an interview with Mike about his knives. We're looking at a photograph of 'Gator Man,' [Mike laughed], the knife that he made for Eddie Peckels, (the eldest of the Peckels siblings)... so what do you want to say?' (To be clearer): 'How do you make the blades?'

[I never realised interviewing family on such a formal level would feel so awkward. Mike calmed me down and went straight into detail about hand-carving the knife for Uncle Eddie.]

MP: "I cut them all by hand: hacksaw, files, stones, polished the stone down, draw-file the blade."

AJP: 'Where do you get the steel? Is it steel?'

MP: "Yeah, its .012 steel."

AJP: 'Where do you get that? Is that Minnesota steel?'

MP: "Yeah, you use it [in Minnesota] for all of your tools, chisels, tooling materials, anything like that there for Harding. Then they oil harden it, and then you can temper it. It's like Rockwell 48 Harding. So it's, so you can still shape it [he explains terminology], and you can still fix it. If the metal gets too hard, it can disintegrate."

[Uncle Mike took some time to explain in more detail how he's able to work with the .012 steel for carving the blades of his knives. He also explained how he makes the knife guards, after I stopped him and asked what a knife guard was...]

MP: "That's to protect your hand [the knife guard]. The guard is made out of stainless steel (440 Stainless Steel). I did that with the drummel [sic: a saw used to shape the guard]... just whatever comes into my head, that's how I design the handle to fit the knife....

"The handle is made out of rosewood, butternut and redwood [from left to right in the image]; the pins [or dowels] were walnut. Then the alligator claw Eddie and Sharon brought back for me from when they went to Louisiana. It was a 'back-scratcher.'



**GATOR MAN
(CA. 2000, MICHAEL PECKELS,
HAND-CRAFTED KNIFE, 9"
HEIGHT (22.86CM HEIGHT))**

**KNIFE DESIGNED BY MICHAEL
PECKELS FOR BROTHER,
EDWARD PECKELS**

"So I took it off the pole and there was one claw that wasn't right. So I took the claw off and kind of blended it into the handle to get the hook in the back of the handle. And then I took it and I cut out the end of the alligator foot and put a piece of maple in it. I 'epoxied' [sic- glued] that into the end of it.

"Then I mounted it [alligator foot] into the handle and it's all 'epoxied' together. But the blade, everything, was all basically cut out by hand."

[While Mike sat patiently and explained how Eddie's knife had been assembled, he used the photograph as a visual aid in assisting his lecture to me. He pointed to every single part and spoke of the knife with such detail; I was quite more comfortable questioning him at this point in the interview. I also asked him about the initials on the side of the knife.]

MP: "That's Eddie's initials in there. I had that engraved. A guy I know owns an engraving shop, and the knives I made for my brothers and that, I had to have their initials engraved into the blade. My initials are on the other side of the blade, they're stamped 'M.P.' by myself."

"And then the polish, I just hand-polish it all with diamond polish and everything else to get the finish on it. But the more you make the finish of the blade with stones, the shiner it'll be when you polish it by hand."

[Mike used objects of his that reminded him of his brother, Eddie. The idea of labelling the leather knife sheath (also hand-made by Mike Peckels) with the title 'Gator Man,' is how this whole story came about. Using the alligator foot from a gift given to Mike by Eddie symbolised a connection between the two; the nickname 'Gator Man' is Mike's to Eddie.]

[I also asked Mike how he came up with the idea and materials for Bill Peckels's knife.]

MP: "His [Bill Peckels] was made out of pretty much the same materials [as the knife made for Eddie Peckels], but his was a brass guard with a deer antler [for the handle]."

[Billy Peckels had claimed that antler portion as his own handle for his future knife. Mike continued:]



BILLY'S KNIFE
(CA. 2000, MICHAEL
PECKELS, HAND-CRAFTED
KNIFE, 8" (20.32CM))

**KNIFE DESIGNED BY
MICHAEL PECKELS FOR
BROTHER, BILL PECKELS**



KENNY AND DEER

(2005, COHEN BASSINGTHWAIGHTE, PHOTOGRAPH 8" X 10" (20.32CM X 25.4CM))

MP: "Yep. I carried that [handle] around with me for a lot of years...

"And then one day, his fiftieth birthday was coming up, so I figured it'd be a proper time to make it for him. But his was all brass [dowels, etc], and the blade material was still .012 steel, but it's all a different design.

"It's more of a skinning knife than anything else. But it was basically the same concept.

"I had to carve through the bone by hand. I had to take a drill to it and square it out so it would fit over the end of the knife, and then the brass was fitted over the handle.

"I had to take the whole thing apart, polish it, and finish it, and then reassemble the whole knife."

Artist Mike Peckels (the father/grandfather, the son, and sibling) has applied useful memories about hunting and fishing to his artworks. His whole life, Mike has been fascinated by the contouring shapes and variety of materials used when making knives.

By employing the interview with Uncle Mike on his fine art items to this chapter, one can link these tools to regional hunting and fishing. Local woods, animal parts, and steel have been incorporated into each work. Mike's knives are brilliant and unique objects, special to the Peckels family of Minnesota.

IX. Summary

This chapter has analysed a particular family's fishing/hunting history on various levels: visual (through photographs), oral (through corresponding interviews), and as integrated local and functional artwork. All of these items, whether pictorial or practical, have been discussed with family members.

Photos included in the chapter (such as the *Gator Man* knife image) were used during interviews in order to assist the discussions and story-telling sessions. The sports of fishing and hunting go beyond mere Minnesota activities; they are a way of life.

The collected textual materials and photos of Minnesota's past and recorded interviews from family members have been incorporated into the chapter to illustrate how people connect to place, place-particular activities and special objects. When the Peckels and Zigan families took the time to express how these objects mean so much in their lives and that of past generations, these simple everyday items became more than just fishing and hunting equipment.

There has been debate upon the accuracy of personal narrative and self reflection of space as a format for recording local history (Reed-Danahay 1997). This chapter utilised both narrative and pictorial heritage. The photographs of fishing parties taken over one-hundred years ago, and the filleting/hunting knives made by Mike Peckels, are more than simple functional objects or gifts; these items connected Minnesotans to place.

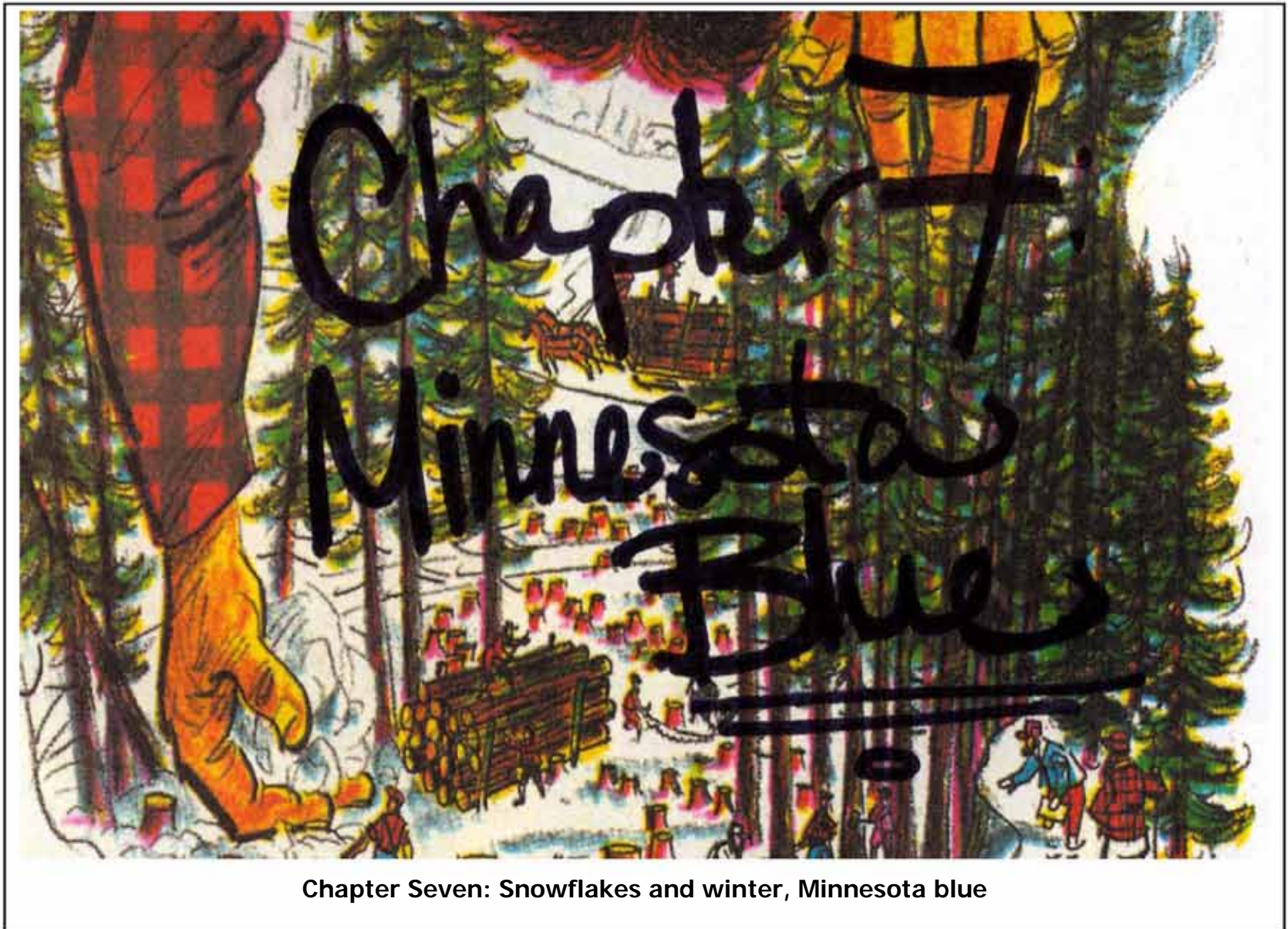
"Literary analysis is a response to one of the complex ways in which human beings make meaning out of life (Callahan 2002, p7)." By incorporating imagery and personal narrative, this chapter explored the social construction of Minnesota and fashioned a well-orchestrated inside-perception of how the settler families and their subsequent generations made themselves at home in the world through common fishing and hunting activities.



BUFFALO, MINNESOTA

(2006, AJ PECKELS, PHOTOGRAPH, 4" X 6" (10.16CM X 15.24CM))

PECKELS/MILLER FAMILY REUNION: (LEFT TO RIGHT) KENNETH PECKELS, BILL PECKELS, JANET (TOOTIE) GEPHART, CHRIS GOODIN, MIKE PECKELS



Chapter Seven: Snowflakes and winter, Minnesota blue



HALLOWEEN SNOW STORM

(2005, AJ PECKELS, MULTI-MEDIUM: OIL PAINTS, GLASS, HEMP TWINE, INK, 11" X 14" (27.94 X 35.56CM))

Chapter Seven: Snowflakes and winter, Minnesota blue

I. Halloween Snow Storm

I was only nine years old on this particular Halloween when the snow storm swept through in 1991. My little sister, Sophia Peckels, father and I went out trick-or-treating shortly after dark (our cousin Rosalee Dahlheimer may have also accompanied us, she usually did join in on our annual Halloween trick-or-treat outings). I'm not sure whether it began to snow before we left or just right after we departed from home on our candy-collecting journey in our father's Ford F-100 pick-up truck, either way we were wearing our big snow boots and winter jackets over our costumes, possibly a mother's intuition!

I recall being pretty upset about having to cover up my angel costume with my purple jacket and clunky moon-boots... The snow was coming down quite heavily and steadily while we were out and about in the North Minneapolis area in search for candy. Not too far into the evening many people seemed to have given up; Sophia and I were only two of a hand full of kids still scooting through the snowy streets with our pillow cases half-full of candy.

As we continued walking along the snow-covered sidewalks looking for houses with their lights on (indicating they were a sure stop for candy), we noticed that our pillow cases were getting fuller more quickly as snow accumulated compared to when we first ventured out at the beginning of the evening. I can only assume that because there weren't as many children out collecting candy that the Halloween-goers were gracious to share what they had with Sophia and me.

Our father followed us along in the truck. He scoped out city blocks with numerous well-lit houses to save us walking along the slack streets for maybe one or two stops; it was at this point the trick-or-treating turned into a business adventure of collecting as much candy as possible before it got too late...

We were raking in the treats as quickly as the snow accumulated along the streets and sidewalks. Some holiday-goers were even pouring their whole bowls of candy into our pillow cases! One cute elderly woman felt so badly for Sophia and me to be walking the streets in such horrific weather, she invited us into her house and allowed us to pick out stuffed animals from a

large cardboard box filled with treats and prizes for neighbourhood children to choose from! I picked out a plush white unicorn with a silver horn and pale blue/green hair.

Our father was having the time of his life dragging us around through the snow in his truck, helping us eat our chocolates (the ones we didn't particularly enjoy of course) and took us all over the northern portion of Minneapolis. Plough trucks came out as the snow got deeper and deeper; I believe we stopped in at our Aunt Barbie Dahlheimer's house at one point to empty our pillow cases. Together, we stock-piled enough chocolates and candy to last through to the following summer!

The painting *Halloween Snowstorm* (AJ Peckels, 2005) tells this story. I wrote the tale in the background of the image, over layers and layers of blue, gray and white washes of thin oil paints and turpentine; these layers represent the thick snow as it fell throughout the city limits.

Fresh snow is always the prettiest sight to behold, as it ages and freezes to the ground; the white colour is tainted by layers of boot prints, some dirty, animal tracks, icicles and grimy water that fall from the rooftops as the temperature rises and falls throughout the wintertime, car exhaust and so on...

But that night was a winter wonderland; we were the first to make tracks on the sidewalks and on the road. It was so quiet in the middle of the city, and it was ours to enjoy all by ourselves.

The old trailer license plate was given to me by my Uncle Mark DuBois, in this painting it symbolises my father's old Blue Ford truck and his determined efforts: trekking us through the snowstorm that night. The snow that melted on the grill, hood and windshield of his truck froze in place, and is depicted with old patterned glass in the image.

I am sure nearly three feet of snow fell on that autumn day/night of October 31, 1991. I do not believe I have seen three feet of snow fall in a single night, let alone an autumn evening, since that night so many years ago in Minneapolis.



BROWERVILLE, MINNESOTA

(CA. 2005: DALE AND SONNY ZIGAN, PHOTO 4" X 6" (10.16CM X 15.24 CM))

WINTER VIEW FROM BACKYARD OF DALE AND SONNY ZIGAN

II. Minnesota blue

Minnesota experiences harsh winters that last for months-on-end each year. There is a long-standing joke that there are only two annual seasons: winter and road construction, (the time of snow and the time to repair the roads for the next snowfall). The last five or six winters have not buried the State in snow, but wintry weather is still quite harsh and Minnesotans are not as lucky as one may believe.

Although the snow has not been falling in record amounts in recent years, residents continue to reminisce of blustery snowy days, and remain weary of unexpected storms. In this chapter, the Minneapolis metro-area childhood stomping-grounds of the Peckels and Zigan kids will be observed through text and imagery, incorporating sensory expression; coiling readers' minds around an average Minnesota winter.

There are countless objects considered synonymous to Minnesota winters. For example: skis, ice skates, snow, ice houses and sleds are common effects that could be found in other parts of the world where temperate winters bring similar weather phenomena to that of Minnesota. The goal of this chapter is to apply objects that are place-specific to Minnesota, and to utilise family interviews as a key connector to object and people, people and place.

Anderson (1997) explored the idea of inclusive heritage, in relation to researching and displaying culture. This approach incorporates personal memories and objects with attachment to family members as a way to grasp a system of activities celebrated in particular cultures. In this case, the focus is the Peckels and Zigan family personal interpretations of activities and objects utilised during Minnesota winter months.

The private, family rituals, such as those surrounding important milestones in the life-cycle, are difficult to interpret through places, and yet are essential aspects of our cultural heritage, intrinsic to an understanding of cultures, both historic and contemporary. (Anderson 1997, p7)

To summarise, the object to apply to this chapter must be specific to the Peckels and Zigan families in order to personalise their experiences and folklore of winter in Minnesota. Portable heritage are special objects to observed family members. Pictorial heritage consists mainly of paintings, photographs and other similar materials (Anderson 1997).

And finally, intangible heritage are the words spoken by residents that connect simple objects and activities that have no apparent value other than the functional opportunities some items render (Anderson 1997).

After applying Anderson's theory (described above) to this chapter, it was clear that the most personal and memorable item was a simple photograph of Arganius and Suzanne Peckels. There was no clear way to connect winter images, art, culture and life in Minnesota to the surveyed families without an inclusive approach to the subject matter.

We live in a material world. The way we see ourselves, or others in relation to ourselves, and the way we view our world is conditioned by the things which surround us. However we conceptualise culture, in contemporary society or in the past, it is entangled with the objects which give it tangible expression. (Anderson 1997, p5)

The images and narratives utilised in this chapter could have been over-looked by other researchers, but for the research participants, the items presented and their meanings are the most important.

Applying Anderson's inclusive approach enables one to take pleasure in the local history of Minnesota winters, and to read how two clans: the Peckels and the Zigans, make surviving winter possible, and furthermore, enjoyable.

This chapter incorporates photographs and interviews, quotes and imagery of Minnesota literature and arts. It has allowed the history to come to life through personal interpretation and photographs that trigger memories within family members of these tight-knit clans and how they make surviving winter not just possible, but enjoyable.

III. Winter in Minnesota

While going through the referenced Minnesota materials, I became aware that there is an unconcealed pride for surviving Minnesota winters. Contemporary ideals of Minnesota winter were most brilliantly presented by Thorkelson (2003):

Not everyone has what it takes to be a Minnesotan. Minnesotans are tough. We own rubber-soled boots and ice scrapers. We wield shovels and snow blowers and big plows. We wear down parkas. We buy snow tires. We know how to use jumper cables.

We also know the softer side of winter... outdoor nighttime parades that light up snowy streets; strangers with four-wheel drive and time to help; snow angels; snowmen; a fresh glistening blanket of white that makes everything seem clean and new. (Thorkelson 2003, pp18-19)

Harsh winters and tremendous blizzards have ceaselessly slammed the ice-covered grounds of Minnesota. The winter of 1888, the Armistice Day blizzard of 1940 and Halloween snow storm in 1991 were a few of the most famous snow falls in Minnesota (TMHS 2003c). Despite snow storms where metres fell silently and cruel reporters who deemed Minnesota "...unfit for human habitation...", (TMHS 2003c, np) settlers and migrants have adapted a unique lifestyle. Minnesotans have incorporated cruel winters, and found ways to benefit from each season. Work, fun, and outdoor sport continue even when the land is frozen.

IV. Ice-palaces: A winter wonderland

Minnesota winter outdoor activities/sports include: ice-skating, skiing, curling, figure skating, ice-hockey, sledding/tobogganing, dog-sledding, snow-shoeing, and ice-fishing (Larson 1998). Winter celebrations, ice-fishing tournaments and the largest winter get-together: the St. Paul Winter Carnival, all operate to promote community interaction and pleasurable winter events.

Originally, the St. Paul Winter Carnival was established to break down bad press barriers, which deemed Minnesota 'uninhabitable' for migrants and U.S. citizens alike, as early as the 1880s (TMHS 2003c).



SAINT PAUL WINTER CARNIVAL ICE PALACE
(1992, KEVIN MCDANIELS- CARTWHEEL CO.,
POSTCARD, 5" X 7" (12.7CM X 17.78CM))

For a century and a half, Minnesota's winters have exercised the descriptive powers of all breeds of writers. Reporters, diarists, humorists, and historians have by this time fairly exhausted resources of the English language on the subject.

The image of Minnesota as a land of endless snow and bristling cold invariably grips the minds of outsiders- and even some of the faint-hearted among its own citizenry... How the image originated and became fixed in the public imagination is one of the main historical backdrops to the story of Minnesota's long history of winter celebrations.
(Larson 1998, p13)

The St. Paul Ice Palace and Winter Carnival Association was formally designed on November 2, 1885 (Larson 1998). The 1885-86 St. Paul Winter Carnival and other winter celebrations throughout the state from that year onwards involved Minnesotans from all frozen corners of the State. Events at festivals included everything from great ice-fishing contests (even eel-pout fishing), ice-skating, winter parades, hockey and many other exhibitions.

It was said that the first winter carnival exposed Minnesotans to a new view of winter time: "Snowshoeing was born, tobogganing was introduced to tens of thousands, curling was plucked out of its Scottish closet, and ice skating began its return to popularity... (Larson 1998, p64)" Many other winter activities in communities and in front yards across the State also took hold; they included making snowmen and flooding yards to make homemade ice-skating rinks.

V. Winter with the Zigans, Brooklyn Center Minnesota

Snow sculptures in various forms and designs have been recorded pictorially over the years at winter carnivals and in front yards of suburban homes throughout the Minneapolis/St. Paul region and surrounding suburb.

One Zigan child associated winter time with ice-skating in the front yard and building snow structures during winter months. Barb Peckels told the author of these times in her childhood through the following account:

Interview with Barb Peckels (September 2006)

BP: "When I was growing up, and we had to play outside in the winter time- *had to*- kids *had to* play outside no matter what it was; summer, winter...

And in the winter time, instead of making snowmen, (I don't know where whose idea it was, or who taught us this), we'd make snow-horses...

And we'd just... you'd form a horse sitting on the ground. One that you could climb on and sit on... and play on it! So we'd make snow-horses right in the front yard, and had a blast! I remember doing the snow-horses all the time.

There might be a photo some place of a snow-horse.

The only other thing about the snow in Minnesota when I was young... I remember making tunnels in the snow; that's how deep it was, you know? We could make tunnels in the snow. We could make igloos in the snow.

And when you kids, [talking about my sisters and me; offspring of her Baby-Boom Generation...] by the time you were born it was like... it hasn't snowed at all. And now it's even worse, with the Earth changing... yep."

After I recorded this interview, and viewed the winter photos submitted by my mother, there was a noticeable difference in the amount of snow that fell in our backyards in Minnesota when I was young (1980s) compared to when my mother was young (1950s and early 1960s). My mother recounted these facts alongside her memories of youth; there seemed to be much more snowfall in her youth than in mine.

The images connected to this interview were taken at the Zigan Fremont Avenue home in Brooklyn Center, this home no longer resides in Minnesota, nor does the neighbourhood it was once immersed within. These images and memories were a rare opportunity to share life in the Brooklyn Center region before the Interstate highway took its place.



BROOKLYN CENTER, MINNESOTA

(CA. 1958, PHOTOGRAPH, 2" X 3" (5.08CM X 7.62CM))

BARBARA J PECKELS ON SNOW-HORSE AT FREMENT AVENUE HOME



BROOKLYN CENTER, MINNESOTA

(CA. 1966, PHOTOGRAPH, 2" X 3" (5.08CM X 7.62CM))

BARBARA J PECKELS AND MARY KAY ZIGAN AT FREMENT AVENUE HOME



GIRL ICE-FISHING
(2005, AJ PECKELS, MULTI-MEDIUM:
OIL PAINTS, GLASS, CHARCOAL,
GRAPHITE, INK, 24" X 18" (60.96CM
X45.72CM)

VI. Girl Ice-Fishing

This image speaks volumes for me; it is one of my favourite paintings. All of the memories that rush through my mind while writing this winter chapter can all be placed into the *Girl Ice-Fishing*. A couple of my favourite winter time stories have been included in this chapter, but are not brought back to life by merely talking about the past, I visualise it as well, almost as if my mother had recorded these scenes with her old video camera.

This painting has contained my thoughts without words. When drawing the hole in the ice I recall immediately thinking about how I would display it. While out on the lake during the winter, the layer of ice that forms is like a wall between the water and the cold air. Water and wildlife are just beneath my feet and I had to portray this feeling in the image; thus the glass on canvas effect. Choosing the glass was difficult, as ice on the lake is not smooth like an ice-skating rink, it is rough: the ice shifts and cracks and the snow on the surface melts and piles up. The glass needed to show these things.

I went to a few second hand shops, trying to envision ice on the lake during the winter in Minnesota, it was easier thinking about the cold in the heat and my trip did not take as long as I expected. I wanted glass that was not flat and that had a texture to it; I eventually found a couple of plates shaped like flowers, probably for a punchbowl set, and knew these plates would be perfect for the illustration.

The original image was a photograph taken at a St. Paul Winter Carnival back in the 1950s, I felt that image and my memories would come to life by bright blues on the ice contrasted by reds worn by the girl and the black Labrador's winter coat of fur. Ice houses and fishermen can be seen great distances while driving along lake roads; everything is covered in white snow so it doesn't take much for colour to stand out on frozen Minnesota lakes.

I loved ice-fishing just as much as I enjoyed sledding and ice-skating. When winter comes along, all of these activities stay at the back of my mind, I have not done any of these things in nearly six years and I miss them most when I think of winter in Minnesota. This image is my tribute to the people who I shared these adventures with and to a winter time from my past.



LAKE OF THE WOODS, MINNESOTA

(JANUARY 1992, WILLIAM AND BARBARA J PECKELS, TWO PHOTOGRAPHS, 2 X 4" X 6" (10.16CM X 15.24CM))

BILL AND BARB PECKELS ICE-FISHING ON LAKE OF THE WOODS

VII. A winter dream channelled through photograph

Wintertime for Minnesotans The singular object emphasised in this chapter, is a seemingly straightforward photograph of Arganius Peckels with one of his five daughters, Suzanne. During interviews with both the Peckels and the Zigan clans, photographs of family members were shown to interviewed individuals in order to steer participants back in time; these objects guided family members through their thoughts and memories... an intangible heritage yes, but not yet forgotten.

To begin, I handed Sue a list of topics: Minnesota icons such as Paul Bunyan and Babe the Blue Ox, the Mississippi River, 10,000 lakes, winter, snow, the Minneapolis Mills and so on... and while we were pondering these ideas I had played a slideshow of Peckels imagery for Suzanne Noyes to view... there was a photo within this series of images I really wanted Sue to see; it contained Arganius and her. I noticed that there weren't many photos of the Peckels children with their father, and once the image came up, everything about its content and narrative that read between these lines transformed the image.

Sue was so excited to see the photograph of Arganius holding her as a child she called her family members into the room to get a look at the image as well (this gathering lasted a few minutes before I could begin recording); because of the animated reactions prior to the recording of the following interview, I knew this photograph would become a significant object in the thesis. But where was I going to place the object in context with the thesis?

This photograph was the sole conversation piece in the Sue Noyes interview. As her interview drew to a close, five more family members drifted into the living room when Sue called out to them; she was pleased to show the photograph to her husband and two of her children.

The group later sat down and looked through the photo gallery set aside for the Peckels interviews and spoke of many things: places, activities, individuals, and memories only this set of siblings could recall... they hold the key that unlocks the memories of their elders who have passed and to their own generation's evolution in Minnesota culture.



NORTH MINNEAPOLIS, MINNESOTA
(CA. 1956, PHOTOGRAPH, 3" X 2"
(7.62CM X 5.08CM))

ARGANIUS J PECKELS HOLDING SUE NOYES
WITH SURROUNDING FAMILY MEMBERS

Interview with Sue Noyes (August 2006)

AJP: 'We're recording...'

'We're looking at a photo of Arganius and Sue, and I'm here with Sue. We went through all the topics for the book, and Sue gave me some hints/tips on some of the topics like the mills and mining (and stuff like that).

'But right now we're going to talk about the photo...

'Sue, you were telling me before [I began recording] about the snow suit [you're wearing in the image], and how it made you feel... uh, hit it, woman!'

SN: "Well I was young. I don't remember the 'thing' exactly being there, but I remember the smells and the touches and the feel of things..."

AJP: 'Do you remember what color it was?'

SN: "Yeah, it was tan... and Dad's jacket [was tan as well]. I can remember the feel of that, and the smell of the cigarette in his mouth all of the time."

AJP: 'Yeah, I guess I can relate...' [My father Bill Peckels (one of Sue's big brothers) also smoked.]

SN: "You know, you can always remember that smell..."

AJP: 'What did the jacket smell like to you?'

SN: "Back then... it was comforting."

[There was a bit of a pause... I felt as if she could maybe describe it for the readers...]

AJP: 'Did it smell like sandalwood or cedar? Where did you keep it?'

SN: "Umm... it was just... It was just his smell."

AJP: 'The suit smelled the same?'

SN: "No. I don't know how [it smelled]... It was umm... Like a smell; if you took a quilt out of a cedar chest, yeah it smelled a bit like that."

AJP: 'And is that hood part of it [I pointed to the item placed on her head in the image]? Or is it separate [to the suit]?'

SN: "No, that was separate. I had a scarf tied on... it was a babushka!" [Sue said babushka with quite enthusiasm; I could tell her memories were coming back to her at this point... she was smiling at the photograph]

AJP: 'Oh cute, a babushka!'

SN: "The knot isn't on the chin at that point..." [She laughed as we looked closer and could see she was correct: the knot was not on her chin]!

AJP: 'You're too little...'

SN: "Yep."

AJP: 'You'd untie that!'

SN: "Yep."

AJP: 'How old do you think you are in that photo?'

SN: "I'm less than one [year old]. I'm thinking this is probably October, November, of 1956. (Because) I was born in January, and that's fall [autumn] definitely. The leaves are gone off the tree. So I'm thinking November '56."

AJP: 'So wouldn't it be a bit nippy outside?'

SN: "Uh huh..."

AJP: 'Looks like all the grass is dead too...'

SN: "Yep. And look how old it is [the background imagery in the photograph]... there's no trees... well one. But you go there now and it's a forest! Strange... [Sue paused for a short period]

"You're Grandpa [Arganius] was always so big to you [to Sue], but I guess he was little..."

[I've never met my Grandfather Arganius, he died when my dad was only ten years old, or when Sue was six years old, but I though he would have been tall like my father, who is five foot eleven inches]...

AJP: 'No way...'

SN: "Yep. Ask your Dad."

AJP: 'He looks so much like Jimmy [another of the Peckels siblings]. I see a lot of Dad in him too... and Chico [Jerald Peckels, another sibling]. I see all the boys.'

SN: "I looked the most like him out of all of the girls."

AJP: 'Yeah, I'd say... you've got the '*shnoz*' [sic: the predominant Peckels nose]...!'

SN: 'Thanks, Alesha!' [Sarcasm... followed by laughter from both of us]

AJP: 'Hey I've got it too [the Peckels nose]!

SN: "I don't have my glasses on... do I have shoes on [in the photo]?"

AJP: 'Yeah, they're boots or something, but they look untied... you can kind of see the laces.' [I pointed to the image, and Sue and I had a closer look at the screen.]

SN: "Yep. I had high-top shoes. That's how I got my name [nickname]. I was called 'Punky.' Archie's Dad (Uncle Eddie, Arganius's brother), they called him 'Unky'... and I was the fattest kid, so then I was 'Punky.' It's something I'll never live down." [Sue laughed]

[At this point in the interview Sue's husband and kids, Mike and Libby, also came in to see what we were talking about. Then my Aunt Chris Goodin and Great-Uncle Archie also came through to look at the photo of Sue and Arganius... everyone was chatting about the image and wanted to see others].

SN: [Sue addressed the audience at this point]. "...That's the only photo of Dad and I..."

CG: "Really? I don't think I have any pictures of Dad and me... [Chris Goodin looked closer at the image to get a better idea of where the photograph was taken]. That was at Auntie's house... [Unsure of where photograph was taken, possibly at the Morgan residence]"

SN: "Yep. Weird, weird, weird... You know that jacket, [pointing to Arganius and his coat in the photo]?"

CG: "Yes I do."

SN: "I remember that jacket..."

AJP: 'Does it have fringe?'

SN: "Uh huh..."

CG: "Yep."

AJP: 'He was hip!' [I giggled... I had not noticed the fringe on Arganius's coat up to that point... it looked like a nice leather jacket. I found out later that it was made for him by a family friend; it was made of deerskin]

SN: "That's what he'd wear to church too! [It was] probably the only jacket he had..."

CG: "He'd wear that everywhere!"

[There was a short silence amongst the group...]

SN: "Gosh..."

AJP: 'It's a cute photo...' [I reflected over all of the data just uncovered about this one seemingly small old family photograph]

SN: "It is... darling..."

In the chapter introduction I briefly discussed how memories are attached to objects through an inclusive heritage method of recording history (Anderson 1997); my auntie Sue has proved otherwise. Not only did the image of my grandfather bring forth memories from Suzanne's childhood, it touched upon her sense of smell. She envisioned her father, his fringed leather jacket, and the smell of him; she put herself back in his arms as in the image.

When my family tells me stories, they ensure I know exactly how it felt to be in their shoes as children. This essay goes beyond the boundaries of a formal gathering of data; it exposes a familial sense of history, my family's history in Minnesota. My aunts and uncles tell stories as Sue did about Arganius at every family gathering, it is commonplace for the Peckels and the Zigans, but what makes these narratives special in this thesis is that they were captured on record and preserved as they were felt by those who lived them. My family members are reliving their lives to share with others and to honour their past.



CENTRAL MINNESOTA

(CA. LATE 1950s, BLACK AND WHITE MEDIUM FORMAT NEGATIVE, 2" X 3" (5.08CM X 7.62CM))

ARGANIUS J PECKELS POSING NEAR WOOD PILE (LATE WINTER)

VIII. Winter linoleum cuts

While creating art work during the course of this research, I began to re-trace my steps through time and pulled stories out of my memory bank just as my family had in their interviews. It became necessary to be able to match the emotion my family put forth through narrative and imagery in my own art work. In this winter exploration of Minnesota, many images came to mind and so a series of linoleum cuts were created and included alongside my family's connection to our space in Minnesota.

The choice of linoleum cuts and the system in which I applied my art was quite simple. Many of the memories that brought forth the imagery portrayed in this thesis were from my childhood, as were the stories told by my parents and their brothers and sisters. I wanted to portray my memories from a child's eye and hand.

The reason I chose to portray memories in this way was simply: when I sat down to interview family members, aunts and uncles, parents and grandparents... their adult demeanour, their title and authority seemed to melt away and the child within came forth to tell the stories of our family's past in the present time. It seemed as if there was no gap in time from when these events played out to when they were recorded and repeated on paper.

In saying this, I created four linoleum cuts which display winter imagery. Having the ability to print the images multiple times allows the stories to be shared over and over again, as can my family's memories and connection to place also recorded in this chapter. These images and their stories are paired with their own stories and are told chronologically.

The first cut image was what I considered my first lesson in art: as a child the one of the foremost objects I learned to draw, and did draw over and over again, was a called a 'v-tree.' One of my grade school friend's mothers taught me how to draw these trees and I have never forgotten. It was refreshing to sketch something permanently into the linoleum as lastingly as it had been etched in my own memories.

This tree image is the first v-tree I portrayed with any colour or seasonal-influence. *Winter Tree* (AJ Peckels, 2006) was also the first of the winter linoleum cuts that I completed.

The second linoleum image is called *Snowflake* (AJ Peckels, 2007). I found it much easier to appreciate the blustery Minnesota winter months after moving to a complete opposite climate in the hot and sticky tropical North Queensland.

As children, my sisters and I attended St. Bridget's Catholic School in North Minneapolis. The school was old, as I remember, and during the wintertime the classrooms were quite chilly. The classrooms were fitted with large windows that ran along one or more whole walls. With the each new season, we the students were allowed to decorate these empty window canvases with scenes that could be viewed from the three sides of the school.

During winter months, we made paper snowflakes and Christmas chains that hung throughout the hallways and on display our large classroom windows. To make these paper snowflakes we would: cut circles in construction paper, fold the circle in to eighth or tenth portions, and cut various patterns throughout the slices. You had to be careful not to cut through the whole wedge of paper, as you would lose the snowflake shape. These snowflakes and winter scenes would fill the windows at St. Bridget's Catholic School. It is with this care I made the snowflake image.

The third linoleum cut is called *Heatwave* (AJ Peckels, 2007). Clearly ironic in title, but I named the icehouse pictured in this image after a movie that was filmed in Wabasha Minnesota called *Grumpy Old Men*. The film evolves around cold Minnesota wintertime, fishing tales, ice-fishing and icehouses.

In the opening scenes of the movie, one catches a glimpse of snow and ice and a frozen lake in Wabasha Minnesota, but there is a song playing in the background: "...We're having a heatwave, a tropical heatwave... the temperature's rising, it isn't surprising..." and so on. Whenever I drive along a lakeside during the wintertime and can see little groups of icehouses sitting on the lakes, I think of this song and it makes me laugh.



WINTER TREE
WINTER LINOLEUM CUTS I.

(2006, AJ PECKELS, LINOLEUM CUT,
10" X 8" (25.4CM X 20.32CM))



SNOWFLAKE
WINTER LINOLEUM CUTS II.

(2007, AJ PECKELS, LINOLEUM CUT,
4" X 4" (10.16CM X 10.16CM))



"Heat Wave" 1/10 AJ 2007

HEAT WAVE
WINTER LINOLEUM CUTS III.

(2007, AJ PECKELS, LINOLEUM CUT,
5.5" X 2.5" (13.97CM X 6.35CM))

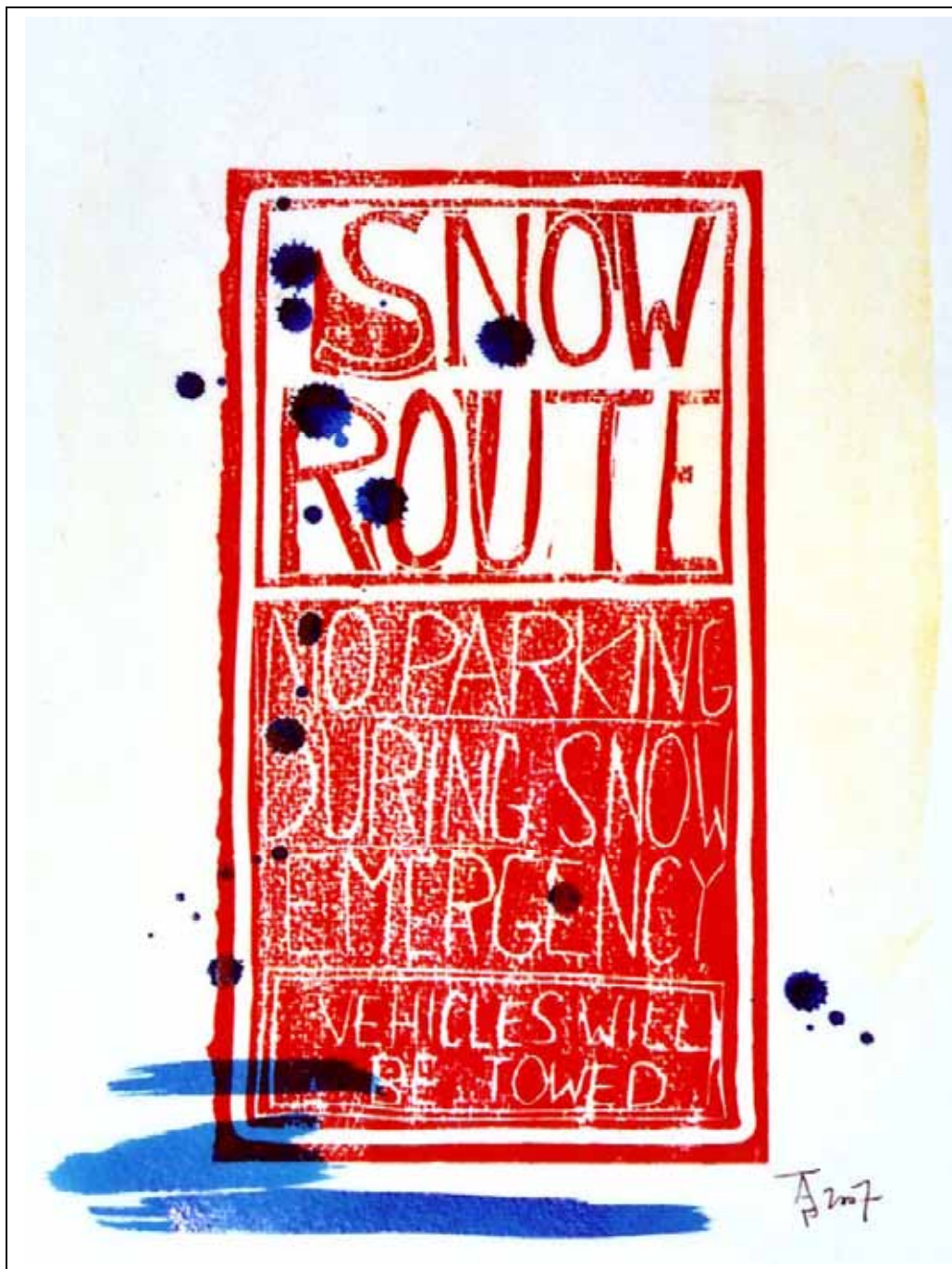
The winter months are host to some of the best annual events and outdoor activities in Minnesota. The cold can be tolerated if you have the will to find something fun to do no matter the temperature! It is a way of life in Minnesota; these cold months hold countless memories for me and my family: ice castles, ice-skating, snow-horses. These times and imagery also remind us of our family members who have passed on and of spaces that exist only in dreams. We grow older but we do not forget our connection to place and objects; the two become synonymous.

The final linoleum cut was a symbol of winter I learned to look out for with age. As I grew, I realised winter fun and activities do come with a cost; driving through the snow and ice for months on end each year is no treat in Minnesota. When I read that a New York reporter once claimed in 1886 that the winter season was ‘...unfit for human habitation...,’ (TMHS 2003c, np), from this perspective, I could not agree more.

When I was forced to adjust my driving techniques for black ice and layers of compacted snow on the road, I became torn between the favouring the parts of winter that I longed for as a child, and being disgusted with winter as it took over every part of daily life. Simple tasks like driving to and from work or university courses became extremely nerve-racking and strenuous tasks. But then I thought of the little things: ice-skating, sledding, skiing, and ice-fishing on the lake with my father... The cold can be tolerated and it is a way of life in Minnesota; I can live and enjoy winter simultaneously.

Snow Route (AJ Peckels, 2007), my final winter linoleum cut, was drawn from a photograph I had taken on a recent visit to Minnesota (2006). Although it was neither winter nor snowing, I quickly took a photograph of a road sign I had seen and read countless times and for some reason, I could not put this image out of my mind.

This street sign symbolised the winter I knew as an adult, but reminded me there are more good times than bad during the winter months in Minnesota. Minnesota winters hold some of the best times for my family and me. The narratives and imagery are glimpses of these times; they connect our personal heritage to our space in Minnesota.



SNOW ROUTE
WINTER LINOLEUM CUTS IV.

(2007, AJ PECKELS, LINOLEUM
CUT/MULTI-MEDIUM: WATERCOLOUR
PAINTS, INK,
16.5" X 11.7" (41.91CM X 29.72CM))

IX. Reflecting on pictorial and intangible discoveries

My Auntie Sue Noyes (2006) explained everything about the photo; connecting it to her Polish ancestry (the babushka), to the Minneapolis region where the picture was taken, and to a wintery November so many years ago. The image reminded Suzanne Noyes of winter. Although her experiences linked to this image were from her childhood, she nonetheless held them close; even in adulthood. These emotions and connections to the photograph could not have been made without the inclusion of a personal narrative.

Without obtaining the pictorial and intangible heritage necessary to tell this photograph's story, it would simply be another countless image in historic storage; there would be no voice to guide a gazing eye through the piece. Noyes (2006) explored her senses, linking smells to her father and her long forgotten winter jacket. She placed colours with items in the photo and noted upon details any other viewer may have seen as trivial.

This interview pin-pointed the Minneapolis region back in 1956 during the winter months, but it is more; a visual connection of a daughter to her father. It has been advantageous for the reader, outsider or Minnesota insider, to experience winter on a personal account. Anderson's theory on the importance of object and place alongside the definition of the object, or photograph in this instance, (1997) have proved to be an effective method of capturing personal heritage in text; through an application of an inclusive heritage approach, it is possible to fill the gaps of local history/public activity and private family rituals.

Re-reading the above materials, and taking out any personal records, (interviews, photographs and memories), the contents of this essay, would be just snippets of history; meaningless shells of data void of people and personal objects. Locating people place is possible through one small black and white photograph: Suzanne Noyes is pictured with her father Arganius Peckels, and she found comfort in her father's arms, phenomenologically immersed in his unique fatherly scent... The image and her narrative have demonstrated how Polish-German Minnesotans made themselves at home in the world through the memories that cling to seemingly 'mundane' objects, such as photos or winter coats.

3 CANS tomato soup

2 1/2 CANS WATER

1 Bay leaf

8 cups Cooked Rice

Brown hamburger, onions &
green pepper
Chapter 8
Bake at 400° for 30 minutes.

Reflections.



Chapter Eight: Reflections

I. Summary

The aim of this thesis was to observe how a particular extended family of Polish-German Minnesotans made themselves at home in the world through their cultural objects and creative activities. In order to do this, it was first necessary to locate the families and their origins, and then place these migrant families in Minnesota. Second, it was important to explore Minnesota so as to present the unique qualities of both place and people discussed in the thesis. Finally, only after including a personal narrative of place, the objective could be met, and it had become possible to document and share a personal view of home in Minnesota.

Each chapter integrates local history, personal narrative, imagery and special objects. The connections between these key ingredients would not have been obtained without the assistance of the Peckels and Zigan clans. By including family members in the research process, a phenomenological approach to researching place had occurred; the personal images and objects came to life through story. Their words brought forth smells and tastes, touch and emotion. It is this connection between people and objects, objects and place where one can find their home in the world, as did the Peckels and Zigan clans. To further explain, Bachelard once said:

The minute we apply a glimmer of consciousness to a mechanical gesture, or practice phenomenology while polishing a piece of old furniture, we sense new impressions come into being beneath this familiar domestic duty. For consciousness rejuvenates everything, giving a quality of beginning to the most everyday actions. It even dominates memory.

How wonderful it is to really become once more the inventor of a mechanical action! And so, when a poet rubs a piece of furniture- even vicariously- when he puts a little fragrant wax on his table with the woollen cloth that lends warmth to everything it touches, he creates a new object; he increases the object's human dignity; he registers this object officially as a member of the human household. (Bachelard 1994, p67)

The Peckels and Zigan clans give personal significance to images and objects that may have appeared simply as a photograph of a man holding a child (pp246-251), or a gentleman standing near the shores of a water bank (p139). The images and places would be void of emotion or memories. But when the Peckels and Zigan clans tell their stories, they connect themselves through words, expression and sentiment to a time a place that stands out so significantly, they can replay events, smells, and past emotions through plain objects and places such as photographs and water fronts. It is these objects, places, and activities that become part of their everyday lives which assist in creating a unique home in the world.

There is no other research that could connect these two Minnesota clans to their home the way they have assisted in the research process in this distinctive thesis. It steps out of the boundaries of a written page, and into the hearts and homes of the Peckels and Zigans; it is a look into a unique way of living in the world as they know it to be today.

The conclusion realised upon completion of this thesis is as follows: one cannot find oneself in the world without first honouring and recalling the past and the community with which one is associated and to which one is related. Everyday community objects a person passes or handles could end up having significant meaning to that individual and phenomenally bring dreams of the past to life for that person. These memories and connections to daily activities and items work as a means to guide a person towards the people that mean the most to them; these simple historic markers become roadmaps home.

As the researcher, I felt more privileged to compile my family's narrative, and to be able to show them how individual their story and their place in the world as they see it. We will always have our personal history in our memories and dreams, but it is possible through research and recording these stories of place, we can now preserve and share our story with anyone who desires to step into an individual Minnesota home.

Time is?

I dream

I wake

I wonder why

Why is life so long

Why is one year not one day

And one day not an hour

My God, if time was like this, I wouldn't have time to
~~borrow~~

For life, or love, or even fear

'Cause it would be over tomorrow

I guess that's why it's like it is

And not the way we want

Because our life is something dear

and not a thing to miss

James F. Peckels

TIME IS? : POEM, JAMES F. PECKELS, DATE N/A

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