



MACOUPIN COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

From Your President

Happy Holidays! This is your president, Dan Hauter, wishing the membership of the Macoupin County Historical Society a very Happy Holiday Season.

Thanks to the people who came out to the Fall Festival and thanks to the many volunteers who do all of the jobs required to put on a show, we had a successful Fall Festival. Saturday was fantastic! We couldn't have asked for better weather or for better attendance. Mother Nature decided that the dust needed settled so she sent some rain overnight and on Sunday morning. I happened to be in the office in the mansion with Treasurer Ralph Scheldt late Sunday morning and answered the phone. A lady asked if we were still going to be open. I invited her and her family out for breakfast. She seemed surprised that the Red Barn was open but said they'd soon be out. And many other people joined us after the rain let up. Some of the vendors left Saturday night or Sunday morning. Other vendors who stuck it out and opened on Sunday said they did as much business on Sunday as they did on Saturday. Some even did better on Sunday. While attendance was down on Sunday I am grateful to the people who came to the festival on Sunday. Those folks and our great volunteers helped make the Fall Festival a success.

I am writing this column on November 2 and want all the members to know that a tremendous amount of work has taken place on the grounds in the last week. Vice President Bill Egelhoff has been a very busy person and all members should thank Bill when they see him for his dedication and hard work. Mark and Brian Bouillon of Bouillon Excavating have moved hundreds of yards of clay to the site of the new building and have done a great deal of site preparation. Reese Tree Service took down a large tree east of the main entrance and we hope to soon take down another large tree immediately northeast of where the new building will sit. Bouillon Excavating dozed out the stump of the first tree and we hope to have the second tree down while Bouillon's dozer is still on the grounds so we can have that stump dozed out, too. Les Hayes brought over a large end loader and hauled the stump and dirtball ball to the burn pile

Les also took away the concrete footings from the trailer as well as the concrete from the patio and some pieces of foundation from the old house that once stood there. That old trailer had some amazing concrete footings! Whoever poured them sure didn't want the trailer to settle. The sheep foot roller working at the building site is on loan from Alby Quarry in Alton and was hauled to our site by Tom Conners of Shipman. The tractor pulling the sheep foot is Bill Lange's. Other people who have been helping include Bob Huyear, Bill Lange, Lonny Hood, Dave Waggoner, and Dee Snell. Wes Loveless and Augie Schmitt have been spectators and have provided moral support. Mark Bouillon dug a bar pit north of Building 3 and took clay from it until the clay became too wet to work with. Then a second bar pit was dug northeast of the rent house and the rest of the clay came from there. Mark and Brian Bouillon have done an excellent job of covering both bar pits. The building site has been raised to one foot above road level. If any reader has been in the northwest section of Carlinville after a heavy rain you'll understand why. I invite all members to come to the grounds and see what has taken place. The Building Committee plans to stake out the new building tomorrow. Although the final decision hasn't been made it's looking like Dave Neely Construction Management of Standard City will be our builder.

We are still in need of a manager for the Red Barn Kitchen. Jim and Alice are retiring after the Christmas Show. If you are interested or know of someone who is please contact one of the officers or come to the November Board Meeting.

Upcoming events include the Hammer In on November 6 hosted by the Illinois Valley Blacksmith Association and our Christmas Show held in conjunction with the Carlinville's Christmas Market. That's the first weekend in December. Please come out and join us.

Happy Thanksgiving, Merry Christmas, and Happy New Year.

Dan Hauter, President

HISTORY BOOK FOR SALE IN GIFT SHOP

Tombstone Revelations Book 1 has been updated and published in four individual books.

Virden, Girard, Pleasant Hill and Sulphur Springs - \$30, \$34 mailed.

North and South Palmyra - \$20, \$23 mailed.

North and South Otter - \$15, \$18 mailed.

Scottville, Barr - \$20, \$23 mailed.

Bits and Pieces

By Lloyd Strohbeck

If you are planning on moving, please send us a change of address. The Post Office now charges us forty-four cents to have a newsletter returned if they cannot deliver it. The first time we mailed newsletters after this went into effect we got back about 30 newsletters. Some of them were for the snowbirds who spend the winter in a warm climate. (Wish I could do that.) Also the number on your address label tells through what year your dues are paid. Everyone should have 2010 or Life on their label. Some members are paid two or three years ahead.

Once again we had one good day and one day with some rain for our Fall Festival. Some of the craft booth folks said they had a better day on Sunday after the rain stopped than the day before. Thankfully the grounds were fairly dry before the rain and folks did not have much of a problem in the parking lots. Once again we appreciate the use of the schoolyard for parking. Things would be really crowded if it were not for that space. We do use a roller to take care of any ruts if the ground is soft. In return the school uses the Museum grounds for their Civil War Days each spring so we help each other.

I want to mention a young man who was a great help for this feeble old man this year. Dakota Washburn is a Seventh grader at the Carlinville Middle School. I got to know him through the Link program at the school. He saw me at the festival on Saturday and stayed until 7:30pm that night helping clean and dump the trash barrels after folks were gone. He came back the next day and helped to keep the thirteen porta-potties supplied with paper and also dumping trash. Sunday evening he got to drive Bill Egelhoff's John Deere (gator) to pick up fence posts and trash. It is sure nice to have a helper with lots of energy

I want to commend Bill Egelhoff for his patience while he listens to first one member then another telling him

what to do concerning the new combination building that is being proposed. Bill has spent a great deal of time getting bids for the project and traveling to look at different types of buildings. It seems everyone has a different idea about what it should be like as well as should it set north-south or east-west. Bill has been an excellent listener. In addition to that Bill has been taking notes on the many different things that need to be checked and done to prepare for each festival.



Last week Virgil Sutton turned in his keys and retired from the lawn mowing and tree trimming. He has been doing this since at least 1993 when I joined the Society.



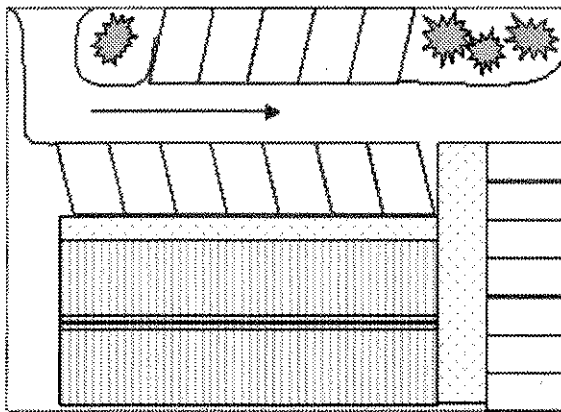
Virgil also worked with the late Thelma Dean Stewart to lay out a number of rows of spaces for craft booths. Thelma Dean then came up with a plat showing the spaces with number for each one. It takes a lot of measuring with a wheel and sticking flags every fourteen feet so the individual spaces can be marked with a line of paint. It takes two people more than half of a day to get the job done. Virgil also has the distinction of being one of the two members who managed to set off the alarm system in the Museum. We wish Virgil and Suzanne well in the future. Charley Fritz started mowing a lot of the lawn two years ago and has been very busy at it, especially with the long wet summer.

Site preparation work begins

The end of October saw the start of site prep work for the new MCHS Genealogy and member meeting space building. The size will be 40' wide by 72' long with an 8' wide porch on the end facing the drive way into the mansion.

If you are interested in viewing the floor plan and exterior of the building feel free to stop by the mansion on Wednesday's between 10am and 2pm.

This is a major undertaking for the Historical Society and as always your support is vital to our success

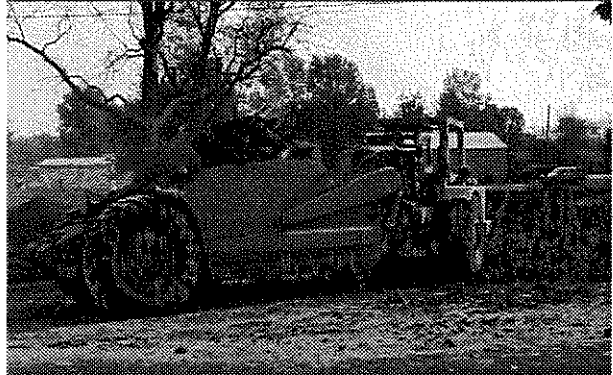


Tree trimming before bulldozing



Heavy duty dirt moving

Mark Bullion brought out his heavy stuff to scrap back top soil from along Bldg 3 to be able to scoop up the clay base and haul to new building site



Once dirt is spread at site, Dan Hauter pulls sheep foot compactor to pack down the clay. Hey Dan, wrong color tractor!!



Capone's Carlinville connection explored at November meeting

By Louise Jett

Every seat was full at the November meeting in the Red Barn as guest speaker Robyn Woodside explored Carlinville's colorful connection to legendary gangster to Al Capone.

Woodside, who has been a freelance writer for 30 years and has worked in the shadow of the old barn at Lake Williamson Christian Center for 20 years as Communications coordinator for the Illinois Assemblies of God, has been searching for definitive proof Al Capone hid his car in the Lake Williamson barn back in the Roaring Twenties.

"It is so difficult to research," Woodside said. "There are so many bunny rabbits to chase and so many trails to follow." Firsthand witnesses from the era have long since passed away, and Woodside must rely on secondhand information passed down through families. But, the self-proclaimed history detective has dug up some informative facts about local bootleggers and the infamous Ortic Inn.

Woodside found court records which indicated Louis Citro from Chicago purchased the Lake Williamson property in 1919 from a local farmer, John Jennings. Citro built the barn and a white building across the lake called the Ortic Inn. "Ortic is actually Citro spelled backwards," Woodside said.

The Ortic Inn had a two-story main section with a wing running off each side. The left wing was a dining room, and the right wing a ballroom. Woodside said the inn was home to wild parties and live music in its prime.

Woodside said it is believed the barn was used primarily for storing bootleg liquor during the '20s. When Lake Williamson recently gutted the barn, they discovered an old beer bottle and a heavy chain, both of which Woodside brought to show audience members. "It was the Cadillac of barns," she said. "The only problem was it was never intended to store livestock."

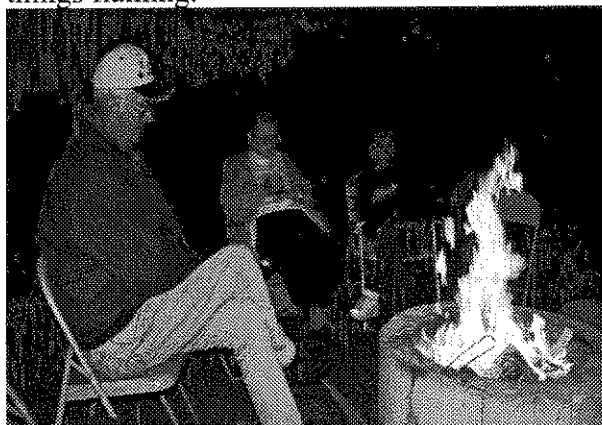
Even though there is no hard evidence Capone hid his car in the barn; it does seem likely. Capone might have even been the financier of the barn and the Ortic Inn. Capone would not have put the business or property in his name because of the fear his assets would be frozen.

Woodside pointed out the irony a place once devoted to criminal activities is now home to a Christian center. As for whether or not Capone hid his car in the barn, Woodside said, "Maybe this is just an impossible task for me to prove or disprove. Maybe it is best to just leave it as a rumor. I would hate to disprove it."

Blacksmith heats up MCHS Wiener Roast

By Louise Jett

Attendees of Macoupin County Historical Society's annual Wiener Roast got more than just mouthfuls of hot dogs and homemade desserts. And, the bonfires weren't the only things flaming.



Blacksmith Augie Schmidt fired up the forge in the Blacksmith Shop for his demonstration on blacksmithing tools.

"The old time smiths, they were more particular about their work, and they didn't like hammer marks showing," Schmidt said as he explained the evolution of blacksmithing. "They wanted it to look factory-made. Today, it is the opposite. People pay for those hammer marks. They want to know it is handmade."

While blacksmiths usually bought their forges and anvils, they often made their own tongs and hammers. During his demonstration, Schmidt finished forging a pair of tongs and passed various blacksmithing tools around the shop.

Bill Egelhoff helped Schmidt demonstrate a striker's role in the shop. The blacksmith, Schmidt, hit the hot metal lightly to show the striker were to land a heavy blow. As blacksmithing evolved, the striker was replaced with a power hammer, which works like a striker landing heavy blows to the metal where the blacksmith desires.

Schmidt said. "You get a lot more work out of a power hammer than a striker, Plus, sometimes you wouldn't know where the striker was, and you would have to go find him."

Bill added that the power hammer would eat a lot less than I would."

Schmidt used the power hammer to finish forming the handle and jaw of the tongs before using a punch and drift to create a rivet hole. When Schmidt placed a rivet in through the holes, the only step left was to ping the rivet over to keep the tongs together.

Unique Antiques At September Meeting

By Louise Jett

Attendees at the Macoupin County Historical Society's September meeting got a glimpse of Bill Thiel 50 years effort of collecting some of the unique and unusual antique items

Thiel impressed audience members with his quizzically shaped household items and old-fashioned tools. During his presentation, he would hold up a piece from his collection for attendees to see and then ask if anyone could guess what the antique was. A lot of his collection stumped the audience, and many were surprised when Thiel would finally reveal the identities of the peculiar items.

Some of the antiquated household items attendees saw were a coconut shredder, canning jar lid straightener, pineapple corer, feather pillow fluffer, hard candy cutter, pre-Civil War iron, sleeve ruffler and an all-brass black powder grinder. "The all-brass black powder grinder was the best \$25 I ever spent," Thiel said with a smile.

Thiel also brought a heavy-duty Wells Fargo lock, store display model Maytag washer, left-handed tooth extractor, wind-up vibrating razor, large cone-shaped hearing aid, Italian bird trap and a knee nutcracker. To use the nutcracker, one would place the heavy, rounded tool on the outside of his or her knee and kneel down while nuts were on the floor. "Before and during the Civil War, they didn't have nothing to do, no TV," Thiel said. "They entertained each other by cracking nuts with this."



Bill Thiel, shows an old-fashioned lemon squeezer to MCHS members Linda Waggoner, and Janet Boyle.

MAAA News

by Veryl Reiher
Sec. MAAA

A few months ago, we received advice from John Tomaska at our MCHS Board Meeting of the availability of a Troy Portable Steam engine as a gift. After some discussion we accepted it.

On October 21 Mr. Ross Dring from Tinley Park, IL delivered the engine to the MCHS and MAAA.

It is an up right engine (no boiler, as air or steam pressure is supplied remotely) with a 4-1/2" Bore, 5" Stroke. It weights about 450 lbs. Mr. Dring mounted it on a small platform with wheels on it. It includes a governor and an oiler.



It is a Model 1-5854 built by the Troy Engine and Machine Company of Troy, Pennsylvania. Ross powered the engine with an air compressor. This would run the engine at 50 to 185 RPM for about 1 minute until the air tank ran low.

It is thought to have come out of a building in Chicago and probably ran the stoker or air fans for a boiler in the heating system.

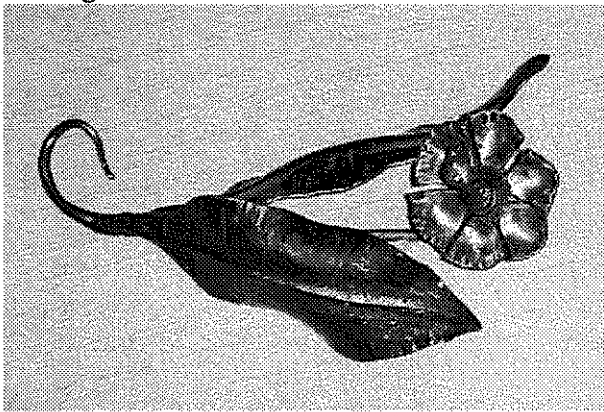
We think we can plumb it to our steam tractor boiler and run it. Bill Egelhoff and others are dreaming of uses for it.

Thanks to John and Ross for this gift.

The Macoupin county Historical Society and the Illinois Valley Blacksmith Association hosted a Hammer-in on Saturday November 6th at the Village Blacksmith shop. This is our 15th year to have this event in Carlinville.

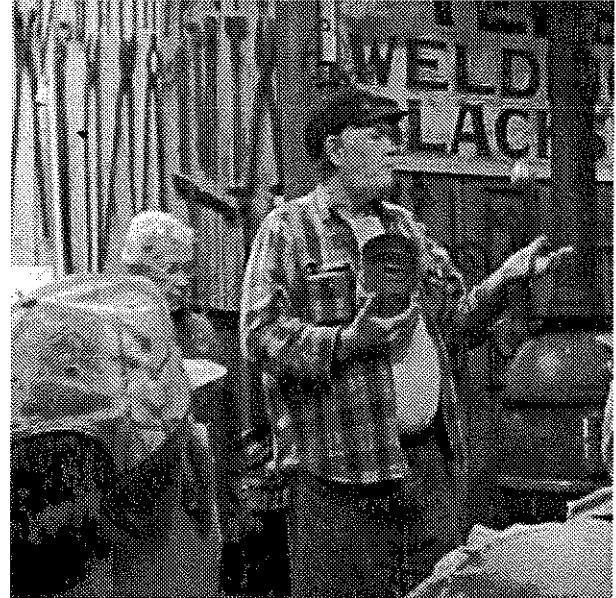


Our guest demonstrator this year is Scott Springer of Roanoke, IL. Scott is a professional smith and has mainly produced gates, railings, and fencing. Scott also has produced some very fine pieces of art. Gary Jamison of Pontiac is tending the fire for Scott.



Above is the demonstration piece that Scott made during the morning. It started out as two pieces of 1/4 by 2 angle iron and a copper slug 1" thick by 2" diameter. Scott first forged out the angle iron pieces then converted the copper slug into a very realistic looking flower pedal. This piece brought \$80.00 at the auction.

Lunch was provided in the shop meeting room. Thanks to all that brought food and deserts for the lunch. As usual, Larry Pitman's fire house butterbeans were a big hit.



Daryll Allen was our auctioneer again this year with Beanie as ring person for the auction held after the lunch break. The auction brought in a little over \$500. This money is used to purchase equipment for the shop such as the early Bradley helve hammer we purchased last spring.

Brand new Blacksmith

Big Mike (Mike Lanham) and Christy have a new little blacksmith. Maxwell was born September 28th a 9 pound, 1 oz husky boy came into this world with a hammer in his hand.

Below, June Coonrod holding Maxwell at the Blacksmith Hammer-in.



Macoupin County Historical Society Officers – 2010

Title	Name	Address	Phone	E-Mail
President	Dan Hauter	#4 Crestwood Drive Carlinville IL 62626	(217)-854-9725 hm (217)-710-8056 cp	
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Bd. Member	Donna Scott	10119 Merideth Rd Carlinville, IL 62626		
Bd. Member	Veryl Reiher	15253 Deerfield Dr. Carlinville, IL 62626	(217) 854-3360	

Committee Chairman

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Food/Programs	Jim Frank	12735 Shipman Rd, Plainview, IL. 62676	(618)-836-5890	frank10@frontiernet.net
House	Mary Schwab	21371 Barnett Road Raymond, IL 62560	(217)-854-8963	

2010 Programs for Macoupin County Historical Society

Date	Program	Remarks
Saturday November 6 th 9:00 am	Hammer-In	Scott Springer Demonstrating at the Blacksmith shop
Monday November 1 st 7:00 pm	Robyn Woodside	Roaring 20's pre Lake Williamson era
December 3 rd -4-5 th	Christmas Show	Theme "Christmas A to Z"



Submissions for our Quarterly Newsletter received, assembled, and prepared by Member Velma Schmidt "Beanie" are due Jan. 15, 2011.

If you have a story, information item, or picture you wish to see in the Newsletter, please call or email Velma Schmidt, Editor (see contact information on this page of your Newsletter). I would love to discuss submissions with you. Remember, this Newsletter belongs to you—our valued members—get involved and share in its content!

Macoupin County Historical Society's e-mail address is www.macsociety.org

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Above, Bill Lange using the 560 with forks attached hauling branches to burning pile

Right: Robyn Woodside holds up information on old barn believed to be part of Al Capone's bootlegging actives.

