

How Thresher's Fields Got Its Name



This 1906 threshing crew included, from front left to right: Herman Heuer, William Holtz Jr., August Goetzke Jr., Julius Goetzke, Henry Sell, unknown, Herman Doehling Sr., Frank Sell Sr., August Goetzke Sr. and Berthold Darsow (second from left in back) others are unknown.

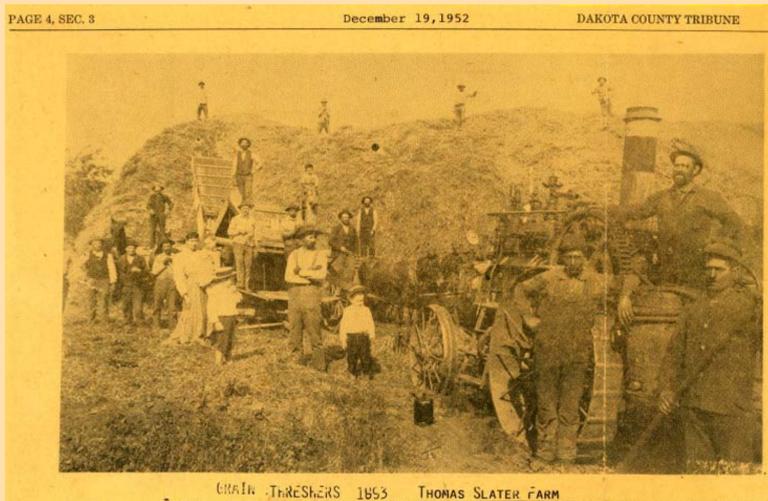
While discussing potential names for this new park site (formerly called North Park, because of its location in the northern portion of Eagan) members of the Eagan Historical Society recalled the history of the property noting that it has been used primarily for farming.

The Schwanz and Heuer families owned and farmed this property as early as 1896. Historical Society Members remember large “threshing parties” which took place on this land, each fall, in the early through mid-1900’s.

Farmers would gather from many neighboring farms with special threshing equipment to help harvest each other’s wheat and oats. Threshing is the process of separating grain from a crop, such as oats or wheat, from the stalks. These “threshing parties” were also an occasion at which young farmers would show off to one another by performing feats of strength and agility.



**This sign was erected in 2006
by the Eagan Historical Society
and the City of Eagan.**



The photo above depicts a large threshing party on the Thomas Slater Farm in southwest Eagan Township in 1853. The photo was reprinted in the *Dakota County Tribune* in December, 1952.

Old Threshing Bee Draws Crowd



For many years after threshing became a thing of the past, the George Ohmann Family held a large “Threshing Bee” to demonstrate this process. This photo appeared in the *Dakota County Tribune* in September 1971.



Threshing on the Heuer Farm, near this current “Thresher’s Fields Park” location, in the 1930s.

Ted Wachter, Eagan farmer, historian and long-time City Councilmember, recalls that the Heuer brothers were known to grasp large sacks of grain, often weighing 70 to 100 pounds, between their teeth. With their hands clasped behind their backs, they would begin swinging the sacks until enough momentum was gained to swing the sacks up onto the wagon-bed all while holding them between their teeth.

It is to these memories, the history of threshing and the important role that threshing played in Eagan’s rich farming history that the Eagan Historical Society dedicates this sign. As a way to ensure this history is passed on to future generations, the Eagan City Council has named this park site Thresher’s Fields.



Threshing on the Walter (Bob) Sell/Ted Wachter Farm on the site of the current U.S. Postal Bulk Mail Facility on Lexington Avenue. This photo was taken in about 1944.