



# Mercer County Historical Society Newsletter

Volume 10, Issue 4

Editor: Mary Jane Sticklen

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## Mercer County Historical Society & Essley-Noble Museum

1406 - SE 2nd Avenue  
Aledo, IL 61231  
Phone: 309/582-2280

Hours: 1:00 - 5:00 PM  
Wed., Sat., & Sunday  
April through the end of October.



### Officers & Board of Directors

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Shirley Crawford, Curator  
Dennis Henderson, Sunday Host



### For Genealogy Queries write to:

Cheryl McCaw/Shirley Crawford  
MCHS Genealogy Dept.  
1406 - SE 2nd Avenue  
Aledo IL 61231-2504



### For membership or change of address contact

Jim Runyon  
756 State Hwy 94  
Aledo, IL 61231  
309-582-7762



### Website:

[http://www.geocities.com/mchs\\_61231](http://www.geocities.com/mchs_61231)

## Trip to Town on Saturday

By Alicia Ives



In the 1950's, farmers were usually busy doing their crops Monday through Friday. On Saturday the family would make a trip into the nearest town to buy their supplies for the following week.

As I recall, we would rise early on Saturday with the noise of Mama and Daddy in the kitchen making breakfast for the family. After breakfast, we were admonished to get ready to go to town for our big "Saturday on the town". We didn't have to be told twice to get ready, because it was a treat to go to town on Saturday. Other than Church on Sunday and Wednesday night, this was about our only entertainment. What I mean is that this was about the only place we went, so we looked forward to it with great anticipation.

At about 10:00 every Saturday morning, the seven of us would load up in the big green truck and head for town; Daddy driving and Mama and the three girls in the front seat with the boys riding in the back. We would head down a washboard road (as Daddy called it) for about 16 miles to town. When we got there, we'd all pile out and more often than not there would be Uncle Cecil, Aunt Bessie and Grandma (with her black hat on) to greet us. We would visit with them for a while, then we were off to see if we could find any of our friends. About noon, we would make our way back to Daddy where he would be standing talking with a group of men about crops. Anyway, I remember standing around until Daddy would say, "What do you want?" He knew all the time we wanted our quarter that we were accustomed to getting. He'd reach into his pocket and pull out three quarters and give each of us girls one apiece. Then he would say with a little crooked grin, "There, now, get out of here and I don't want to see you until it's time to go home." That's exactly what we did.

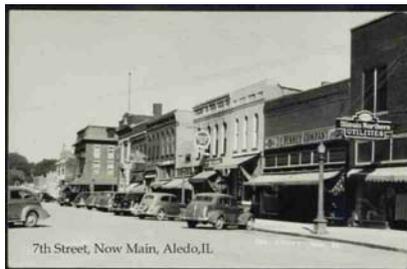
We took our quarter and headed straight to the picture show' to watch Roy Rogers and Dale Evans or Gene Autry (in black and white). It cost 10 cents to get into the show. Once in the picture show, we would make our way to a seat. I remember how dark it was when we first came in, but after we were there awhile, we could see who was there. We sometimes changed places to sit with our friends. Before settling in to watch the featured show, we'd go get a nickel bag of popcorn and a nickel drink, usually a big orange. We would watch the show with great enthusiasm, and couldn't

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wait until the next Saturday to see another one. After the show, the lights would come on and we would make our way to the outside. Remember how bright it seemed outside? It would take a while for our eyes to adjust.

We would tour the Variety Store, sometimes finding something to spend that last nickel on. By this time Mama and Daddy would be in the grocery store finishing up the day by buying groceries. If we didn't find anything in the Variety Store that we wanted or could afford (we never went back to Daddy for more money), we would check to see how much Daddy lacked being through in the grocery store. We would rush to the Drug Store and buy either an ice cream cone or a cherry fizz! Our day was complete and it was time to go home.

Sometimes on the way home, we would stop off to visit with Grandma and Grandpa. We would end up back home about 5:00 in the afternoon after a big day in town. All that would be left of Saturday was suppertime and chore time. It would be another week before we'd do it all again!



**Curator's Corner  
By Shirley Crawford**

Donations received since August board meeting are: From Patsy Anderson, Tucson, Arizona, a graduate of the Aledo High School Class of 1944 - Marsh school bell, Marsh slate, photograph taken from a glass negative of a steam engine on the Marsh farm, and a \$500 donation. More items to come. Marsh school was located southwest of Aledo on road north of Seaton. From the Rock Island County Historical Society - Joy Norton brought in a ledger for the Hardy School Minutes. Hardy School was located in the extreme northeast section of Millersburg township. We received from Rozetta Burrows a photograph copy of the Aledo High School Class of 1941 at their 25th reunion. Thank you to Marge Berglund and Louis and Eleanor Lloyd for identifying everyone.

Thanks to Sandy Sharer and Pat Gustafson for continuing to index in the genealogy section. Next year we'll have an all name index for the

burials in Mercer County. Molly Paulsgrove will have a display of Doris Lee prints and other items for the 2007 season. We extend our sympathy to Pat in the loss of her mother, Mrs. Theresa Greer, a Mercer county native, and to Max and Molly Paulsgrove in the loss of their grandson, Morgan Jackson.

Thank you to Dennis Henderson and Nancy Ferguson for being host and hostess on Sundays and to everyone who has helped with the operation of the museum. Come visit us soon as **the last day of the 2006 season will be Sunday, October 29.** Winter tours are available for groups over 10 persons by calling Shirley Crawford at her home 309-584-4820.



**Friends, Old and New**

We enjoyed seeing our friends for the summer's activities. Our booth at the **Mercer County Fair** was again a popular attraction, made even more so by wheelwright Tom Sveum from Janesville, WI, who displayed his tools and products in the afternoon Wednesday through Friday. He plans to join us next year in an extended booth and demonstrate his talents.

The **Name the Tool** Contest again stimulated lively discussions. The correct answers were:

1. Garden rake
2. School lunch pail
3. Hatchel (to comb flax)
4. Bread knife
5. Carpet stretcher
6. Spice grater
7. Corn husking peg (palm)
8. Fly switch
9. Brick mold

Congratulations to Linda Riddell, Aledo, with most correct answers and to Myrna Sanburg, Gilson, general drawing.

Thank you to all who supported us for the annual **ice cream social**, to the volunteers, to those who came to eat, and a *special thanks* to *Mercer Market* who again worked with us on pricing and their return policy.

Those who went on the Aug. 3 Springfield trip to the **Lincoln Museum and Old State Capitol** thoroughly enjoyed the experience and look forward to returning on a future date. We appreciated Doris Olson of DO Travel, Monmouth, for safely taking us there and home.

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**The Roosevelt Military Academy** former cadets enjoyed visiting the museum during their August reunion. Thank you to Gene Shalander Sr., from Ocala, Florida, for donating a display of medals, ribbons, insignia and a banner from the academy, plus CD's of RMA's yearbooks.



Again we thank Matt Frieden for bringing his

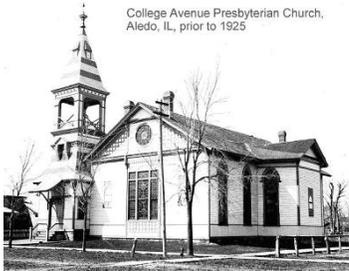


wagon and team of Belgian horses for the **MCHS parade entry** during Viola's sesquicentennial. In the seat are, Matt, Sue, and Jason Frieden. Riding in the wagon are, Bill Bertrand, Bob Armstrong, Cheryl McCaw, and Harriett Reynolds



**College Avenue Presbyterian Church  
Sesquicentennial**

Originally the First Presbyterian Church, the College Avenue Presbyterian church was organized November 10th 1856 in Mills schoolhouse south of Aledo, nine of the charter members coming from the Pope's River Church. After worshipping at two other locations, the congregation moved to the chapel of a college building erected by the Presbyterian Church in



1865. In 1871 construction began on a new church building at the same site as the present one. In 1922 the congregation voted to build a new church, the cornerstone of the

present building being laid on May 4, 1925. A major remodeling effort took place in 1952. The celebration will be November 11 & 12th. There will be an Open House at the Church and Manse from 1:00-4:00 on the 11th as well as a 7:00 program that evening.

There will be a special worship service on Sunday followed by a pot luck dinner. "From its humble beginnings at the Pope River Church, College Avenue

special worship service on



Presbyterian Church as been a cornerstone for faith building in the Aledo Community for 150 years. Please join us in celebrating this joyous occasion."



**Fall Open Meeting**

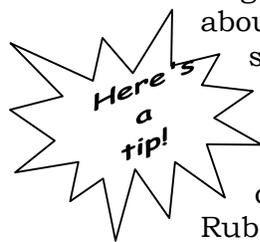
Mark your calendars for the **Fall Open Meeting Oct. 16, 7:00 PM** at the Essley-Noble Museum.

George Olson will present a slide show entitled *Tour of the Tallgrass Prairie*. His paintings of wildflowers led him into a study of prairie plants some 20 years ago while he was an art instructor at Wooster College in Ohio. He has had some 75 art exhibitions, including 25 in London, England, where he and his wife have spent 6 years off and on. His next exhibition will be at the Missouri Botanical Gardens in St. Louis in January and February 2007. George is the author of the book Elemental Prairie in which are watercolor paintings of prairie plants and an essay by John Madson. He will bring along copies of his book for sale Monday evening. He is originally from Minnesota, graduated from Augustana College, obtained his Masters from Iowa University, taught at Wooster for 37 years, and has retired to Henry County, IL, where he maintains a small prairie that he and his father-in-law started 20 years ago.

This promises to be a very enjoyable program and it may well be your last chance to visit the museum before closing for the season. There is no admission and the program is open to the public. Refreshments will be available afterwards

**Cleaning A Canvas**

Ronn Dillavou gave some interesting information about cleaning a collectable canvas seed company bag. The ink was water soluble so, if washed, the logo would disappear. Ronn said to wait for a winter day with a very cold, dry snow. Rub the snow onto the bag and brush it off before bringing it indoors.



**Ronn Dillavou**, Ohio Grove, has lived in Mercer Co. since 1955. He and his wife have two boys and a girl. Ronn collects farm primitives and has a "little museum" in his house. He is a past president of the Corn Item Collectors' Club, was an Aledo School Board member, and a charter member of the Chamber of Commerce. Ronn works as a John Deere implement salesman for Monmouth Implement.

**Mary Jane Sticklen** is a retired teacher of special reading from Rockridge and has lived in Duncan twp for 25 years. She enjoys her horses, gardening with a special interest in the native prairie, walking, and traveling. She is currently editor of the MCHS newsletter.

**Coming Events:  
Oct. 16 7:00 PM**

- **Fall open meeting** - George Olson *Tour of the Tallgrass Prairie* slide show

**Oct. 29**

- Museum Closing for the season

**March 5-10, 2007**

- Genealogy Computing Workshop - Carl Sandburg College 877-236-1862, Ex. 5337



**Note:**

Several area businesses have agreed to sponsor a single issue of the MCHS newsletter, which defrays our cost and gives recognition to those who have invested in our communities. We appreciate their support. If this is something a business or organization would be interested in doing, contact Douglas McCaw 582-2615.

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This newsletter issue sponsored by:



**Farmers State Bank  
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