

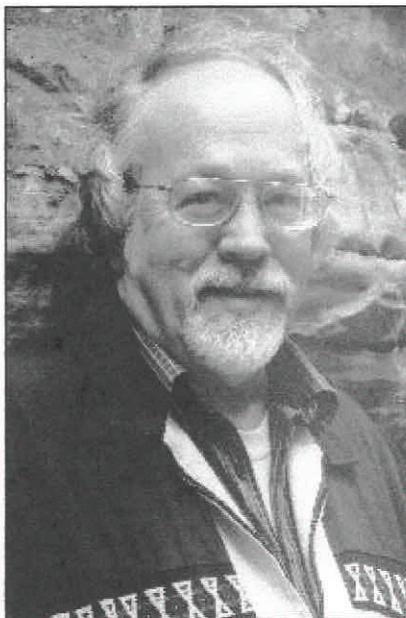


JACKSON COUNTY PILOT

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Inkpaduta speech tops historical society meeting

By Mike Jordan (January 07, 2010)



An author, artist and lecturer from Rochester with extensive knowledge of the Spirit Lake and Springfield massacres and the Native American warrior who led them, will be the keynote speaker at the Jackson County Historical Society's annual meeting this Saturday.

Mark Diedrich will address society members following the annual business meeting, which begins at 1:30 p.m. at the Jackson County Historical Society Museum in Lakefield.

Diedrich lived with his family in West St. Paul until the fourth grade, when they moved to Leominster, Mass. He graduated from St. Paul High School and continued his education at the University of Minnesota, studying studio art for three years and finished his college education at the University of Illinois in art education.

On Saturday, Diedrich will speak on Inkpaduta and the Wahpekute Tribe. Inkpaduta was the renegade Indian that led the Spirit Lake Massacre and the Springfield Massacre that followed in Jackson County.

Diedrich is the author of 16 books and has dedicated the last 30 years of his life to researching, writing and illustrating the history of the major Native American groups of the Midwest and their relationships with the settlers of that era.

"My interest in history began as a youngster, reading about the Civil War," Diedrich said. "When I was in college I read several books which got me interested in Native American history. The two books were Dee Brown's 'Bury My Heart at Wounded Knee,' and Mari Sandoz's biography of Crazy Horse."

After school, Diedrich began looking for a subject area for his artwork and eventually turned to early photos of American Indians. He then came up with the idea of doing a book mainly to present portraits of Indian leaders.

"But my initial attempts to find a publisher failed," he said. "I then tried to get a grant so that I could develop my Indian portraits to larger canvases, and as a collection, but this also failed. By that time, I began to do historical research on certain Indian leaders. I was mainly interested in how Indian leaders lived and dealt with all the changes that came upon them with the advance of white settlements toward the West. I wrote a small manuscript on Black Kettle of the Cheyenne for a school-age audience, but failed to win over a publisher of such books."

In 1978, Diedrich moved back to the Twin Cities from Chicago and began researching a Minnesota Indian leader named Little