

THE BATAVIA HISTORIAN

Vol. XII, No. 1

February, 1971

Published by the BATAVIA HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Knowledge of the past and its heritage is of great significance when it enters into the present, but not otherwise. . . . The past is a great resource for the imagination; it adds a new dimension to life, but on condition that it be seen as the past to the present, and not as another and disconnected world.

John Dewey

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NEXT MEETING

SUNDAY; FEBRUARY 7, 1971 - - 3:00 P. M.  
IN THE BARTHOLOMEW CIVIC CENTER

PROGRAM

Some accomplishments achieved in 1970, and definite goals for 1971 - will be ably presented, under the direction of Mary Snow, Program Chairman.

Refreshments will be served by Mrs. Herbert Anderson and her committee.

This part of the program will be preceded by the election of officers. The following slate is proposed by the Nominating Committee:

|                       |                             |
|-----------------------|-----------------------------|
| President             | Mrs. Earl (Mary Ann) Judd   |
| Vice President        | Harold Patterson            |
| Secretary             | Mrs. Norman (Helen) Johnson |
| Treasurer             | Neil J. Conde, Jr.          |
| Trustee for Two Years | Philip R. Elfstrom          |
| Trustee for Two Years | Ed Hampton                  |

Miss Mary Snow substituted for the President Harold Patterson, and also conducted the program at our last meeting, December 13, 1970. Among the items of business -

It was moved by Mrs. Carl Johnson and duly seconded and passed that the annual society dues be raised to \$2.00 per member and \$3.00 per couple.

Miss Snow compared the nicknames; theme topics, etc. in the 1912 High School Annual with the present day names and topics. She showed an interesting display

of old Batavia photos and then a movie of Christmas customs. About forty people were in attendance despite the many conflicting meetings.

We thank all of the outgoing officers, Harold Patterson as President, Miss Mary Snow as Vice President, Mrs. Walter Wood as Secretary, Herbert Carlson as Treasurer and Jeff Schielke as Trustee, for giving much time and conscientious service to their jobs. We know that this loyalty to the society will continue.

We thank the Furnas Electric Company for typing, printing and addressing the four issues of the Newsletter the past year. We are most grateful.

Since completing our last Newsletter, we have received eight group photos of Batavia people from Donald Hill; also a tax receipt for 1872 from Miss Helen Rodewald. We are most grateful to them.

This is our 45th consecutive issue of the Newsletter, The Society is starting its eleventh year of service to Batavia.

Last month we received a letter from William B. VanNortwick of New York City stating that he has finished writing the book about the VanNortwick Family. It is now in the hands of the printers.

We have been able to help two inquirers for information this past month. A lady wanted knowledge of three Batavia Civil War veterans who were her ancestors. The other, a man, is writing a book on Windmills and we have been able to give him a wealth of information on this subject. We have written him three times in answer to his questions and have sent him ten pages of xeroxed material.

The following happened one hundred years ago and certainly couldn't happen today - - we wouldn't want it to if it could . . . A market gunner boasted in the "American Sportsman" in 1870 of killing 6000 ducks in one season near Chicago.

Have you visited the Stone Mill Museum owned by the Sandwich Historical Society? One who did recently said that it was most interesting and instructive. The Herald gave a description of the museum in the September 16, 1970 issue. It is open every Sunday afternoon from 1 to 5. Guides are always present. The museum is located on East Railroad Street, just one block north of Route 34. Direction signs are on Route 34.

Our book Batavia: Past and Present makes a very fine gift at any time of the year to any present or former Batavian at \$1.00 each.

#### THE FOLLOWING HAPPENED ONE HUNDRED YEARS AGO

- April 21 R. W. Thickers was issued a patent for a Farmer's Boiler.
- April 23 Rev. W. H. Gloss; Pastor of the M E. Church, will preach in the German Church, East Batavia, at 3:00 P M.
- May 2 The Singing Class, under the direction of Prof. S. L. Fish, gave a concert in the West Side School Hall.
- November 3 The Swedish Mission (present Evangelical Covenant) Church was organized in the Anderson Hall (Smith & Crane and presently the Tri-City Warehouse Sales Building). The original members were:
- Mr. and Mrs. C. M. Gronlund
  - Mr. and Mrs. Andrew Redborg
  - Mr. and Mrs. John Redborg
  - Mr. and Mrs. John F. Freedlund
  - Mr. and Mrs. P. A. Russell
  - Mr. and Mrs. John Lind
  - Mr. and Mrs. Charles Wenberg, Sr.
- July Contracts were let for the construction of a stone building at the Kane County Poor Farm. This was completed in December at a cost of \$18,000.

#### AN ORNITHOLOGICAL QUEST

We had an inquiry the other day about the history of the glass case of stuffed birds that is now in the Alice Gustafson School. We do not know the actual age of the case. Arnold Benson told my brother that the case was given to the school by E. G. Hobler but he didn't know when. We remember that it was on the stair landing of the present School for Exceptional Children. Miss Sigred Johnson remembers when she was in the third grade, that it was in this school, and so can I, by stretching my memory - - that was seventy years ago. From there it traveled to the Blaine Street School and from there to the Alice Gustafson School

My sister has a better memory than I have. She calls to mind two other cases of stuffed birds. One was in Doctor O. W. Hubbard's office on the second floor of the Anderson Block. She called Doctor Hubbard's daughter, Mrs. O. Lester Jones, to see if she knew what happened to this case of birds, Vendela said that it was in their barn until recently when she gave it away.

The third case of birds was in the front hall of Mr. and Mrs. L. A. Desrosier's residence, now the home of Mr. and Mrs. Elmer Ander, 434 W. Wilson Street. No one seems to know what happened to this case. Mr. Desrosier, A French-Canadian, was a Civil War veteran.

Can you supply us with any more information about any of these three cases? Or, do you know of any other cases of stuffed birds in town? We would appreciate hearing from you if you do.

We understand that one of the birds in the school case is the long-extinct passenger pigeon. These, at one time were so plentiful that they darkened the sky for hours when they were in flight.

E. G. Hobler was born near Batavia in 1860, married Miss Harriet Wells of Geneva. They had one son, Atherton and lived in the limestone house formerly owned by William Van Nortwick, later the Home Ec Building and torn down to make way for the Junior High School Gym and Auditorium.

I thank Miss Erma Jeffery for spotting an error in my "49er" article last month. Cornelius B. Conde was a cooper, a maker of barrels and not a maker of wagons.

..... A Special Message From The Officers. . . . .

To begin the year, 1971, alive and healthy, is an accomplishment and blessing.

The retiring officers and directors wish to thank all the members and the general public for their support in 1970. We know our actions or inactions didn't please everybody, but we did our best.

Our newly appointed membership committee did real well, under the chairmanship of Sadie Lundberg. We have 270 on our mailing list and the moral support and interest of many others interested in preserving Batavia History, and antique items. Our Museum should be a reality, by this summer, (with your support).

We have purchased a Directory of Historical Museums, which we will place in our Public Library, as a resource item. It gives the location, specialty, hours, and charges, if any, of nearly all the Museums in the D, S. and some in foreign countries.

As retiring President, it has been a privilege and joy to have done my duty, to the best of my ability for the Batavia Historical Society.

Harold O. Patterson

Published by the BATAVIA HISTORICAL SOCIETY

“ . . . Now when everything moves so fast, it is a sobering thought that what is built today may be around for a long time: that which is demolished can never return again; In the frenetic rush toward a new city, when time-pressured decisions are made in haste, it might be good to look around and hopefully keep some bits and pieces of the past to break the monotony of the modern patterned streets and to remind a new generation of the efforts of those who have gone before and create a happy mixture of the best examples each era has contributed to her growth.”

Caroline Williams in Louisville Scenes.

Along the same line John Ruskin wrote:

" . . . when we build let us think that we build forever. Let it not be for the present use only, let it be such that our descendants will thank us and say; ‘See, this our fathers did for us.’”

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NEXT MEETING

SUNDAY, MAY 16, 1971 - - -3:00 P.M.  
IN THE BARTHOLOMEW CIVIC CENTER

PROGRAM

SLIDES AND TALK ABOUT THE PRAIRIE PATH

BY

MRS. AUGUST SINDT, NAPERVILLE, ILL.

Refreshments will be served by Miss Mary Anderson, Miss Freda Lundberg and Mrs. Mary Ann Judd.

Mrs. Sindt is a member of the Naperville Heritage Society. She has been a promoter of the Prairie Path since its inception.

Bicyclists, horseback riders, nature lovers, bird watchers, biology classes, Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, Cub Scouts, in fact, anyone interested in preserving the ecology of this area, should be interested in this program. All are invited. Contributions for the work of the Prairie Path will be accepted at the meeting. The Batavia Park Board is planning to extend the Prairie Path north to the Fabyan Forest Preserve for bicyclists, using the old C&NW Ry. Right-of-way.

At the February meeting Miss Mary Snow discussed the Depot-Museum situation. This was well covered in the newspapers so this won't be repeated here.

Mrs. Hiebert of Geneva talked about Col. George Fabyan and the Preserve, originally part of his estate. This was followed by many anecdotes, questions and comments from the audience.

Since completing our last Newsletter, we have received artifacts from the following people: Mrs. Elfreda Olsen, Robert L. Phelps, William J. Wood, the Leslie M. Langley Family and Mrs. Rudolph Kopecky, Geneva. We are most grateful to these donors; they have all been thanked by letter.

As a reminder, we would like copies of any special programs or histories of any and all churches, clubs and lodges or any other organizations. Preserving these items is part of our job. The following is from our By-Laws:

#### ARTICLE II - OBJECTIVE

The object of this Society shall be the discovery, preservation, and dissemination of knowledge about the history of Batavia Township, Kane County, Illinois. To collect and preserve books, pamphlets, papers, photographs, relics and other historical objects. To receive by gift, grant, devise or purchase books, museums, moneys, real estate and other property. To encourage the preservation of historical monuments and buildings and to suitably mark them. To publish historical material in the newspapers and in pamphlets and books. To hold meeting with addresses, lectures, papers and general discussions.

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Seemingly, we continually need help from you good people. Does .any one have any cigar boxes that originally contained cigars made by John Geiss or James Russell? The former made San Tonio, Old Plantation, Select, Geiss' Best Five, Electric Light and White Statute. He undoubtedly made other brands. James Russell made the Batavia Bell (or Belle) in 1898. Do you know of any other brands or do you have any boxes that held any of these Batavia brands that you will give to the Society? John Geiss joined his father, Jacob, in the manufacture of cigars in 1880. When did Jacob start? How many men did they employ? Can you write a history of this industry or tell us any facts about it in Batavia?

Periodically we discover buildings made of Batavia limestone. Robert Barclay stated that the Universalist Church building, built in 1866 and now the Aurora Woman's Club building is made of Batavia stone. This he stated in an excellent article in the Aurora Beacon News recently.

Do you have more than one copy of the book Historic Batavia? Will you part with one? Several newcomers to Batavia have expressed a desire to buy one but there is none available.

We have an ample stock of Batavia: Past and Present at \$1.00 each. Use these as gifts to your friends and new neighbors.

We will need lots of help later on in renovating the interior of the Depot-Museum. Can we depend on you to help? Please let Mrs. Mary Ann Judd or Miss Mary Snow know when and what you can do to help.

The Batavia Public Library was one of several organizations who recently received an award from the Illinois Audubon Society for their efforts to beautify their immediate landscape. Congratulations!

We received an interesting letter from Mrs. Pauline Campbell recently. You will be glad to know that she is well and is most enthusiastic about her work. She is on a 760 acre ranch in Colorado on which are 99 head of Herefords, so at times she turns cow-girl. Naturally she is doing a lot of photography in that beautiful country.

### LIFE IN THE GOOD OLD DAYS.

By Kenneth O. Wolcott

Kenneth O. Wolcott was the youngest son of W. A. Wolcott, the other two sons were Laurens E. and Walter. W. A. Wolcott, druggist and grocer, had a store in the Batavia Body Co. building on the Island. Kenneth was born in 1885 and, after receiving his education, moved to Rochester, New York eventually. He and L. E. Wolcott wrote a biographical sketch of their lives and called the book, "Life in the Good Old Days." The book is now owned by Mr. and Mrs. Oliver M. Wolcott. Their memories of Batavia are most interesting as the following extracts will attest: They have given me permission to copy.

"May I here add a couple of notes on the advent of the telephone into Batavia. The first "Central" switchboard was located in Micholson & Johnson's store at the corner of Batavia Avenue and First Street. Initially, of course, there were very few subscribers-principally manufacturers, some of the professional men, doctors, lawyers, etc., and maybe a dozen or so residences. At this time, when I was about seven years old, as I came out of school to go home one afternoon, I met Father on the street. This was unusual, as he rarely left the store on the Island during the day, except to go home for his meals, then always going "the back way" via Water Street. I ran up to him demanding to know where he was going. He replied, "I am going to talk to a man in Chicago. Do you want to come along?" I did of course. I knew vaguely what a telephone was but could scarcely imagine that it would carry as far as Chicago, forty miles away. I watched and listened as he shouted into it, finally getting his message across. It was an emergency order to his wholesale drug house for some special drug urgently required to fill a prescription, to be delivered immediately by special messenger to a pick-up desk maintained near the old C&N W Ry. station on Wells Street, by Ed Strain. Ed was a professional errand-boy in Chicago for Batavia people, commuting daily, matching a spool of silk for the dressmaker, exchanging a pair of shoes, getting theater tickets, performing all sorts of errands for local merchants, factories or anyone else. It was then nearing four o'clock; if delivered immediately as ordered, Ed would pick it up at his office at five, would arrive in Batavia and be delivered to Father's store soon after six, - a remarkable record for that era."

Kenneth goes on to say:

“My Father had two Assistant Pharmacists. One was C. C. (Charlie) Stephens and the other was Rush E. Winslow. A visitor would have had difficulty in finding the latter by asking for him by name-Rush E. Winslow. He was always known by young and old, all over town as “Kerney.” Although I had known him well from early childhood, worked with him during my boyhood, liked and respected him, I was a grown man before I learned the origin of that peculiar nickname. It seems that soon after the end of the Civil War, when his father married and had a son, he named his baby after an officer he had served under and greatly admired, Col. Rush Ellsworth. As a small child, he was sometimes called "The Little Colonel," - thence Colonel and Kerney. The name stuck with him the rest of his life."

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Have you visited any of the nearby museums? If you haven't you should. Your Board discussed recently the advisability of hiring a bus and going to some museum as a body, each passenger paying his share of the transportation. Would you be in favor of this? Please let your officers know what you think of this.

We congratulate Mrs. Elma Hettinger on reaching the grand age of ninety years. She has lived a life of service to the community. We honor her. She passed away March 24, 1971.

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Four months of 1971 have gone by, and we aren't any closer to opening our museum than we were on January 1. We believe that we have the SUPPORT of most of the members, but we need active, inspirational, direct physical help. (volunteer architects etc.)

The combined committees, from the Park District and the Historical Society have not met or been organized, to figure out the mutual problems and benefits of the ownership of the building, being transferred to the Park District, to manage, for us Taxpayers.

Maybe someone, would like to donate a memorial gift, to move the “Q” Depot over to Laurel Street Park, which would make an ideal spot for a museum and a beautiful setting for an antique building.

Did the word, "FOREVER" in one of Jeff Schielke's news items, make you stop and wonder, ponder, or concentrate on what "forever" really means.

Thanks for your interest in our News Letter and attendance at our quarterly Batavia Historical Society meetings.

Comments from Program Chairman,  
H. Patterson

THE BATAVIA HISTORIAN

Vol. XII, No. 3

September, 1971

Published by the BATAVIA HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Social reform is not to be secured by noise and shouting; by complaints and denunciations; by the formation of parties; or the making of revolutions; but by the awakening of thought and the progress of ideas. Until there be correct thought, there can be no right action; and when there is correct thought, right action will follow.

Henry George

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NEXT MEETING  
AN EXHIBITION

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 26, 1971 --- 3:00 P.M.  
IN THE BARTHOLOMEW CIVIC CENTER

PROGRAM

ART AND ARTISTS OF BATAVIA: PAST AND PRESENT

By

MRS. GEORGE (MARGE) RUNDLE, SPONSOR

Refreshments will be served by Mrs. Franklin Elwood, Mrs. Harrold Blair, and Mrs. Malcolm Derby.

This exhibition is open only to Batavians and to Batavias Past and Present. Anyone with any art talent is invited to show their products - paintings, drawings, metal work, work on cloth or leather, etc. If your exhibit needs support, bring an easel. If your paintings are large we must limit you to one or two pictures. Tables will be provided for flat displays.

Mrs. Augustus Sindt of Naperville, Illinois talked about and showed slides of the Illinois Prairie Path at our May meeting. She gave a most interesting account of the history, the present status and future plans for the Path.

We extend our sincere sympathy to the families of the following former members:

Mrs. Elma H. Hettinger, 90, who passed away March 24th.

Miss Florence A. Johnson, 82, who passed away April 24th.

Mr. Philip R. Elfstrom, 80, who passed away June 1st. Mr. Elfstrom was one of our directors. Sixty-nine individuals or businesses contributed a total of \$410.50 to the Batavia Historical Society as a memorial to him.

Since completing our last Newsletter, we have received artifacts from the following people:

Central Pattern Works; Forbes Bryant; Mrs. Marshall Gayle; Ralph H. Finley, Santa Barbara, California; Miss Harriet Chamberlain; Mrs. Frederick C. Richter; Mrs. Harvey M. Sampson; Mrs. Elmer W. Olson; Arnold P. Benson; Charles Hodson; Miss Ora Mead; Mrs. Ture Andrews; Mr. and Mrs. Ronald J. Urich; Mr. and Mrs. James W. Mills.

## YOUNG WRITERS NEEDED FOR "ILLINOIS HISTORY"

The Society sorely needs a student, or students, to replace Kenzie B. Harris who has left town with his family. Undoubtedly there must be other budding journalists in our Junior High School who can follow through on the program of topics set forth by the student state magazine, "Illinois History." We understand that all classes in the proper category receive this magazine. Batavia writers have been noted for their absence since March of 1970. I know that this has disturbed several people who have always worked for student participation.

We need one or more teachers who will spark the young writers in their classes and urge and help them to write on one or more of the following subjects set forth in the state magazine for the ensuing year:

|              |  |
|--------------|--|
| October 1971 | Regional Meetings.                       |
| November     | Illinois Public Buildings and Monuments. |
| December     | Illinois Inventions and Inventors.       |
| January 1972 | Illinois Waterways.                      |
| February     | Abraham Lincoln.                         |
| March        | Illinois Printers and Publishers.        |
| April        | Social Work and Charitable Institutions. |
| May          | Medical Education and Institutions.      |

One of our own members should be in charge of this program because it is important not only to the students but to Batavia. I'll do what I can to help, of course.

Here is a list of Kenzie Harris' topics and the month and year in which they appeared in the magazine:

|               |  |
|---------------|--|
| December 1968 | The St. Charles Arcada.                          |
| February 1969 | Batavia's Famous Visitor - Mrs. Abraham Lincoln. |
| October 1969  | The Batavia Institute.                           |
| December 1969 | Kane County's Reba Keeler.                       |
| March 1970    | Swedes in Illinois - They Came to Batavia, Too.  |

Prior to Kenzie, the following two students wrote single articles for "Illinois History:"

|               |  |
|---------------|--|
| February 1968 | Batavia's Judge Lockwood by Loretta Marie Bolle. |
| May 1968      | Some Sesqui Dates by Keith Wendland.             |

Let's give this program some thought because it is most important. We need young people with a knowledge of Batavia's history to take our place.

Students receive much information about the history of the World, the United States and Illinois, but very little about local history, City and County. Mrs. Mary Ann Judd, our President, has suggested that several of our members be trained in Batavia history so that they can go to the school class rooms and tell them about the important events that have happened in our town. Batavia is our home, it is where we go to school, to church, where our parents work, where we play, where our friends and some of our relatives live. Where some of our tax money pays for our water, lights, our sewage system, improved streets, playgrounds, fire and police protection and garbage collection. Here our doctors, ministers, teachers, lawyers, public servants, mail carriers, milkmen, storekeepers, and "the candlestick maker" live. Here we see, and participate ourselves, in so much of our entertainment, music, sports, plays and special events such as the Fourth of July display.

So here "we live, move and have our being." Therefore the more we know about Batavia, the more we will appreciate it.

### BATAVIA'S CIGAR-MAKING INDUSTRY

The following notes were made after a telephone conversation with Miss Harriet Chamberlain on May 14, 1971. This was in response to my inquiry in the last Newsletter about the cigar factory business in Batavia.

She said her father, the late William Chamberlain, started working for the Geiss' as a tobacco leaf stripper when he was fourteen years old. Later he became a union cigar maker. This was one of the first organizations that was unionized. He marched in the first Labor Day parade in Aurora.

She has several photographs of the Geiss cigar factory which she has loaned us.

John Geiss and his father, Jacob before him, had his first small factory in the basement of Miss Hallum's store, a frame building on the north side of E. Wilson Street. Later he employed eight men in the basement of his own store which was where Rachielle's Pharmacy is today. Some of the men he employed were - Ed Richter, Jake Feldman, Otto Conrad, Ed Sorenson, Arthur Kindblade and later the two Stevens boys, Ed and Roy, were strippers, that is, they removed the main stems or veins from the leaf.

In making the cigars, one man rolled the filler, another pasted the filler together using a certain aromatic gum. Tobacco leaves from different parts of the United States and foreign countries were used to produce the different brands.

Besides John Geiss and James Russell, there was a man named Knuteson who made special cigars in a shop over the Chamberlain barber shop.

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We are receiving photos continually of people, shop groups, church groups and others, with only a few, or sometimes none, of the individuals identified. These pictures should be spread out on a table as soon as possible with a sheet for names under each photo. Then we should ask you old-timers to write down the names of all the people you recognize on the sub-tended sheet. This is imperative and should be done at once.

For instance, we received a shop group photo of 71 men recently from Mrs. Elmer W. Olson. Neither she nor I knew more than one person in the picture and he was Theodore Freedlund. We were not sure of the shop in which the men worked.

Our book Batavia Past and Present at \$1.00 each makes an excellent gift for Batavians or for banks, industries or stores to give to their "extra special" customers.

Our financial account of this book Batavia Past and Present, as of August 7, 1971, is in the black according to Eunice Shumway.

|                    |                  |                |
|--------------------|------------------|----------------|
| Her account shows: | Receipts of      | \$3064.75      |
|                    | Disbursements of | <u>2961.18</u> |
|                    | Balance          | \$ 103.57      |

Eleven panes of glass were broken in the C B & Q RR depot-museum recently, by vandals. Harold Holbrook, his son Dan and Les Bex installed new panes. This was more difficult than usual because each pane had to be cut to fit the window frame.

The Society thanks these three concerned helpers for this work freely and graciously given.

A student of Batavia's District No.5 wrote the following in front of his text on Bookkeeping, date 1871:

"The height of fifty feet has been taken as the extreme height of the atmosphere." What would he say if he lived today?

Have you paid your dues for 1971 yet? Now it costs eight cents in postage for each issue of the Newsletter and we have a hundred and one other expenses. We need your dues to carry on.

All membership dues have to go to our membership chairman, for proper recording: Sadie Lundberg, 31 N. Mallory or to Batavia Historical Society, P.O. Box #15.

August 19, 1971

Dear John and Members:

Have held off reporting to you until several matters could be resolved about the CB&Q station.

- 1] The Park District now has the lease on the land with the Burlington and has assumed lease and property tax costs.
- 2] The Park District has formally taken title to the station reserving a portion of the building for the use of the Batavia Historical Society.
- 3] The Park District has been maintaining the grounds this year and provision has been made in the new appropriation ordinance to cover the cost of grounds maintenance, utilities, upkeep and repairs.

Major installations, water supply, electricity, heat and new stairs will be a joint venture between the three interested parties, the Historical Society, the Park District and the Jaycees who are interested in renovating the entire second floor.

To get the program started, Neal Conde, Treasurer of the Society, Dwain Wilson, President of the Jaycees and Ron Podschweit of the Jaycees and Mary Snow of the Park District met to coordinate renovation efforts on August 19.

By the September meeting of the Society, a full progress report should be ready for presentation to the membership. At that time we will all have a better idea of just what individual members of each of the three organizations can contribute financially and WORK.

Mary

THE BATAVIA HISTORIAN

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December: 1971

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Disdain for history is symptomatic of the malaise of today's youth culture and the larger society which nurtured it. Resenting death we murder time. Almost too late we see that what we have slain is not time but our sense of ourselves as humans. To reject the past is to deprive today of its meaning tomorrow. To evade the significance of time is to empty life of its significance. It is that meaninglessness which pervades this age of instant gratification and instant results and permanent dissatisfaction.

Editorial "The Death of Time" - - - New York Times

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NEXT MEETING  
SUNDAY DECEMBER 5th. 1971 --3:00 P. M.  
IN THE BARTHOLOMEW CIVIC CENTER

PROGRAM

CHRISTMAS AND MUSICAL PROGRAM

BATAVIA JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL

Mr. Charles Christiansen, social studies teacher, will speak Miss Vanderlaan, speech teacher, will prepare one or two students to present a skit or reading relative to Christmas.

The Junior High School Orchestra directed by Mr. Williams, will present a program.

Sounds like an excellent program. Refreshments will be served by Mrs. Douglas Hoover, Mrs. Willard Eckblade and Mrs. Russell Nelson.

The Nominating Committee to select next years officers has been appointed.

The art exhibit at our September meeting was a grand success thanks to the sponsorship of Mrs. Marge Rundle: program topic was "Batavia Art and Artists, Past and Present." It was a pleasure to meet some of the former Batavians now living out of town, and to see their art work. Of course, we always feel proud of our present and past people and to see their work. We trust that mere Batavians will become art devotees.

We are making as complete a list as we can of artists in Batavia. including painters, sketchers, wood carvers: leather and cloth workers, etc. This last meeting, with its artists, helped immensely.

The Batavia Chamber of Commerce has turned over three inquirers for information to us. A Florida man wanted to know about Hicks, Fredendall. A Chicago woman asked for information about George B. Moss, Thomas Moss and Mr. and Mrs. Joseph J. Minium. Then a man called from Denver, Colorado for a history of the Newton Wagon Company. We were able to help all three inquirers.

Our efficient, conscientious Membership Chairman has had to relinquish that position. Thanks, Sadie Lundberg - so temporarily send your dues for 1971 or 1972 to Neal Conde, Jr., 210 N, Washington, Batavia, Illinois 60510. If there is any question about your dues, call 879-5982. Dues may also be mailed to P.O. Box 15, Batavia, Illinois.

Since completing our last Newsletter, we have received artifacts from the following people. Roy Weaver; Duane Treest; Mrs. Donald Joy, Aurora, Mrs. Joy gave us a photograph album that she found in her attic. The photographs were not identified. She thinks this album belonged to a Batavian because most of the photos were taken by early Batavia photographers. It will be on display at our December meeting.

Being an officer in most organizations is a thankless job - it means a lot of work, much thought and some fault-finding by a few individuals. That holds true of our own officers. We appreciate what they have done and we thank them for the deep concern the out-going officers have had for "the good of the order."

We do thank the Furnas Electric Co for printing, folding and addressing our Newsletters. Usually Harold Patterson has clipped and stamped them, along with his manifold duties as Program Chairman.

Next year, 1972, will be an important year for Batavia with its many centennial celebrations. It will also be the 100th anniversary of our big factory fire on March 10, 1872 and a lesser factory fire on December 23. More about these next year.

We will have a few of our Society's factory group photos on display at our December meeting with a sheet attached to each picture on which you can write down the names of the employees you recognize, please. We have a total of 22 group photos, all different, so this work of identification will have to be carried over several meetings. We will start with the Challenge Company employees.

#### DISCONTINUED POST OFFICES

We received the Letter of Discontinuance of the Post Office of Bald Mound, Illinois discontinued February 28, 1905, from Melvin Rasmussen. Envelopes, postcards and postal cards of these Discontinued Post Offices (DPO) are valuable. If you have any of them, don't destroy them. It looks also as if in a short time there will be no physical Bald Mound. Trucks are hauling it to the NAL site as fast as they can.

According to Ferslew's Kane County Directory and Gazetteer, 1857, the following were the Post Offices in Kane County at that time:

|                                     |                               |
|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Aurora                              | Hampshire                     |
| Batavia                             | Kaneville                     |
| Berkshire                           | Kings Mill                    |
| Big Rock                            | Lodi Station (now Maple Park) |
| Blackberry (now Elburn)             | Montgomery                    |
| Campton                             | North Plato                   |
| Clintonville (now South Elgin)      | New Virgil                    |
| Dundee                              | Rutland                       |
| Geneva                              | St. Charles                   |
| Elgin                               | Sugar Grove                   |
| Grouse (NW Corner Sugar Grove Twp.) | Udina (Plato Twp.)            |
|                                     | Winthrop                      |

How many of these Post Offices have been discontinued?

..... We wish you, one and all a very MERRY CHRISTMAS

and a HAPPY AND PROSPEROUS NEW YEAR

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### ZERO ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

I was interested in Stewart Udall's article on windmills in the April issue of Reader's Digest. I had previously seen that term that he uses, in some other article. This was Zero Environmental Impact (ZEI).

In my last letter to Robert T. Clifton, Texas, who is writing a book on windmills, I said, "Both wind and water power mills have Zero Environmental Impact. There is no coal, gas, electricity or atomic power used; the power comes from the wind or water, therefore is free and there is no pollution of anything." We can't go back to that era I know, but I think it's worth considering: for instance, that the Fox River furnished the industries in Batavia with at least 500 horsepower of free energy for many years. What would that power cost today with increasing costs of power and the present concern about pollution.

Water power was the reason Batavia was settled on the Fox River. A saw mill and a grist mill operated by the river were our first industries. Levi Newton was thinking "water power" when he came here to plan his wagon factory. He sat on a rail fence on the north side of Wilson Street, on the Island, considering where he could best build his shops so that he could construct his wagons in the most expeditious way. They say that the Island north of Wilson Street was a wheat field and, in this field, he envisaged the location of his office, the wood room, his blacksmith shop, paint shop and other buildings that he would need. He planned all this before a stone was laid.

### THE NEED FOR MUSEUMS

“. . . the past of the modern world is short. The names of yesterday's heroes lay with yesterday's torn newspapers. They have served their purpose and were now forgotten.” The above quote is from The Firmament of Time by Loren Eiseley.

That's why we need organizations like the GAR, American Legion and the V. of FWs to perpetuate the memory of the heroes who have gone before and now compel us to remember the price in suffering they have paid for our continuing freedom.

That is why we need organizations like museums to collect memorabilia of time and scenes long past to call to memory how our parents and grandparents lived. It is so easy to forget that we didn't always have automobiles, paved streets, telephones, central heating plants, electric lights, gas stoves, television and a thousand and one other things which we think are indispensable today. Do you remember the wood and coal cook stove and when the old base burner was used for heating? They had to be set up every fall and taken down every spring and do you remember the "chilblains" we had every winter as we warmed our wet shoes on brackets on the stove? That was before the days of inside plumbing and all that that implies.

John mentioned that 1972 would be important for Centennial celebrations, but in the month of November the Evangelical Covenant Church will observe a Centennial Memorial and also lay their new cornerstone. The McKee Street (Swedish) Methodist Church is 100 years old and the United Methodist Church 135.

If there are any other anniversaries, just contact our Historian, John Gustafson.

We appreciate the support of all the members, even if you are unable to attend our Quarterly programs.

Neal Conde, Jr., may have some definite plans for our Museum, which will be in the "Q" Depot, to present at our December 5th meeting.

Some Batavia history for 1971 . . . . on or near Wilson Street - New Park District office in Civic Center and reorganization of the Huddle. A new Import Distribution Center in the relocated Barber Shop who moved to the bottom of Wilson St. hill; also a change in tenants in the Anderson Bldg. by the Beauty parlor relocating. A change in Junior High by the 9th graders moving to the new addition at the High School. New tenants and/or change in owners in the old theater building. The People's Place, or Youth Center in old Body Company building. Horizons Unlimited in Body Company Bldg. Gossard outlet in Erday's building and, Operation School Clothes upstairs, sponsored by the churches of Batavia - Phipps did a big internal remodeling - Scott Art & Print Shop moved several doors West - the barber shop enlarged its business, a new leather crafts shop - Anderson has big remodeling plans, a new art shop just north of Wilson Street a remodeled front porch on Holy Cross parsonage. There are many other changes and improvements which we haven't mentioned; in 100 years this will be ancient history. Will these all succeed economically? Will we contribute as much to their success as they will to our needs and welfare?

We look backwards at disappointments, broken hearts and great achievements and proceed forward, over uncertain paths, with confidence gained from experience and faith in the future.

H. O. Patterson