

BELTRAMI BICENTENNIAL

June 24, 2023

Buena Vista Ski Area

and

June 25, 2023

Beltrami County History Center

PROGRAM

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INDIVIDUAL CONTRIBUTORS

Mary A. Foster · Sharon Fruetel in Memory of Harold and Erma Fruetel ·
Harriet A. Tesch · Sharon Geisen · Herman Bohlmann in Memory of Ed Bohlmann · John Eggers ·
Ann & Kent Wilson in Memory of K.E. "Red" and Ruth Wilson · David Quam · Francis Kiefer

BELTRAMI'S "TRANS-ATLANTIC PROMENADE":

AN ITALIAN EXPLORER AMONG NATIVE AMERICANS IN EARLY MINNESOTA



In 1823, Count Giacomo Costantino Beltrami (1779-1855), from Bergamo, and Filottrano, Italy, embarked on a search for the sources of the Mississippi River and the Red River of the North in northern Minnesota. His account of his adventures was published in French in New Orleans in 1824 and in English in London in 1828, "A Pilgrimage in Europe and America: Leading to the Discovery of the Sources of the Mississippi and Bloody River." Previously, in Italy, Beltrami had served in Napoleon's Grand Army, as a judge in Macerata, and had frequented a salon in Florence with such notables as Vittorio Alfieri, Ugo Foscolo and Lord Byron. After the fall of Napoleon, which led to his exile, and grieving the loss of his dear friend Giulia Spada de' Medici, Beltrami went on a long journey, leading him to the United States, and later to Mexico, Haiti, London, Paris and Heidelberg. In his Pilgrimage, he describes his journey, while wading in an uncharted river alongside his beloved birchbark canoe as a "transatlantic promenade."

In a steamboat heading upriver from St. Louis, in mid-April 1823, he met an Indian agent, Lawrence Taliaferro, and General William Clark, who facilitated his interest in native peoples. At Fort St Anthony (later Fort Snelling), near what is now Minneapolis, he joined the expedition of Stephen Long heading north towards Pembina along the Canadian border. Beltrami's interest in the Native Americans he met over five months in early Minnesota, primarily the Sioux (Dakota), and the Chippewa (Ojibwe), inspired him to write first-hand accounts of their habits, customs, and beliefs. He also collected numerous objects, such as ceremonial pipes, medicine bags, drums, flutes, and cradleboards. At a time when white Europeans had no respect for the indigenous peoples of the Americas, Beltrami in Minnesota collected one of the earliest written accounts of the Sioux language, "The Sioux Vocabulary" of 1823. In Mexico, he collected the first translation of the Gospel into Aztec, written on agave paper. He shipped some thirty containers of material artefacts to Italy, which are housed today in the Museo Civico E. Caffi in Bergamo.

In 1866, the state of Minnesota named a northern county after Beltrami, as well as a lake, an island, and a park in Northeast Minneapolis. In the summer of 2020, during the social unrest following the murder of George Floyd, a statue of Christopher Columbus outside the Minnesota State Capitol in St. Paul was toppled by activists. A letter to the editor by John P. Gwinn in the Minneapolis Star and Tribune "An Italian explorer Minnesota could love" proposed replacing Columbus with a statue of Beltrami: "although wrong in his geographic calculations, [he] deserves a spot in our heart, and our legacy, for being the first Italian to wander recklessly through Minnesota's forests in search of glory. He certainly didn't hurt anybody, and probably provided a bit of a comic diversion during that hot summer of 1823" (July 8, 2020).

Count Giacomo Costantino Beltrami was much more than a loveable Italian goofball, as this writer implies. His intellectual, literary and political background as a European aristocrat framed his encounters with Native Americans, which merit more widespread attention. While his accomplishments were contested by contemporary writers, Beltrami's subsequent fame was utilized by state authorities in the historical process of colonizing the lands of the Dakota and Ojibwe.

John P. Welle
Professor of Italian, Emeritus
University of Notre Dame

SATURDAY, JUNE 24

BUENA VISTA SKI AREA



8:00 FAMILY-FRIENDLY 5K WALK/RUN

Take in the scenery that Beltrami described as “phenomena which will fill the soul with astonishment and inspire it at the same time with almost heavenly ecstasy! This is a work which belongs to the Creator of it alone to explain.” Stride the Continental Divide and watch for signs sharing the story of Beltrami’s adventure along the trail. Enjoy refreshments after the race and purchase an event T-shirt to celebrate your run! Same-day registration available.

9:45 OPENING PIPE CEREMONY

Darrell Kingbird



Darrell Kingbird is

10:00 BELTRAMI: A PILGRIM'S PROVIDENCE

Norwood F. Hall II and Dr. Janet Rith-Najarian

"Beltrami: A Pilgrim's Providence" from the documentary series "True Source", exploring the geography and history of exploration in the Mississippi Headwaters. This is part of a series in production for the Minnesota Alliance for Geographic Education, created by Norwood Hall (Moonwood Artisans), and Dr. Janet Rith-Najarian (Rivers Edge Geographics). For more information, see the documentary webpage at <https://www.rivergeo.org/true-source>



Norwood F. Hall II is an artist, performer, and musician from Bemidji, MN. Norwood has been paddling and exploring the sacred waterways of the Mississippi Headwaters region since childhood, and the river has been a lifelong muse for his art. His research for the "True Source" series has been a fascinating journey from Beltrami Avenue, where Norwood grew up, to Mr. Beltrami's home town of Bergamo, Italy. His research and creativity have collided to inspire musical compositions and historical reenactments for film, always featuring the wealth of local talent in the performing arts, and the landscapes and soundscapes themselves.

Dr. Janet Rith-Najarian has a PhD in both conservation biology and geography. Her past research has focused on environmental impact assessment and river habitats, but current research focuses on biogeography and the history of expeditions. Dr. Rith-Najarian is also a teacher-consultant for the Minnesota Alliance for Geographic Education (MAGE) and the National Geographic Education Foundation. The "True Source" documentary series is one of several MAGE projects being made in collaboration with her longtime friend and colleague Norwood Hall.

SATURDAY, JUNE 24

BUENA VISTA SKI AREA



11:00 HISTORY OF RED LAKE NATION

Floyd "Buck" Jourdain

Join us to learn the history and lifeways of the Red Lake Nation, the Ojibwe community who saved Beltrami and guided him to Lake Julia and through Beltrami County to Leech Lake and whose people and lifeways thrive today.

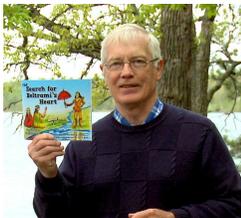


Floyd "Buck" Jourdain, Red Lake Ojibwe, was born and raised on the Red Lake Reservation in Northwest Minnesota. His Indigenous studies roots go back to the Red School House survival school in St. Paul, where he was educated in Indian history, culture, and the rights of Indians and tribes. After Red School House, he returned home and is a proud graduate of Red Lake High School. He holds a BA in Liberal Studies from Bemidji State University, with an emphasis in Indigenous Knowledge. He served as Tribal Chairman of the Red Lake Nation from 2004 to 2014. He is currently the Director of Equity, Cultural Education, and Tribal Archives at Red Lake Nation College.

12:15 FAMILY STORYTIME: BELTRAMI'S HEART

John Eggers

Join local author and historian John Eggers in the Lumberjack Hall of Fame Museum at Buena Vista for the reading of his book "The Search for Beltrami's Heart"; FREE copies will be distributed to families after the program. ***Lumberjack Hall of Fame Museum***



Dr. John Roger Eggers is an author and lifelong educator, serving as professional teacher from 1964-2019. He has served as a K-12 teacher, university professor, high school principal, and charter school director. John is the founder of Project Graduate, which as its goal a 100% high school graduation rate. In addition to Project Graduation, he serves as a volunteer for Red Lake Nation and on the board of the Voyageurs Expeditionary Charter school. John is the author of several educational and historical books, and lives with his wife, Kathy, on the shores of Lake Julia.

1:00 ARTIFACTS OF THE GIACOMO BELTRAMI COLLECTION

with the Civic Museum of Natural Sciences, Bergamo



Executive Director Marco Valle and staff of the Civic Museum of Natural Sciences in Bergamo will join us via Zoom for a unique virtual exhibit of ten artifacts from the Beltrami collection, most from the Dakota and Ojibwe communities through which Beltrami traveled. We will be joined locally by members of the Beltrami family, Buck Jourdain, and Smithsonian emeritus/Beltrami expert Cesare Marino as we explore the artifacts and how Beltrami came to collect them on his journey.

SATURDAY, JUNE 24

BUENA VISTA SKI AREA

1:00 & **ANIMALS OF MINNESOTA**

2:00 Headwaters Science Museum



Beltrami wrote extensively about the animals of Minnesota that he encountered on his travels. Join Headwaters Science Museum staff to see and touch fur pelts and learn more about our wildlife! ***Lumberjack Hall of Fame Museum***

ALL-DAY ACTIVITIES

Native American Artisans

History Center Pop-Up Bookshop

Voyageur Fur Trader Reenactment & Music

Birch Bark Canoe Display

History Walk (on the 5K Trail)

Turtle River Township (1898 Buena Vista Schoolhouse) Tours

Coffee, Snacks, and Lunch Available

Walleye, Wild Rice, Grill Fare

BUENA VISTA MAP

1

Buena Vista Chalet

- 1st Floor: Restrooms
- 2nd Floor: Refreshments
- 3rd Floor: Programs

2

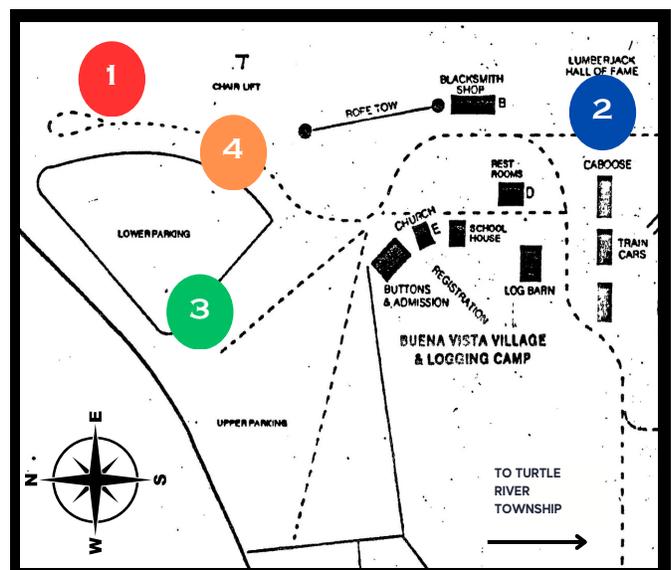
Lumberjack Hall of Fame Museum

3

Main Parking

4

Elder/Assisted Dropoff



SUNDAY, JUNE 25

BELTRAMI COUNTY HISTORY CENTER



10:30 BELTRAMI'S "TRANS-ATLANTIC PROMENADE":

AN ITALIAN EXPLORER AMONG NATIVE AMERICANS IN EARLY MINNESOTA

John Welle

Who was Giacomo Beltrami, and why does he matter to history - specifically our history? Join professor emeritus and Beltrami scholar Dr. John Welle to learn more about the Italian aristocrat-turned-adventurer. The complete abstract for this program is on page 3.



Dr. John P. Welle is Professor Emeritus of Romance Languages and Literatures; Concurrent Professor Emeritus of Film, Television and Theatre, and Fellow of the Nanovic Institute for European Studies at the University of Notre Dame. His interests include nineteenth and twentieth-century Italian literature, poetry and translation, film history, film and literary interactions, ecocriticism, and postcolonial studies. He is the author of "The Poetry of Andrea Zanzotto" and the editor of "Film and Literature," (*Annali d'Italianistica* 1988). His translation and edition of "Peasants Wake for Fellini's 'Casanova' and Other Poems" by Andrea Zanzotto (with Ruth Feldman) was awarded the Raiziss de Palchi Book Prize from the Academy of American Poets. He has received grants and fellowships from the Fulbright Commission, the National Endowment for the Humanities and the American Council of Learned Societies.

11:30 'JUST A PIECE OF BIRCHBARK'

NEW HISTORY, TWO CENTURIES LATER

Cesare Marino

Dr. Cesare Marino, Smithsonian emeritus and author of several works on Beltrami, will present his program "Just a Piece of Birchbark - New History, Two Centuries Later." We hope you will join us to learn of recent discoveries within Beltrami's collection and the continued impact of Beltrami's travels two centuries later.



Dr. Cesare Marino, Ph.D. in anthropology with a specialization in North American Indian ethnology and ethnohistory, is staff Emeritus at the Smithsonian Institution in Washington, D.C. He has written a number of books and articles about the history and culture of Native American communities and the early Italian explorers who met and wrote of them. Dr. Marino's works include "Reassessing two nineteenth-century proto-ethnographic collections in Italian museums: Giacomo Costantino Beltrami (1779-1855) and Antonio Spagni (1809-1873)" (2020), and a recently revised version of "'Just a piece of birchbark': G.C. Beltrami and his sketch-map of the Upper Mississippi 1823."

SUNDAY, JUNE 25

BELTRAMI COUNTY HISTORY CENTER



1:00 BELTRAMI COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY ANNUAL MEETING

Members and guests are invited to attend this update on our successes in 2022-2023 and a look ahead at upcoming programs and initiatives. Members will vote on our 2023-2024 Board of Directors and Officers.

2:00 PRESENTATION AND DEDICATION OF DAKOTA FLUTE

Awaniikwe aka Justice Anne McKeig

Minnesota State Associate Supreme Court Justice Anne McKeig joins us to present Beltrami County Historical Society with a replica of the Dakota-made courting flute that Giacomo Beltrami took back to Bergamo. Awaniikwe, (translated as "woman of the mists") aka Justice Anne McKeig, presents this flute in memory of her grandfather, "Nu Maywenen" - aka Edward McKeig, son of "Pah oom bway we dum oke" of White Earth.

Ed was a native speaker, a boarding school student, veteran of WWI, a fine baseball player, a brakeman for the Soo Line Railroad, and a musician.

The original flute, which resides in the Beltrami Collection in Bergamo, Italy, is the earliest surviving Native American flute of wood. It is constructed from a single piece of Western Red Cedar. It has been bored rather than split and glued and is in good playing order. The SAC exit hole and the sound hole are circular. The shallow flue is cut into the top of the flute body and the block is a tiny piece of Western Red Cedar tied with a thin tie (possibly deerskin). The effigy at the end of the flute may be a gar, which is mentioned in Dakota origin legend and appears on later flutes.

The replica flute is made by Jon Norris, an instrument maker who lives in Holly Springs, North Carolina, and specializes in making Native American flutes. It is made as accurately as possible; the scale of the replica matches the original, and is tuned to match the original.



A descendant of the White Earth Nation, Justice McKeig is a native of Federal Dam, Minnesota, where she grew up on the Leech Lake Reservation. She received her undergraduate degree from St. Catherine University, and her law degree from Hamline University. She served as an assistant Hennepin County Attorney for 16 years, handling child protection cases and adoption matters, with a specialty in cases that fall under the provisions of the Indian Child Welfare Act. She was a district court judge for almost 9 years in Hennepin County, several of those years as presiding judge in Family Court. She also teaches Child Abuse and the Law and Domestic Violence and the Law as an Adjunct Professor at St. Thomas School of Law. Justice McKeig is the proud mother of five children and a Vikings and Johnny Cash super fan.

SUNDAY, JUNE 25

BELTRAMI COUNTY HISTORY CENTER



2:10 WOWIYUŠKIŋ ~ MINAWAANIGWAD ~ GIOIA ~ JOY

We are honored to welcome flutist Jon Romer with Native American flutist and historian Ann Humphrey and musician Mike Tangen who will present and perform Native American and Italian flute music to close the Beltrami Bicentennial.



Jon Romer (left) is an outstanding player and teacher of Native American flutes. He enjoys performing solo and ensemble work, composing, and discovering new places for the beauty of the Native American flute while honoring its traditional uses.

After serving as Professor of Voice and Choral music at Gustavus Adolphus College for many years, he moved to Cass Lake, MN, where he was the first Director of Music Programs at Bug-O-Nay-Ge-Shig School. He later taught music at Leech Lake Tribal College.

Jon has performed across the country and has prepared students to participate in Native art festivals from Washington, D.C. to Alaska. He has been featured on many recordings as well as documentaries and public television programs.

Mike Tangen (right) was a teacher of music in Grand Forks, ND, and Bemidji, MN. Mid-career he taught mathematics, and served Bemidji Area Schools as the Director of Technology before retiring.

As a guitarist, Mike has had a wide range of performance experiences with many groups, most often playing a Martin D-35 steel string folk guitar. In addition to performing folk music as a soloist and with various groups, he recorded and performed regionally with "Mike & Maggie, Music for Children."



Ann Humphrey is the Assistant Director of the American Indian Resource Center at Bemidji State University and Northwest Technical College. Humphrey, a member of the Leech Lake Band of Ojibwe, joined the BSU and NTC communities after spending three years at Leech Lake Tribal College. Ann has a bachelor's degree in vocal music education from the University of Minnesota, Duluth, and was a student of Native American flute with Jon Romer.



SUNDAY, JUNE 25

BELTRAMI COUNTY HISTORY CENTER



ADDITIONAL ACTIVITIES

Native American Artisans
 History Center Gift Shop Open
 East Gallery Beltrami Exhibit Open
 Iron Horse Model Railroad Society Model Tours
 Food Truck Lunch Available
 MAC N the Box, K-Dawg Korean Korn Dogs



HISTORY CENTER MAP



- 1 Speakers/Programs
- 2 Restrooms
- 3 Admission/Gift Shop/Membership
- 4 Artisan Tabling & Food Trucks



BELTRAMI COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY BOARD OF DIRECTORS



CLASS OF 2024

Amy Karwoski
Chris Muller
Ashley Reynolds
Leo Soukup

CLASS OF 2025

Jim Aakhus
Charles Dolson
Linda Lemmer
Cathy Marchand

CLASS OF 2026

Dan Allosso
Cecelia McKeig
Charlene Sturk

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Emily Thabes



WE EXTEND OUR APPRECIATION

TO THE MANY VOLUNTEERS, RESEARCHERS, AND HISTORIANS WHO
CONTRIBUTED SO GENEROUSLY OF THEIR TIME AND KNOWLEDGE,
INCLUDING:

Andy Mack · Ara Gallo · Cesare Marino · Cierra Kilpela · Civica Biblioteca Angelo Mai
Elliot Dessert · Floyd "Buck" Jourdain · Jane Prestebak · Janet Rith-Najarian · John Thabes
John Welle and the Welle Family · Leo Soukup · Linda Lemmer · Lois Jenkins · Maestro Silvano
Moretti Marco Valle and the Museo Civico Scienze Naturali Enrico Caffi · Mary Lou Marchand
Norwood F. Hall II · Robert Allen Bell · Sue Bruns · Suzanne Thomas · Travis Cloud



Ivory portrait of Giacomo Costantino Beltrami
courtesy of Marzia Luchetti, Museo Beltrami, Filottrano, Italy



BELTRAMI: A PILGRIM'S PROVIDENCE THROUGH SEPTEMBER

Reenactment Documentary Costumes · Artwork of Maestro Silvano Moretti · Ojibwe artifacts from the Morrison Collection similar to those collected by Beltrami · Excerpts from the writings of Giacomo Beltrami · Exhibit posters donated by Kraus-Anderson

