

THE BATAVIA HISTORIAN

Vol. XI, No.1

February, 1970

Published by the BATAVIA HISTORICAL SOCIETY

The things that the Flag stands for were created by the experiences of a great people. Everything that it stands for, was written by their lives. The Flag is the embodiment, not of sentiment, but of history. It represents the experiences made by men and women, the experiences of those who do, and live under that Flag.

Woodrow Wilson

NEXT MEETING

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 1, 1970 at 3:00 P. M.
IN THE BARTHOLOMEW CIVIC CENTER

PROGRAM

ELECTION OF OFFICERS

PROGRAM BY THE NATIONAL ACCELERATOR LABORATORY
PUBLIC RELATIONS DEPARTMENT.

At the moment we do not know just what phase of their work they will talk about. The Executive Board will furnish the refreshments. The program will be preceded by the Election of Officers. The following slate is proposed by the Nominating Committee:

- | | |
|-----------------------|-------------------------|
| President | Harold O. Patterson |
| Vice President | Miss Mary Snow |
| Secretary | Mrs. Walter H. Wood |
| Treasurer | Herbert R. Carlson |
| Trustee for Two Years | Miss Mary Anderson |
| Trustee for Two Years | Mrs. Franklin G. Elwood |

Our December meeting was a Christmas program. Nine students from our High School gave a delightful program of vocal, flute and trumpet solos, accompanied by a very competent pianist. The program was extremely versatile and very well done. This was followed by a Christmas story by our Librarian, Mrs. Carl W. Johnson. The story was written by one of the editors of the gone, but not forgotten "Youth's Companion."

The Misses Theresa and Mary Feldott furnished the refreshments.

Our sincere sympathy is extended to the families of Mrs. L. L. Urch, 89, who passed away November 10th, and Mrs. Stella Atkinson, 87, who passed away November 4th. Loyal members, both of them, although they were not able to attend any meetings.

Since writing our last Newsletter, October 13, we have received mementos from the following people: Miss Alma Benson, Mr. and Mrs. Richard Rubo, Harold F. and Robert F. Peterson, Ralph Finley and George Neri, St. Charles.

Recently we received a letter from our Mayor Robert V. Brown, enclosing a copy of a letter that he had received from the President of the Batavia, N. Y. City Council, asking for a "closer inter-governmental relationship between the four 'Batavias' in the United States." We told our Mayor that, in February of 1963, we had sent the Librarian of Batavia, N. Y. a complimentary copy of our book "Historic Batavia, Illinois." We also told the Librarian that our town was named in honor of Batavia, New York by our first Postmaster, Judge Isaac Wilson, who came from there. Also, we told them, when Judge Samuel D. Lockwood came to live near Chicago, he undoubtedly was influenced in coming to Batavia to live because, after studying law in New York, he opened his first law office in their city. We received a very kind "thank you" from their Library Director there who also enclosed much information about that city.

Several years ago we went east to visit some relatives, and, passing near Batavia, New York, we digressed and stopped there for an hour or so to see what kind of a "birth right" we were named for. As I remember, it was a well-set-up city, larger than our city.

Kenzie B. Harris, a Junior High School student, wrote an article for the December issue of "Illinois History" on "Kane County's Reba Keeler," the Executive Secretary of the Kane County Fair. Some of us "Old-timers" remember when the Fair was held in Laurelwood Park, north of Batavia and recall riding the steamboat "City of Batavia" from the pier on Wilson Street to the Park for five cents. Memories! But that's another story.

Mrs. Earl Judd has suggested that we initiate a program in our grade schools to talk about Batavia History and to create a reverence for our historic buildings. She volunteered to help but we will need others. It will give volunteers an opportunity to read up on our history. Also she thought it would be decidedly worthwhile to have a picture map of Batavia made to leave in the several grade school rooms. This would show all of the early points of interest here.

We have learned much about the perfumes and other products of the Campana Corporation, due to the inquiry of Miss Sandy Brown of Houston, Texas. The information about the "Old South" perfume has been sent to her, but no empty bottles were available. We thank all of you who helped us with information.

We went out to the Kane County Home for the Aged recently, to take some pictures of the buildings. While we were there Paul Willing, the last Superintendent, told us that the stone buildings are to be torn down. In a way it is more important to preserve these structures than the brick Court House in Geneva because these are made of our local stone. Strong, well-lighted native stone buildings such as these are getting scarce. Go out and

look at them while you have a chance. There they stand "like a strong-hearted and cheerful person, forceful yet friendly," but what memories they must have.

The other day, a man wrote us who had a 60 year old log saw made by the Appleton Manufacturing Company that was in poor condition. This he wanted to restore for his museum. He wanted information about this concern so that he could get from them literature or drawings to help him rebuild the saw. We told him that the company was no longer in existence but we traced a cut of a log saw that was in a 1900 Appleton catalog, which the Society has, along with a description of the saw. We sent him this, hoping that it will help.

Do you have a copy of Historic Batavia that you will part with? We have had calls from three different persons for copies in the last few days. (Maybe we need a new printing?)

THE KANE COUNTY HOME FOR THE AGED

For most of the period in which the Kane County Home for the Aged has been in existence, the indigent have been well taken care of in clean, sunny, comfortable rooms with good care and food. Kane County has lessened the anathema of going "over the hill" to the poor-house to the minimum.

Until 1852, when the first alms house was procured, the poor were farmed out, as was the custom, to individuals in private homes who took care of them for a small fee. Undoubtedly some of these caretakers took advantage of those in their care by treating them as menial servants.

In the spring of 1852, the Board of Supervisors bought the farm of Elijah Lee of 179 acres for \$16.00 an acre. This was part of the present farm located between Geneva and Batavia on the Averill Road. In June, James Hotchkiss was appointed the first Superintendent. For a time, due to many demands on the County, it was a case of making the existing buildings do. However, after the Civil War, times became more prosperous so that, in 1871, a three story stone building, costing \$18,000 was completed. An addition for the mentally ill was erected soon after. In 1887 the west part of the main building was destroyed by fire but was quickly rebuilt, remodeled and enlarged.

Some of the early "keepers" were Simeon R. McKinley, J. D. Sperry, Alonzo Cook who served for 14 years until April of 1869. Robert L. Reeves was Superintendent for a short time, followed by Clark Wood, serving for 16 years, from November, 1871 until his death February 2, 1888.

Then Seymour E. Keyes was Superintendent until his death 17 years later on January 7, 1905. During his term of office, many improvements were made to the buildings and farm. There were now, 1904, three large stone buildings, three stories high with slate roofs. A deep well had been drilled. This was a great improvement to the fire fighting equipment. Steam and electricity plants were installed for light, heat and power.

The Court House and Jail in Geneva were lighted from this plant.

The cattle and hay barn was modern and well equipped and the horse barn was fairly good. Small fruits, vegetables, meats, milk, & eggs used were produced on the farm. Grain and hay was raised for the farm stock with some to spare. To take care of this plant, there were two assistant farmers, two men attendants, one night watchman and attendant, also one electrician, one engineer and one cook. Mrs. Keyes, the matron, had five assistants.

In 1898, 41 acres were added to the farm. Prior to that the establishment had grown to 240 acres.

In September of 1905 John Micholson followed Mr. Keyes as Superintendent, with Mrs. Micholson as matron. In November, two years later, a fire doing \$10,000 damage, broke out in the Women's Department. Fortunately the inmates were removed without injuries.

Succeeding Mr. Micholson, who resigned in December of 1913, Frank Averill became manager. He held that position for 21 years. During his span of office, the big horse barn burned to the ground, the fire being caused by sparks from the boiler room chimney.

Mr. Averill was followed by Robert A. Powell, with Mrs. Powell as matron. June, 1939 saw the completion of extensive improvements to the plant in excess of \$100,000. Due to careful management, the Powells reduced the per capita cost of taking care of the inmates, to \$1.67 a day. More land was needed so, in 1949, the Board of Supervisors purchased the Green Farm to the west of 67 acres, bringing the total acreage to 348.

In 1951, Robert Powell died and Mrs. Powell took over the management with her son James as farm manager. They retired nine years later and Mr. and Mrs. Paul Willing have supervised the farm and home since.

The number of inmates grew from eight in 1855 to a maximum of 171 in 1904 which included 105 mentally ill. August 1, 1969, there was a total of 56. Since then these inmates have been placed in private nursing homes or with families, leaving the Kane County Home for the Aged empty. An auction sale was held recently of everything that was portable. Will these sturdy stone buildings be destroyed? I understand that they will. So, after 117 years, the Kane County Home for the Aged has served its purpose. (The stone buildings may be all razed, by the time you receive this printing).

Some of the "portable" items were purchased for our museum, such as dining room tables, antique benches, wheel fire hoses and several small items.

We will need physical and financial help, before we have the "Q" Depot ready, to store and show our Historical material.

THIS IS YOUR TOWN!!!!!!!

The Batavia Historical Society extends to you a special invitation to attend its 3:00 P.M., Sunday, May 17th meeting at the Civic Center, behind the library on West Wilson Street.

The program, "This is Your Town", is specifically geared to inform newcomers (and any oldtimers too) of the interesting history of Batavia in this Fox Valley area.

Dorothy Ann Miller's comments range from tribolites to the wonderful collection of native Indian arrowheads and artifacts she has collected. Eunice Shumway, direct descendant of one of the town's earliest pioneers (1849) presents a fashion show, replete with an embroidered wedding vest of a town founder, his wife's handsome gold mesh shawl (5 x 7 feet, weighing umpteen pounds) and her very beautiful parisian couturier gowns.

Mary L. Snow, whose great-grandfather arrived in time to bury three wives, gives a quick rundown of early manufactured products; among others, an all brass, miniature replica of a Challenge windmill (it works) and tools used by skilled artisans to fashion the magnificent native limestone of our churches, stores and factory buildings.

Arnold P. Benson, our former State Senator, and Batavia's best pitcher, (baseball that is) promises delightful anecdotes about early sports in (or is it of?) Batavia.

In conclusion: all speakers will be brief so that everyone will have an opportunity to visit the future home of the Batavia Historical Society, the old (1854) Chicago, Burlington and Quincy Railroad Station at the corner of Webster and So. Van Buren.

This station, solid as its limestone foundation, is a fascinating one. Restoration is underway, but we would like you to see the "Before" and perhaps join in planning and working for the "After". As the spring and summer progress, we will be having sweep-ups, scrub-ins, paint-in and outs, and would cheerfully welcome "JOIN-INS"!

Sincerely,
Harold Patterson, President
Mary L. Snow, Program Chairman

P.S. Oh! by the way, the station is where refreshments will be served after the May 17th meeting.

NO LOOKEE, NO COOKEE

THE BATAVIA HISTORIAN

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Published by the Batavia Historical Society

The United States "has not been conspicuous for the imaginative and far-sighted use of its endowed resources. Like a profligate heir, it has lived off its capital trusting that the future would uncover a new resource to be chopped down or dug out or shot. Such obvious and easily exploited resources are now gone. Future development will demand sound research, trained intelligence, imagination and patience."

NORTHERN LIGHT, issued by
Northland College, Ashland, Wisconsin

NEXT MEETING

SUNDAY, MAY 17 - 3:00 P. M.
IN THE BARTHOLOMEW CIVIC CENTER

PROGRAM

"THIS IS YOUR TOWN"

Mary Snow, Program Chairman

The Board of Directors appointed a Membership Committee - Walter Wood, Alice Storer, Seigred Johnson, Sadie Lundberg, Phil Carlson, Carl Johnson, Amos Hartman, Theresa Feldott, (Sadie Lundberg has the list of all old and new members, paid to date or past due).

We elected officers at our February meeting. The slate shown on the February Newsletter was elected. Following this Mr. Robert L. Hines, NAL's farm manager, talked to us about his job in this organization. He confessed that he didn't know much about the atomic energy part of the set-up. His business was to develop most of the area into a park. Houses and barns in good condition were to be maintained, also most of the roads. They are interested in saving any artifacts of historic interest and have already started a museum in the Leon Feldott farmhouse which will be open to the public. This museum is on the Batavia-Warrenville Road. Part of the land, not disturbed by construction, will be rented to nearby farmers on which crops will be grown.

We thank Miss Ruth Northrup, Mrs. Fern Anderson and Bill Benson, our outgoing officers, for much time and thought given to the interests of the Society. Ruth has been our Vice President for two years; as such she was our Program Chairman. Fern and Bill have been Trustees.

Since completing our last Newsletter on January 3, we have received mementos from Mrs. Clifton Hildebrand, Oakland, California.

You will remember Mrs. Hildebrand as Lita Keller when she lived in Batavia. Her father, George Keller, was farm manager of Mooseheart. He was also owner of an outstanding farm west on Main St, Road.

One day a man came out to see me. He took a rolled-up copy of the magazine "Headlight, Batavia Edition" from his hind pocket on his pants. This, I knew, was printed in 1895, 75 years ago, and therefore very fragile. I was appalled at his treatment of this. He asked me if I had seen a copy. I said, "Yes, I had, the Society owns several copies," He didn't ask me if we wanted it and I didn't tell him that we did. He just rolled it up again and stuck it back in his pant's pocket. I shuddered. The proper way is to handle these paper items as little as possible and to keep them in envelopes with no folds or as few folds as space will permit. We are looking forward to the time when these fragile papers can be given the best of care in proper depositories.

What did a lime kiln look like? Burning lime was a fairly important industry in Batavia when limestone was being quarried here. George Bird lists several in an article in the Batavia Herald for September 1, 1933, the Centennial Edition. He says "there was one at Hendrickson's quarry (south of Dr. Lysne's home). There were big lime kilns up where George Vermilyer lived (N. Washington Avenue) and another big one was located where Barney Price's junk yard now is (south side of State Street between Washington Avenue and N. River Street) and two down on Mahoney's Creek (west of Route 25 and south of Batavia)." There was also one on the west side of N. Water Street between Wilson and Houston Streets on the stone house property recently razed. There undoubtedly were others. There is still the ruins of a kiln in the north bluff of Mahoney Creek, I tried to get close enough to it to take a photo of it, but too many trees intervened. Some one more agile than I am will have to get down on the creek level to take a close-up of it. Does some one have a photo of this now, and will they give a copy of it to the Society?

Charcoal kilns are common, Eric Sloane, in his book, American Yesterdays shows pictures of two different kinds, but I haven't yet found a good picture or description of a lime kiln.

This winter, as I have had time, I have been collecting anecdotes about Batavia so that I would have them all in one book. This book is not for publication and includes stories not included in Historic Batavia, stories that people have told me, and stories about Batavia and Batavians collected from here, there and everywhere. Some are funny. Some are sad. So far I have written, in longhand, 123 stories, short and long, on over 105 pages. Do you have anything to add to the collection? Think I'll call the book Batavia Scrapbook.

HAPPENINGS ONE HUNDRED YEARS AGO

1870 POPULATION . . . Batavia Township, 3,018. Kane County, 39,091. Chicago, 298,977. Illinois, 2,539,891. United States, 38,558,371. Our Batavia population consisted of - White, 2,974; Colored, 44; Dwellings, 581.

In May O. B. Merrill bought out Roof's interest in the Batavia News. It was then Merrill and Lewis. The paper was founded May 8, 1869. The Society has a copy of Volume 1, Number 1. In October Clark A. Lewis bought out Merrill's interest.

THE POLLUTION OF THE FOX RIVER

Why shouldn't the Society be interested in a clean Fox River? It was clean when Christopher Payne came here and the river was filled with edible fish. Now look at it! It's dirty and has very few fish in it and those are mostly cull fish - certainly not game fish.

Pollution didn't start yesterday. Back in 1894 polluters, notably the glucose factory in Geneva, were killing tons of fish. The following quotes from newspapers at the time prove that:

April 24, 1894. A great many dead fish are in the river, again alleged to be killed from poisonous chemicals from the glucose factory in Geneva,

March 19, 1899. The State Board of Fish Commissioners have decided to prosecute the Geneva Glucose Co. for polluting the Fox River. Refuse from the factory has poisoned thousands of fish.

August 13, 1899. About 30,000 lbs, of dead fish were taken from the Fox River near Geneva. Six men and a team gathered up the dead fish and burned them under the boilers of Geneva's factories. The fish included bass, carp, red horse and suckers.

September 1, 1930. Thousands of fish died in the Fox River over the week end and were still being removed in ton loads yesterday. The fish were killed by acids dumped in the river by upriver industries.

July 20, 1936. With record low water in the Fox River, thousands of dead fish have been taken from the river at Geneva.

October 3, 1949. After tons of fish were killed in the Fox River last Friday and Saturday, the City Council sent a protest to Governor Stevenson. Later, sportsmen's groups met in Geneva to take similar action.

The Kane County Clean Streams Committee should have our wholehearted support in their work. For the last ten years they have been the "watch-dogs" of our valley to prevent pollution in our once beautiful river which even today is our greatest natural asset.

Today we should be concerned about the removal of so-called "excess" water from the rivers in Batavia by the NAL. This water is not to be returned to the river after being used.

The Society is happy that Arnold Benson was honored by his compatriots in Batavia on Wednesday, March 11th. He richly deserved the tribute. We added our bit with a letter of commendation.

Shall we change the By Laws and increase dues to \$2.00 for Ind. and \$3.00 for family?

You are in arrears for the years _____ Total \$ _____ .

The Treasurer is Sadie Lundberg, Secretary of Membership Committee.

THE BATAVIA HISTORIAN

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September, 1970

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We shall seek a renewed stirring of love for the earth; we shall urge that what man is capable of doing to the earth is not always what he ought to do, and we shall plead that all Americans here, now, determine that a wide spacious untrammled freedom shall remain in the midst of the American earth as living testimony that this generation, our own, had love for the next.

David Brower - The Audubon Bulletin, Dec., 1969

NEXT MEETING

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 20, 1970 - 3:00 P.M.

IN THE BARTHOLOMEW CIVIC CENTER

PROGRAM

In recognition of the 120th anniversary of the first train service between Batavia and Chicago, the September 20th meeting of the Historical Society will be devoted to railroading. Gerald Ruble of Batavia will display material from his private collection of early equipment, tools, glassware and mementos gathered over the past 40 years of his association with the Nickel Plate Railroad. Truly astonishing number of interesting items, including a large number of foreign railroad memorabilia and a set of slides showing the fastest train in the World, the Japanese Tokyo Express.

The refreshment committee will be:

Dorothy Patzer, Chairman, Marilyn Phelps, Marge Benson and Ione Blair

Our May meeting was outstanding. It was well attended, with an interest-packed program under the guidance of Mary Snow, Program Chairman.

Mrs. Dorothy Ann Miller talked about many things - the Indians who lived here; her first night in Batavia; Glenwood Park; the Isaac Wilson house, etc.

Eunice Shumway showed dresses, vests, etc. of the early Van Nortwicks and artifacts of the Lockwood daughters and of Dr. F. H. Daniels.

Arnold P. Benson talked briefly about some of the outstanding personalities of Batavia, the early baseball teams and his experience driving the Rehder Bakery wagon.

Mary Snow discussed our desperate need for a place to house our mementos. We have now such a building in prospect, the "Q" Depot, but it needs repairing and remodeling. After viewing the artifacts which were on display, the audience was invited to inspect the depot where refreshments were to be served by a committee composed of Martha Wood, Georgette Kautz and Mary Snow. Many accepted this invitation and viewed the station for the first time.

We extend our sincere sympathy to the families of Mr. Carl S. Swan, 79, who passed away April 13, and Mr. Ralph C. Benson, 60, who passed away April 25. Ralph was our Treasurer for 1966, 1967 and 1968; Mrs. Joseph Kelly, 66, who passed away August 7; also Mrs. Michael Schomig who passed away August 14.

Since completing our last Newsletter, we have received mementos from the following people: Melvin Rasmussen, Mrs. Barton S. Snow, Mrs. Lowell Burkitt, Mrs. Ralph Benson, Mrs. Arthur B. Hoover, Mrs. Walter Schelsky, Mrs. G. R. Johnson, Elburn, Mrs. Leo Hoppe, D. Harold Bunker, Philip R. Elfstrom, Miss Fern Hinfrack, Coyle Anderson, James L. Hanson, Miss Viola E. Peterson, Geneva.

In the last Newsletter I located the lime kilns which were in various parts of Batavia. I said that I had never seen a kiln, real or in a picture, except the one on the north side of Mahoney Creek. I asked if anyone could advise me what they looked like. Marj Holbrook carried my question in the Aurora Beacon News. Here are the answers I received:

Stanley Alberding on May 19, brought out a 2 1/4" x 3 1/4" photo of the kiln on Mahoney Creek taken about 50 years ago. This shows a built-up limestone wall about 40 feet long and 18 feet high with a short wall at both ends. There are two openings, arched, in front, about four feet wide and four feet high. This looks as if it was built out from the north bluff.

Mrs. Hazel Millett said that Lyle Hendrickson had told her the kiln was near the creek and she had gone there often as a girl. The installation at Barker's Quarry was a stone crusher. (I remember this - it was along the C. & N. W. tracks for easy loading of crushed stone.) Her father and uncle, Charles and Fred Millett, hauled stone from Hendrickson's Quarry to Wayne to build Dunham's Castle.

Brayton Weaver said there was a kiln at Mill Creek. This was lined with granite boulders so that the kiln itself would not be injured when limestone was burned.

Mrs. Edwin G. Remaly of St. Charles said the Fall Issue, 1969, of "Wisconsin Tales and Trails," a magazine, had two good articles about limestone and lime in Wisconsin. I sent

for a copy of this. Following is a description of a lime kiln from this magazine:

“The kilns were built of limestone and were well lined with firebrick. The simplest kind were called ‘mixed feed’ kilns. First cordwood was dumped down the shaft and set afire. Then alternate layers of limestone and fuel were added. The heat from each layer of wood converted the stone above it to lime. This method was efficient, but the lime collected from the bottom of the oven was mixed with wood ashes. To combat this problem, separate fireboxes were built low in the sides of the kiln. These kept the burning wood away from the limestone, but allowed the heat to reach it.”

The kilns the magazine mentions were larger than the Batavia kilns, I am sure. "They were square and stood thirty to fifty feet high with walls up to six feet thick."

PROSPERITY OR POLLUTION - TAKE YOUR CHOICE

It is amusing the “build-up” that the artists used in depicting the overall views of some of our manufacturies in the 1890’s.

For instance, “Headlight” for 1895, a magazine published by the Northwestern Railway, shows a general view of the Challenge Wind Mill Co. spread across the center two pages. Besides the buildings, and extensive lumberyard south of the plant, and the dam, the artist has drawn four windmills on top of the buildings, a water tank, a tall chimney belching smoke and three locomotives pulling lines of boxcars. Also, would you believe it, on the Fox River below the dam, is a good-sized steamboat, a sailboat with four sails and a racing boat with two men in it rowing. That artist used his imagination, I would say.

We did have a steamboat, 60 feet long, but that was on the Pond and plied from the Wilson Street bridge to Laurelwood Park.

Then, in the Challenge Co, catalog, #72, a birds-eye view of the plant showed three vents spouting vapor and nine chimneys spewing clouds of dense black smoke.

In a magazine called, "The Arkansas Traveler" for February 28, 1899, there is an overall view of the U. S. Wind Engine & Pump Co. plant, showing six chimneys pouring out smoke. There again the artist must have thought the more smoke he could show pouring out of the stacks, the more industrious and prosperous the industry was. They evidently didn’t know anything about air pollution in those days - at least they were not concerned about it.

Here are the results of the open bicycle race for boys and girls on Saturday, May 23, put on for the benefit of the Batavia Historical Society Museum Fund. There were 93 entrants and each entrant paid a 50 cent fee. The committee sold orange drinks. A total of \$38.01 was raised for the Museum Fund. The names of the winners follow:

Age 0 to 8 years:

Girls' conventional - Cheryl Johnson
Boys' conventional - John Poole
Boys' speed - John Hollyfield

Age 13 to 15 years:

Girls' conventional - Karin Curnock
Boys' conventional - Roy Poole
Boys' speed - Dale Thomas

Age 9 to 12 Years:

Girls' conventional - Laura Kauth
Girls' speed - Laurie Harris
Boys' conventional - Brent Olson
Boys' speed - Dan Ellwanger
Tandem - Bryan Maddox and Jeff Lash

Committee:

Kenzie B. Harris, Scott E. McMurray,
Roger D. Williams, Danny David,
Steve Ahasic, Greg Bond, Gary Larson
- Advisor: Charles Christiansen

A Continuation of the Happenings here in 1870:

In August, the Batavia Paper Manufacturing Co. bought out the paper mill from the bankrupt Chicago Fiber & Paper Co. The main building, on the south side of Mill Street, was of cut limestone, two stories high and 150 feet long. Print paper had been made here since 1862. The new company employed from 60 to 80 men, making six tons of paper a day from rye straw, rags and some wood pulp. It was incorporated with John VanNortwick as President.

In September, the Swedish Methodist Episcopal Church was organized (present McKee Street United Methodist.) It met with the Geneva congregation until September of 1871. The first church, a frame structure, was erected on the site of the present stone church in 1875.

Also, in September, Andrew P. Anderson, a tailor, erected the stone block at the northeast corner of E. Wilson and N. River Streets. This was the Smith & Crane Furniture store, later, and now the Tri-City Warehouse Sales.

At one time this store had a catchy slogan. When Glenn S. Crane and Ralph J. Swan were partners in the furniture business, their slogan was "Let these birds feather your nest."

THE BATAVIA BURLINGTON DEPOT

"The Galena and Chicago Union R. R. Co. completed its line from Chicago to Turner Junction, now West Chicago, in 1849. About that time a meeting of interested citizens was held in Batavia to plan a connecting route from Aurora to Turner Junction. This was adjourned to Aurora. Money was raised to finance the project and a strap-iron railroad track was started from the east end and reached Batavia, twelve miles distant, on September 2, 1850, 120 years ago. This was called the Aurora Branch R. R. It was continued on to Aurora and reached there October 21, 1850."

The above is a quotation from my article in the Newsletter for September, 1969. Now go back and read the rest of the article to be prepared for the current program.

We have recently received from Mrs. G. R. Johnson, Elburn, through the kindness of Arnold Benson, a bill of sale from Hunter & Griffith, Batavia, for December 19, 1898. Just to show what inflation and scarcity of product has done to prices, compare these prices with present-day prices:

Roll Tar Paper -	\$1. 25
1/2 MRC Shingles 6/2	\$1. 25
1-2x6-16	\$0.24
14-2x4- 6	\$0.67
1-1x12-16 #2	\$0.27
2085 lbs. coal -	\$3.13

In part payment, the purchaser offers 25 bushes of corn at \$5.00.

Your Editor is grateful for, and thanks everyone who had any part in making his 80th birthday anniversary a success. He didn't know anything about the city-wide celebration contemplated until it appeared in the newspapers with a copy of the Mayor's and Council's Resolution making July 9th, "John Gustafson Day." That overwhelmed him. He thanks all of you for your birthday cards and "well-wishes."

I came across the program recently of the musical comedy romance, "The Land of the Honeymoon." This was given in the High School Auditorium under the auspices of our American Legion Auxiliary on Thursday and Friday, October 17 and 18. However, no year is given. Do you remember the year? Here is a partial list of people who were in the comedy.

Eldora Hoover, Ansgar Carlson, Gifford A. Johnson, Hattie Swan, Herman Benson, Harrold Blair, Mrs. Edw. Johnson, Pauline Krause, Edna Freedlund, Thelma Borgstrom, Victor Thelander, Florence Daniels, Joseph Kelley.

And now just a few of the advertisers in the program:

Hollister Funeral Company
Sheahan's Electric Shop - - G. E. Refrigerators, Majestic Radios
Julia Kline, 8th Anniversary Sale, October 15 to 19
W. A. Whitney, Battery Man
Batavia Cash Market - For quality and service
A. J. Barckley - Hardware and Sheet Metal Work

Dr. Clarence Smith, until recently a member of the Aurora College faculty, visited us a short time ago. He talked to my sister about the value of a museum in every town, large or small. He said that when a museum represents several towns, much material in the separate towns, like photographs, newspapers and some artifacts, is destroyed. This material may be very valuable in the town where it came from but not in the other towns as the larger consolidated museum has to pick and choose. There may be many similar artifacts from each town that it represents.

What are you doing to help convert the old "Q" depot into our museum? Some of you have done a lot, I know, others have done hardly anything. In the meantime, we are getting more artifacts to take care of. Since our last meeting, fourteen people have donated mementos. Our house is temporary storage for these and we are bursting at the seams. Moreover, this material cannot be stored properly, much less displayed properly here. Our home has been

temporary storage for over ten years now. Please hasten the remodeling of the museum.

We thank Mrs. Mabel Bowron for the loan of Bill Bowron's scrapbook, through the kindness of Mrs. Joseph McClurg. Bill was reporter for the Batavia Herald during the Centennial Year 1933. Most of the material I hadn't seen before, and it was interesting. I copied some of it for our record.

We have received a "Batavia High School World War II Scrapbook, 1941-1945" from Miss Viola E. Peterson, Geneva, who was a teacher here for many years. Many of those in uniform were her students. We will consider this scrapbook one of our priceless, irreplaceable possessions.

John Gustafson

Our Museum is developing slow and sure; we have hired a man to sandblast the many coats of paint, on the depot which will cost us between \$300. and \$400. Then we'll clean the walls and woodwork on the inside, where we will need volunteer help. (We'll also need help to paint the outside, after it is cleaned up).

We still have some copies of "Batavia, Past and Present" - for you.

Our membership committee has added 22 new members since our May meeting. Thanks.

Mary Snow and her sister Frances Moran were the main contributors to our Boo Boo Days float. We wish to thank Larson & Becker for the use of their windmill and truck for the occasion.

There is some correlation between the Past, the Present, and the Future.

Harold Patterson, President

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If there is a country in the world where concord, according to common calculation, would be least expected, it is America. Made up, as it is, of people from different nations, accustomed to different forms and habits of government; speaking different languages, and more different in their modes of worship, it would appear that the union of such a people was impracticable. By the simple operation of constructing government on the principles of society and the rights of men, every difficulty retires, and the parts are brought into cordial unison.

- Thomas Paine

NEXT MEETING

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 13, 1970 - - - 3:00 P.M.
IN THE BARTHOLOMEW CIVIC CENTER. . . . ,

PROGRAM

An interesting program, appropriate for the Christmas Season, is being arranged by Miss Mary Snow.

The refreshments will be served by Evan and Nellie James, Alice, Lucille and Arnold Gustafson.

The Nominating Committee may have their report ready for the December meeting.

Our fiscal year is January 1 to January 1. Dues are payable to - Miss Sadie Lundberg, 31 North Mallory Avenue, or any member of the Membership Committee.

The Batavia Historical Society, will take this opportunity to thank the relatives and friends of the late Axel Nelson, for their gifts to us, as a Memorial to his memory,

Our last meeting was on September 20, 1970. Mary Snow reported that the Q depot-museum exterior had been sandblasted. The wide battened boards were of white pine and showed a beautiful grain. The Park Board had contracted for all of the limestone from the razed Kane County Home for the Aged, some 400 truck loads. This is to be used for seats and for a retaining wall along the east bank of the Fox River from the bridge south.

Mr. Gerald Ruble, who had forty years of railroading to his credit, was the fascinating speaker. He had been a collector of railroad memorabilia for ten years, his basement was full of artifacts and he had brought many of his most interesting items in his collection to the meeting to show and explain. He told about railroading in the early days when links and

pins were used to connect cars and many fingers of brakemen were lost in connecting them. The present automatic coupler changed this. He has been to Japan and ridden on the famous fast Tokyo Express.

Since completing our last Newsletter, we have received mementos from the following people: Mrs. W. J. Wallace; Mrs. Wm. Bartelt; Mrs. Koch, St. Charles; Ralph Finley, Santa Barbara, California.

We were able to help a young lady from the Aurora College who was writing an essay on the flora, fauna and history of the Nelson's Lake area, west of town. We have a description of the Lake long before it was drained when Hugh Alexander used to pass the Lake on his way to school in 1859. He then lived where John Maloney lives today. Mr. Alexander was the father of Mrs. Margaret Allan and the late Ms. Ethel Alexander. Mrs. Allan let me take her father's description of the Lake to copy. He says:

" . . . the wild (passenger) pigeons came to the (Nelson's) Grove in multitudinous flocks and here I had a chance to show my Mimrodic activities and secured quite a string of these beautiful birds quite often.

"The great resort for ducks, sandhill cranes, geese and even swans were on Nelson's Lake. The margin of this lake was overgrown with a soft spongy vegetation with a sparse growth of the usual reeds, flags, rice and sawgrass. The surface was springy and a pole could be run down into the material to a depth of sixteen to twenty feet.

"Cattle would wander off in feeding till their legs would sink so that they could not withdraw them and then the poor creatures would flounder about 'till the entire surface was broken up and they would sink in the slime so that naught but their heads and horns would appear above the surface. It was pitiful as we passed by to hear the miserable beasts moan in such a fearful way.

"My brother and I, as well as many of our neighbors, rescued many by throwing a rope over their horns and pulling them to where they could gain a firm footing. But doubtless many of them sank out of sight and were smothered in the mud."

BATAVIA FORTY-NINERS

I have just finished reading the book, The Great Platte River Road by Merrill J. Mattes. That was the road taken by the people traveling to Oregon, California and the Mormons going to Salt Lake City. The book says that an estimated 350, 000 used this road in the

twenty-five years between 1841 and 1866. Reading that statement, I wondered how many of that number were Batavians. I have a rather incomplete card index of prominent Batavia people from its beginnings in 1833 to the present day. I looked through this index and found six whom I think definitely took this road west. They were James Carr, Cornelius B. Conde, Steven Hill, Albert H. Jones, John Griffith and Samuel Wilson. I thought a short story about these people might be interesting based on my card file notes.

James Carr left Maine, (where he was born in 1817,) in 1836. He went to Florida, then to New Orleans and later to New York State. Then he returned to Maine but he didn't stay there. He came to Kane County in 1839 and settled on the farm near his brother, west of Batavia. He had been east for two years since moving here, on a railroad survey. In 1849 he went to California to stay for four years. We don't know what he did there. Did he mine gold, survey the land or raise grain? In 1857 he went on a government survey.

I wrote to Francis J. Carr, Clearwater, Florida to see if he knew anything more about James Carr. He said his grandfather Leonard Carr and his brother James Carr came together to Batavia in 1839 and both bought farms west of town at that time. Francis said his files give no more information about James Carr after that date.

In another letter to me, Francis said, "Although I left Batavia over fifty years ago, I still think of it as home. . ." By the way, he was the first Controller of the Tennessee Valley Authority. Later he was Vice President of the American Steel and Wire Co. He is now retired.

Cornelius B. Conde, the great-great-grandfather of Neal J. Conde, Jr., left New York State in 1837, going to DuPage County where he was engaged in making wagons. He came to Batavia in 1841, following the same business. In 1849 he drove an ox team overland to California, remaining there until 1851 mining gold with fairly successful results. He had several narrow escapes from the Indians while in California.

Steven Hill, the grandfather of Mrs. C. E. Gormsen who recently moved to California herself, went to California during the 1849 gold rush remaining there ten years. He left Batavia with twenty-three men and twelve wagons drawn by oxen. The group took two cows with them to provide milk on the long trip. When he returned from California, he married Caroline Warne. They settled on a farm at Big Woods which he had purchased for \$29.00 an acre. The above is from the Aurora Beacon News for March 8, 1948.

John Griffiths came to Illinois from New York State in 1844. In 1852 he went overland with oxen to California. Two years later he was in the Indian Wars. He returned to Illinois in 1857. Five years later he bought a farm in Blackberry Township. In 1870 he bought a farm of 246 acres, two miles east of Batavia.

Albert H. Jones was the brother-in-law of L. A. Desrosier, Civil War veteran. He came to DuPage County with his parents in 1838 where they bought a farm from the government.

He lived on this farm for 39 years, then retired to live in Batavia. He went to California for three and one half years during the gold rush. We don't know how he went or how successful he was in mining gold. He returned to farming when he got back.

Samuel Wilson left New York State in 1835 for a farm in Nelsons Grove west of Batavia. He came to Batavia in 1849 to live in a house which is still standing at 212 Main Street. He manufactured fanning mills and other agricultural implements. After gold was discovered in California, Wilson made two trips overland with cattle and horses to that future state, returning both times by way of Panama to New York and by rail to Batavia. He was also engaged in gold mining in California for several years. His daughter Mary became Mrs. E. C. Newton.

I am not sure when James Latham went to California. He was one of the early settlers in Batavia, coming in 1834. He lived here long enough to own a subdivision named for him as well as a street later, but I have no date when he went west.

The above six people were obviously not the only Batavians who went to California during the gold rush. Do you know of any others? Or, do you know of any Batavia people who went to Oregon during the years from 1841 to 1866?

In 1966 the Batavia Historical Society received a priceless book from Mrs. Corinne Robinson titled, "Batavia's Celebrities, 1908 and 1909." It is a book of 505 photographs, 2 1/4 by 3 1/4 inches, taken by Tracy Holbrook of Batavia men of that period. This book was given by Leslie Holbrook, Tracy's brother, to Mrs. Robinson. The photos were taken anywhere, on the streets or in the stores or homes and are arranged four on a page. They are in remarkably good condition. We have numbered the pages and made a list of the men in the order of their appearance. Now we have just finished an alphabetical list so that any photo can be easily found. We remember about one-half of the men. Remember these pictures were taken 61 and 62 years ago. We owe Tracy Holbrook a tremendous debt of gratitude for taking photos of this cross section of Batavia men so long ago.

Tracy Holbrook was the son of Mr. and Mrs. Emanuel Holbrook. He was a famous violinist, touring the U. S. four times. In 1903 he played by invitation in the White House for President Roosevelt and 600 invited guests.

According to Frank Smith, both Tracy and Leslie were born in the house on the southwest corner of East Wilson and South Van Buren Streets. Later they moved into the house now occupied by the Johnson Funeral Home.

We are happy that the Society could loan several old school photos to the Batavia High School Graduating Class of 1970 for the Centennial issue of the Echo, the school annual. It is a most artistic and complete book and we commend all those who had a hand in its development. We received a complimentary copy of the Echo.

Our book, Batavia, Past and Present would make an excellent gift at \$1.00 each.

And finally, We wish you all a VERY MERRY CHRISTMAS and a HAPPY NEW YEAR.