



Mercer County Historical Society Newsletter

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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.



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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

OLD INDIAN TRAIL

At the Karl Kenney residence SW of Aledo, is a curving depression in the ground and a plaque commemorating the old Indian Trail and stage route. The marker, researched by Alice Edwards, the daughter of R.F. Cabeen, reads: "This



small depression is a remnant of a famous Indian Trail from Oquawka to Black Hawk's village, Saukanuk, now Rock Island, Illinois. Black Hawk and his band of Indians were known to have used this trail in 1832 before they were forced west of the Mississippi River by the Black Hawk War. Puritan and Cavalier Chapter NSDAR Dedicated 1988." Just east of the marker is the site of an old ford across Pope Creek where at a bend called Candor's Loop it is believed that a cannon became mired and lost by a young Abraham Lincoln during the Black Hawk War. Pope Creek has since been rerouted and it is not known whether the cannon has ever been recovered. The picture shows the marker and J. Leonard Kenney standing in the trail depression.



Work Projects

There have been several projects at the Essley-Noble Museum to attempt to stave off time and weather. We are very grateful to Gary Baker who donated his equipment and time to tile and correct drainage problems. It was a busy time with Gary tiling and Board members Bob Armstrong, Bill Bertrand, Dave Duncan, and Doug McCaw armed with shovels backfilling the ditches. Thank you, Gary!

Thank you to Ronn Dillavou who perilously climbed the old windmill to replace the brake wire, install a new hand-made handle, and fill the housing with grease to silence an annoying squeal.

The school house has been freshly painted and Butch Blazer put new gutters and downspouts on the main building.

examine the tree stump, which was still smoldering.



The Old Barn

By Alicia Ives

The old barn was well built out of native elm or cedar for the outside sheathing and solid oak beams for the frame, held together either with mortise and tenon joints or by round oak pins driven into holes. When Grandpa moved the barn from where it originally stood on the creek bank, Grandma insisted he locate it some distance from the house. She complained, "I want that barn far enough away so that I can't smell it when the wind is from that direction," so Grandpa put it nearly half a block away. In fact, it was so far between the house and barn that my cousin Marsh and I made a practice of tethering a pony at each place so we wouldn't have to walk. Many happy times were spent in that old barn. When the neighborhood boys came over, we would make up games ranging from Blackbeard the Pirate to Tom Mix and his horse Tony.

There were eight horse stalls with a wooden feed box and a manger. Behind each pair of horses were wooden pegs for two sets of harness. After a hard day's work, each horse would roll in the dirt, drink his fill of cool water, and then head for the barn and his ration of oats and hay. Afterwards, all were free to graze in the pasture until morning.

On a lower level at the back was a shed for the cows. In the winter they were milked and fed in stanchions. However, in the summertime we simply milked them out in the corral. One cow called Shorty was quite stocky and close to the ground. We never knew how much milk she would give -- sometimes a lot and at other times very little. This mystery was solved one morning when I came down a little earlier to milk. One of the piglets from the nearby pigpen had wriggled through a hole in the fence and was busily gorging himself from one of Shorty's spigots. Grandpa patched the hole in the fence and Shorty was again on full milk production.

The best part of the barn was the spacious haymow. It didn't have a traveling hay fork, so we filled it with pitchforks and strong muscles. My job was moving the hay back into the corners and we were always glad when all the hay was in and we were ready for winter. One afternoon when a thunder storm blew up the men drove the horses under the sheltered driveway between the barn and the corncrib to wait it out. As Marsh and I lay on the fresh hay above, watching the downpour, there was a blinding flash of lightning and a loud clap of thunder. For a moment we could neither hear nor see, but as we gathered our senses, we could see that lightning had struck the large willow tree just below the barn. There was a smoky blue haze rising from the tree stump and pieces of tree trunk littered the barnyard. Grandpa came climbing up the wooden ladder to the loft yelling, "Are you kids all right?!" When we could catch our breath, we assured him that we were and he hurried out to



We always had lots of pigeons, which usually nested on the ledges in the haymow and were easily captured. I once found a pure white one and made

a pet of it. Like Mary's little lamb, it followed me to school and was a hit with my schoolmates. However, when it began to roost in the cloakroom, it had to go -- the teacher said so.

Reminiscences or Stories

Reminiscences or stories about Mercer Co. history, places, special events, etc. are most welcome. Please send to Mary Jane Sticklen, 1452 160 St., Aledo, call 582-5814, or email mjst@qconline.com. Photos can be scanned and returned.



Genealogy Workshop

Carl Sandburg College is holding its 9th annual Genealogy Computing Workshop March 5-10, 2007, on the main campus in Galesburg, IL. For more information, call 877-236-1862, Ex. 5337.



Medicine Bottle Donated

An old medicine bottle with the inscription
L.E. Robinson, M.D.
W.A. Miller, M.D.
111 N. Maple St.
Phone 9
Aledo, ILL



has been donated to the Essley-Noble Museum by Dr. Dennis Palmer. He received it

from a friend, Dr. David Hull, CO, who is a collector. Drs. Robinson and Miller were partners from 1945-57. Their office stood east of City Hall where the city parking lot is located.



Ancestors

If you could see your ancestors
All standing in a row,
Would you be proud of them?
Or don't you really know?

Strange discoveries are sometimes made,
In climbing the family tree,
Occasionally one is found in line,
Who shocks his progeny.

If you could see your ancestors,
All standing in a row,
Perhaps there might be one or two,
You wouldn't care to know.

Now turn the question right about,
And take another view.
When you shall meet your ancestors,
Will they be proud of you?

...Author Unknown
Submitted by Alicia Paul Ives



Your Support is Vital!

Annual memberships expire December 31, 2005. We count on dues and donations to provide necessary funds for our projects and for the maintenance of the Essley-Noble Museum complex. Thank you to all of our patrons!

- () Annual Membership - \$15.00 (one household)
- () Lifetime Membership - \$300.00
- () Corporate/Business Fee- \$100.00

Send to: Jim Runyon
756 Hwy 94
Aledo, IL 61231

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone _____

New MCHS Officers

For the next year, Bill Bertrand and Dave Duncan have agreed to exchange places as President and Vice President, respectively, making a great team. Mary Jane Sticklen is the new secretary, giving hard-working Beverly Gray more time for her busy schedule. Bev has done a super-human job and will still be a very active board member. Thank you for all of your time and energy, Bev! Jim Runyon remains treasurer.



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.



Coming Events:

- **March 5-10:**
Genealogy Computing Workshop-Carl Sandburg College 877-236-1862, Ex. 5337
- **April 1:**
Museum opens for the season
- **April 16:**
Spring open meeting 7:00 p.m. Program TBA



This newsletter issue sponsored by:



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