



September 2025

The Story of “Florence” by Judy Payne RHS Archivist



A new acquisition to the archives of the Historical Society is “Florence” a Bru Doll.

Trish Peterson donated “Florence.” The Doll is a Bru #3. The #3 means that she is an 18” doll and is a general doll made by Bru. Bru manufactured 3 types of dolls: a fashion doll, a general children’s doll, and a baby doll. Bru’s first product in 1866 was the fashion doll, which could be purchased with or without clothing. The costumes for the dressed dolls were designed by Appolyne Bru. Eugene Barrios originally supplied the bisque heads.

The 1872 catalog offered a wide variety of options to choose from including two types of bisque, fur or mohair wigs, and several costumes. Dolls could have a kid body with wooden arms or a partially or entirely joined wooden body. There were twelve sizes of heads.

In 1876 child dolls or “Bebe’s” made in a wide range of sizes were introduced.

As Bru’s reputation grew, collectors and children alike sought out these distinctive dolls, drawn by the meticulous craftsmanship and the variety of features that could be selected to create a truly personalized companion. Over time, the company continued to innovate, offering new body types and facial expressions to reflect evolving tastes. Many of the dolls were cherished family heirlooms, with their delicate bisque faces and carefully tailored clothing bearing witness to generations of play and admiration.

Today, a Bru doll like the one donated by Trish Peterson serves as an enduring example of 19th-century dollmaking craftsmanship, preserving a legacy of creativity and meticulous workmanship that remains of significant interest to both collectors and historians.

The enduring appeal of Bru dolls lies not only in their beauty, but also in the stories they carry—each bearing subtle marks of past owners and eras, with minor repairs or lovingly replaced garments adding new chapters to their ongoing histories. Today, collectors value the rarity of original pieces and the subtle variations that distinguish one doll from another, whether it is the delicate hue of bisque, the artistry of hand-painted features, or the remnants of a carefully sewn dress. As these artifacts find their way into museums and private collections, they invite both admiration and research, inspiring fresh insights into the artistry and industry of 19th-century toymaking.

The Bru doll from Trish Peterson, with its unique provenance and characteristic charm, continues this tradition, reminding us that beyond their value as collectibles, such dolls serve as gentle custodians of memory and imagination.



Roseville Heritage Trail Updates

Roseville's Heritage Trail was established in 1976 as a bicentennial project. The trail was designed to inform Roseville residents about aspects of the community's history. It highlights various buildings and sites that have played roles in Roseville's development since before it became a village or city.

A committee of seven, chaired by Lorraine Schaefer, conducted research and established the trail. Their process included interviewing community members and visiting multiple locations prior to designing a map, which City Hall later printed for distribution. These maps were made available to individuals and organizations to facilitate navigation of the trail by automobile or bicycle.

Initially, 24 sites were selected as points of interest. Bill Brown designed metal signs marking these sites, and Gopher Sign company of Saint Paul manufactured them. The City of Roseville's Engineering department assisted with installation, placing signs using public right-of-way or yard setbacks to avoid private property.

Bill Brown also created oil paintings depicting many of the heritage sites; these are displayed at City Hall and the Roseville Historical Museum.

This information is based on a handwritten summary archived at the Roseville Historical Museum. Plans are underway to update the Heritage Trail, including enhanced presentation on the website. Project updates are forthcoming.

Thank You to Dallas Leier and Sheila Gniffke Pribyll for working on the latest trail updates and this article.

Remembering Loni Anderson



Our community remembers Loni Anderson (1945–2025), the talented actress who brought laughter to millions through her role as Jennifer Marlowe on WKRP in Cincinnati.

Before her Hollywood career, Loni was part of our own story here in Roseville—she was crowned Miss Roseville and carried that hometown pride with her throughout her life.

Though she went on to shine on television screens across the country, Roseville always remained a special part of her roots.

A Message from Heritage Director Sharon Pillen



Hello Everyone,

As summer concludes, canning season is underway for products scheduled to be sold in November and December. Please keep November 3rd through the 7th open as well as Dec 1st through December 7th for our sales. Our signs will be out on the days of the sale. Please let your families and friends know so they don't miss our specials.

During the sale days Volunteers needed to assist with greeting guests, packaging products, and setting up displays. If you're available, please call the office and leave a message if there is no answer.

Grannies' attic offers unique gifts, and our "Grannies Hallmark" store features budget-friendly prices.

We will again have the small breads in decorative packages, sugar cookies in tins and a candy assortment for gift giving.

My year is coming to a close for being your hostess at the membership meetings and your Heritage director for ten years I am grateful for your friendship and all your donations you have given me for making our sales possible. I will be stepping aside for a new director and will help in any way I can. Every year from our sales we have been able to pay for our everyday expenses for the year. The grants we apply for have given us funds for special items needed. Donations from the membership are always welcomed; and put to effective use to maintain our museum.

Our sales cover annual expenses, while grants fund special projects. Member donations are always appreciated and used to maintain our museum.

As you downsize remember us with your new and old items. We are always looking for that special vintage item to put into our collections or repurpose to sell at our sale. Please think of us as you sort your treasures.

The US Marines Corp has a line—"We need a few good men." The Historical Society has changed words to say: Your **membership and volunteerism when you can to keep our community alive is needed.**

Some Things Think About

"A diamond is forever."

"When you care enough send the very best."

"There are somethings money cannot buy."

"Impossible is nothing"

"Open happiness"

October Speaks

Mary Overson



The air is crisp
The sky is blue
The grass is wet
with morning dew

October nudges summer
"It is time to go
But in your place
I'll leave a paintbrush show"

"I'll turn the leaves
to red and gold
to warm your heart
against the cold"

I'll prepare the earth
for winter's sleep
But the promise of Spring
I vow to keep"

RHS Board Members

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Mark Lowe

Vice President
Dick Wenkel

Heritage Director
Sharon Pillen

Archivist
Judith Payne

Secretary
Linda Valois

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Committee Chairs

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Historian
Gloria Sandberg

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Ila Black

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RHS Meeting and Events

September 15, 2025

Membership meeting in the Fireside room at the Oval at 5:30pm

- A program on Antique Clocks and Clock Repair will be presented by Brent Glommen @630pm.
- Members and Guests are encouraged to bring a clock for display.
- Please do not bring a Valuable Clock

October 16, 2025

Board meeting 4:30 in the Willow Room in City Hall

December 8, 2025

- * Annual Membership meeting and Holiday Gathering at 5:00pm in the Fireside Room at the Oval
- * Holiday Dinner and Entertainment
- * Minnesota Choral Singers will present Christmas Around the World
- * The event will cost \$15.00 per person.

*******SAVE THE DATES*******

RHS Sale Dates

- November 3rd through the 7th
- Dec 1st through December 7th

To have a successful sale we will need volunteers to help staff it more information on shift times and how to sign up will be coming soon.

Membership Form

Name _____ Date _____
Address _____
City _____ State _____ Zip _____
Email _____ Phone _____

Mail completed form with your check to: _____ Individual membership \$10.00/year
Roseville Historical Society _____ Family membership \$15.00/year
2660 Civic Center Drive _____ Donation
Roseville, MN 55113

The Roseville Historical Society is a 501(c)(3) organization. Money given above membership amount is tax deductible. All memberships are for the calendar year (January – December).

Roseville Historical
Society 2660 Civic
Center Drive
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55113