

THE BATAVIA HISTORIAN

Vol. 20 No.1

February, 1979

Published by the Batavia Township Historical Society

February Annual Meeting

Time: 3:00 P.M. February 11, 1979

Place: Bartholomew Civic Center

Business Meeting.....Walter and Georgene Kauth, Pres.

Minutes

Treasurer's Report

Nominating Committee Report: Elliott Lundberg, Bob and Marilyn Phelps

Program: Notable names in Batavia's history

Presentation of Kane County History bulletin

Listing of Batavia streets with historic names

. William Wood

Presentation of proposal of more historic street names.

. Jeff Schielke

Introduction of "Notables" of the first to sixth generation

Social Hour

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This meeting can truly be a rich and unique experience, especially for those newly come to Batavia. Learning bits of the historic past and meeting persons of the historic present may indeed help construct, for them, a cultural home in Batavia to add to the intrinsic value of the physical home. The role of the veteran Batavians is to act as recaller of the past, to help to identify relatively local fathers, visiting firemen, police officers, etc., who have won our respect. Jeff will present each of us with a long list of over 150 names; we are to make corrections, additions, other comments and to meet those honored if they are present. Members of long established families have been invited more specifically to relate the story of their ancestors. Will each old timer please bring two newcomers?

Do you know which street is named after a girl, who, woman grown, was the first Batavian married? Do you know Melba and what city job she held? Do you know the member of the historical society who is descended from both the VanNortwick and Burton families? Do you know who the two Civil War Stewarts were? Do you know who was left in charge of defenses at Vicksburg after the Union forces moved toward Savannah?

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THE MUSEUM WILL CONTINUE TO BE CLOSED, DUE TO INCLEMENT
OUTRAGEOUS WEATHER, UNTIL FEBRUARY 13.

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Note: No mention of the 1979 blizzard! If you need info on that, read the newspapers. Eventually comes the thaw, if not in January, then in February, or March, or April. The thaw can be important, too. After the bad winter of 1831, the flooding was so great that a long, lanky railsplitter left Salem on a loaded raft on the Sangamon, the Illinois, and the Mississippi, all so swollen that he could guide his unwieldy raft over the dam(s) to New Orleans. There, he was confronted with the institution of slavery, which so shocked him that his life, that of our nation and all mankind were affected.

HAPPY NEW YEAR TO ALL OF YOU, NEAR AND FAR !

. Lucile Gustafson

IV. Our Society as educators.

Every time one of you acts as museum guide, you are educating, aren't you? The pamphlets you distribute as free literature are educational documents. (By the way, we have just reordered 1000 updated copies of the historic map of Batavia and 1500 copies of Jeff's brief resume of Batavia history. If any of you wish copies, they are yours for the asking). Also, we have presented the new H. C. Storm Elementary School with a copy each of John Gustafson's Batavia Historian and Past and Present and a set of Old Batavia, a reprint of 19 - 20 pages about Batavia from the 1888 History of Kane County. Wm. Wood continues to serve the school children and others as guide on bus tours of Batavia. The month of May will be busy for him. I don't know how frequently he speaks but he is busy spreading the gospel of Batavia. It is interesting to note that the significance of such activities is not lost on the youngsters. In a thank you note from a third grade boy, one child said, "When I grow up I want to be like you, telling kids about Batavia!"

When children visit the museum, as they will in droves now that spring is here at last, one of the Society members tells about Batavia in the recreation room downstairs while Carla Hill, frequently with Society assistance, tours the museum upstairs. When I am speaking to them I always show them chunks of limestone containing fossils. I trust they look at our venerable limestone buildings with new respect. Also, I always have them touch the tomahawk that Alice Storer donated some years back. It may be the only time they will have an opportunity to do so. (Carla has prepared the museum for the children's spring onslaught. I wouldn't be surprised if she has once again put up a low-placed TOUCH display for them).

The school libraries and other interested persons keep asking for copies of Batavia Historian. We are contemplating having copies made on the instant press temporarily to meet the need until the book can really be updated.

One of the most dramatic and significant contributions to our education can well be our local story as told in pictures and statements of the various phases of Batavia life. Carla will coordinate the displays in the beautiful new multiple display unit recently donated by the luminaria-selling corps. (This is certainly a marvelous gift . . . all Batavia thanks them, as does the Society). Carla will place her charts on the schools immediately if not sooner. Stop in to see the charts . . . twenty pages 30"x40". That turns a small museum into a big one. Please offer your assistance to Carla. It should be in beautiful order by the time of the Windmill Festival the end of July.

Windmill Festival

The Chamber of Commerce would like to feature the main events of this year's festivity around the museum and Windmill Curve. We need a series of fun activities going on outside the building and in the basement. They may be as nostalgic as apple-peeling or as rowdy as ???. Some men may set up a horseshoe-throwing contest or popcorn balls for kids. If you have ideas on fun-energy, please contact your co-president, Georgene Kauth, 879-5290. Featured around its sales activities, the Society expects to set up an old-fashioned stationery shop featuring local art, etc. Carla no doubt will have windmill material on grand display. What ideas do you have?

As Historian

My most important job is probably to answer questions from various newspaper reporters about Batavia . . . some weeks I am just swamped. The last inquiry was for someone from Joliet who is preparing a manuscript

in re Kane County. She wanted a story about some outstanding structure in Batavia . . . I told them about Fox Hill.

Inquiries about Roots would keep me busy if I let them. The last was from someone in Alaska wanting information about possible relatives in Redland. No stamped envelope enclosed. Another from Minnesota, frustrated because I hadn't answered the first inquiry. As John says, almost no one says thank you.

Another major project is the preparation of elementary materials. We are using Furnas Foundation monies to assist in the preparation of such materials, principally John's, but not entirely. With two librarians on your Board, with the assistance of a typist and the advice of Sally Bast, city librarian, we ought to get some uniform system. All materials that we have typed will be duplicated for the Batavia Library as well.

We need an assistant historian, a second, third, fourth, etc. Carla is requesting the hosts and hostesses to list materials in the filing boxes at the museum. That helps and there is almost twenty years of material that John has collected here. Help!

VI. Sympathy and Condolences

As some of you may know, death has taken a life member, Harold Bunker. And a fine, honorable man he was. It was his family, of course, that gave Bunker Road off Main Street Road its name. He was a collector of tractors, of all things . . . not a dainty article. The bank informs us that memorials in his name may be sent to Batavia or Geneva Historical Society. One out-of-state donation has already been received. I understand that we shall also receive a bequest. I do hope it can be for a special project with his name attached. Condolences may be sent to his cousin, Irwin Allen, Kaneville Road, Elburn.

Miss Eunice Shumway, presently confined to Community Hospital (home address 232 S. Batavia Ave.) deserves continuing gratitude for her service in the formation and constant support of the Batavia Historical Society. We may show our love and respect for her by dropping her a card or note.

VII. Nice Tidbits

The Chamber of Commerce honored the Society with an "Ole" because of the windmill erected on the bank of the pond across from the museum and the plantings around the building. For the first project Walter Kauth, Dave Sawitoski and the three Eagle Scouts who helped them should take a deep bow . . . maybe a couple of them. As for the plantings, they were paid for chiefly (\$1000.+) by friends who gave memorial gifts to the Historical Society.

Dan Halladay and Jeff Schielke have both completed books, one on cabooses and the other concerning fire engines and equipment. Congratulations!

Remember the weather conditions when I wrote the last newsletter? Well, May is something to brag about, so let's brag!

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Please accept this letter in a generous spirit. At least it carries the best wishes of the Society and the Gustafsons.

Lucile Gustafson, Historian.

P.S.: Georgene Kauth wants me to thank all the volunteers! We all do.

THE BATAVIA HISTORIAN

Announcement of Regular Meeting

Welcome

Time: 3:00 P.M., Sunday, September 23, 1979

Place: The Batavia Depot Museum

Business Meeting..... Walter Kauth, co-president

Program Dedication of the U.S. Wind Engine Windmill

An Introduction to "The Tale of a Windmill" Jeff Schielke, Vice-Pres. Batavia Historical Society

"Our Own Batavia Windmill - from Whence It Blew" Harold Patterson, Past President, Batavia Historical Society

"The Place Where Our Windmill Blows" Rich Mays, Director Batavia Park District

"An Introduction to Batavia - Our Windmill in Color" Carla Hill and the Rev. David Berg

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Social Hour

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Statement of Cash Position as of August 31, 1979

Checking Account	\$	319.17
Petty Cash		24.51
Building Account		2,667.23
Certificate of Deposit #1		2,152.48
Certificate of Deposit #2		<u>2,000.00</u>
Total	\$	<u>7,163.39</u>

Respectfully submitted,

Dave Sawitoski, Treasurer 9-10-79.

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We Thank . . .

William Wood, for his quiet service and projects in the interest of the Batavia Township Historical Society and our community. His most recent activity was another bus trip for the residents of Holmstadt which netted over \$38.00 in personal contributions. Probably no one in the community knows more than he about our historic structures and the land on which they are built. Many of us, museum volunteers and others, would appreciate going on a trip under his guidance.

We Thank ••• (continued)

Elida Swan (Mrs. Dewey), who is presently preparing to move to Holmstadt and is making varied and valuable donations to the Society. They include numerous pictures of groups . . . school, social, work . . . which her brother had framed. There is a Nordens Soner badge and numerous insignia of World-War I to match the Civil War items now on display. There is an old wooden handmade chest containing Dewey's World War I uniform complete with hard hat and canteen and whatnot. She is likewise presenting as a long-time loan a handmade spinning wheel from Sweden (1800) brought here in about 1880.

Georgene Schramer, Lydia Stafney, Sadie Lundberg and Ray Patzer for "manning the table " at the Art Show. We sold around \$35.00 worth of materials. Sales on train banks are slow but members could consider them for birthday and Christmas gifts . . . also, volunteers are reminded of their 20% discount on all items sold at the Museum!

Batavia Woman's Club Conservation Department for donating, planting and tending the geraniums in the stone planter overlooking the river. This has been a bright spot for the past several years with the special help of the Robert Kalinas.

We are also grateful to Mr. Carmichael for the donation of the Challenge water tank to our Historical Society, and to the Park District for storing it for us until such time as we can properly display it.

Blow, Winds, Blow

The City's Windmill Festival Days were a grand success. A happy crowd circulated up and down the streets, hunting for bargains, inspecting hand-crafts, gossiping with friends, and visiting the Museum. About two hundred of those milling through the building signed the guest book. Many admired the fine windmill display. They were pleased, too, with the multiple display unit with its photographs of different architectural structures in Batavia as well as the industrial display. The Society is indebted to those who purchased luminaria for this unit . . . it doubles our display space . . . and, of course, especially to the Luminaria Committee that contributed the cash realized from this project.

We Learn and Eat

Carla Hill (Mrs. Michael), Museum Curator; presented an excellent seminar September 7 from 10 A.M. to 1 P.M. for the Museum volunteers at the Museum. The agenda follows:

1. Museum procedures A listing of eleven successive tasks for the guides to accomplish. This gives them a feeling of security and worth.
2. What's coming up Timing of displays.
3. Cataloging Dorothy Hansen (Mrs. James), an experienced librarian, explained the system of filing that is being used. It was determined some years ago that the Dewey system would be employed.
4. Suggestions The hours for the Museum to be open should be from 2 - 4 P.M. every day as of October 1 and not changed to others for Saturday and Sunday.
5. Historical Society Georgene Kauth announced that the Board had voted to grant a 20% discount on purchase of goods as a small appreciation to volunteers for their service to the Society.

A tasty buffet luncheon was served after the seminar, financed by the Park Board Museum fund. Again, a thank you to the volunteers.

We Weep

Since writing the last newsletter, two valuable members of the Batavia Historical Society have died, Alice Gustafson and Ruth Northrup. Both were members of long standing . . . Alice was a life member.

Both shared their considerable talents to the success of the Society, Alice principally in the developing and preservation of valuable documentary materials and artifacts, Ruth as photographer and speaker. The Society will miss them, as will the community. Both were teachers; Alice taught in both the old McWayne and Louise White schools, later becoming principal in the latter. (As a tribute to her role as an educator, an elementary school was named in her honor). Ruth Northrup was Domestic Science teacher in the high school. She was a member of the United Methodist Church, acting as their historian. Alice was an active contributing member of the Congregational Church of Batavia for seventy-seven years. She taught Sunday School for sixty consecutive years.

Your Society sent a beautiful arrangement at the time of Alice Gustafson's funeral. A memorial fund has been established to the Batavia Township Historical Society in Ruth Northrup's name.

And Rejoice

Jean Conde has been very ill but now is recovering nicely at her home under the T.L.C. of her daughter, Barbara Hopkind of Vancouver. Apparently St. Luke's-Presbyterian, after some additions and subtractions that they perpetrated, came up with the right sum! By the way, Barbara is our only "foreign" member.

Remember

Way back in 1961 the Batavia Historical Society was organized in Eunice Shumway's home. That was important to the development of the spirit and character of Batavia. It is our privilege to express appreciation to some of those who are now restricted in their activities. We wish them well.

Cornelia Brown Snow (Mrs. Barton) has moved to Holmstadt where she is enjoying comfortable arrangements. Cornelia has donated innumerable documents from her family history and the T. W. Snow Construction Company. The Snow home was the Greek Revival limestone house just north of the west side cemetery.

Eunice Shumway, after extended hospitalization, is again in her beloved home, vastly improved. One of her chief contributions to the Society was probably her excellent organizational ability and her dedication to every detail of the Society. She was the main force behind the publication of Batavia Past and Present.

All worthy projects need artists. Elaine Cannon (Mrs. Carl) and her sister, Mary Williams (now deceased) lent their talents to such activities as the historic displays at The Frame, a Batavia Avenue storefront. Elaine's specialties have been wheat-seed dome dolls, hickory nut figures and many exquisite miniature rooms for collectors. She is known as one of the leading miniaturists in the United States.

John Gustafson has been confined to his home for some years now. Strange as it may seem, the accident in 1946 that limited his physical abilities released time, energy and talents that made possible the writing of Historic Batavia and the contribution of local history articles to the Batavia Herald and-other publications. His enthusiasm for the Society and the town has been an inspiration to many a (Three little girls knocked at the Gustafson home door the other day wanting to see John, the man who wrote the book they studied in school).

Remember (continued)

These are but five whose contributions we respect. A number of you may want to write them brief notes or pay them brief visits. (Be sure to phone first to see if it is convenient). And be sure to remember Augie Mier with his vast knowledge of local Indians.

Goodbye and Best Wishes

I fear this is more of a "Society" letter than it is an historical epistle. We hope to see you September 23. We had hoped Rod Ross could be with us on that date. As an archivist he is involved with some very interesting documents.

Lucile Gustafson, Historian

BATAVIA HISTORIAN

Vol. 20 No. 4

Batavia Township Historical Society
P. O. Box 15, Batavia, Il. 60510.

"In Flanders Field the Poppies Grow"

November 11, 1979, Remembrance Day

WELCOME

Regular Meeting of the Batavia Township Historical Society

Time:November 11, 1979- 3 P. M.

Place:V.F. W. Hall Route, 25 South of Batavia

Business MeetingPresident Walter Kauth, presiding

Secretary's ReportDorothy Tierney

Treasurer's ReportDave Sawitoski

Election and Installation of new officers and trustees

Nominating Committee - David Sawitoski, Howard and Mary Matteson

Program.....Jeff Schielke, V. P.

Reminiscing of W. W. I - Interested persons

W. W. I artifacts in the Batavia Depot Museum - Carla Hill

Buffet Dinner4 P. M

NOTES

When we buy red poppies on "Armistice Day", we honor "those who" to quote Lincoln, "gave the last full measure of devotion". Let us on this November 11th, honor those who lead long, full useful lives. And so today, we salute the thirty five W. W. I veterans living in this area, or elsewhere, who share the common experience of War service:

Charles Anderson	Ernest Duckett	Augie Mier
* Elmer Anderson	*Jimmy Dunn	Ernest Nelson
Max Alexander	John Gustafson	Carl Oleson
Robert Averill	Claude Hanson	*Al Schreiner
Ernest Barrett	Milton Hoag	Walter Stephano
*George Benski	Carl D. Johnson	Emily Sykora
Axel Benson	Carl W. Johnson	Jim Sykora
Panna Benson	Stanley A. Johnson	Victor Swanson
Erwin Bortner	Walter Johnson	Victor Thelander
Lyle Buelter	*Eddie Jones	Charles Thomas
Ed Carney	Dub Leifheit	Brayton Weaver
Dutch Clarno	Roy McGary	

The names preceded by an asterisk indicate that information is needed concerning his whereabouts. Please notify Lucile Gustafson - 879-1212 or -1117 Main Street, if you can contribute information.

All these veterans are cordially invited to be the Events of the Batavia Historical Society at the buffet supper at 4 P.M. We are sorry that many veterans are housebound or living elsewhere. All those whom we can reach will receive a congratulatory note and an invitation to attend the meeting-dinner.

(By the way, Stanley Johnson compiled the list and contributed most of the addresses, Arnold and John Gustafson assisting.)

As your Society's Historian, I plead with you to write on the blank pages of this letter what you remember about W.W. I; sixty years after the grand celebration of the return of the service men. Actually few of you participated in the war, but you remember the effigy burning celebration, planting a Victory garden, or recall your parents or grandparents or some other person telling war tales. Jot your memories on the blank sheets and mail to Lucile Gustafson, 1117 Main St. at your early convenience or bring to the meeting. - Such remembered bits are the stuff of history.

REMEMBER ROBERT AND DOROTHY

Robert Larson died October 9th. Our sympathy is with Elna and the rest of his family. Do you remember his recording of the Batavia church bells? When he moved to Wisconsin, he presented the Historical Society with his excellent slide projector.

Dorothy Hoover Borg died October 18th. The Borgs are an old respected family. We mourn with them on the death of Dorothy.

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Remember to make reservations for the buffet dinner to be held November 11th. The cost of this two-meat buffet will be \$4.00. Reservations must be in by November 2nd with Georgene Kauth (879-5290), Marion Phelps (879-1924) or the Depot Museum (879-1800).

Volunteers, guides, typists, mailers will be treated to a bus trip of Batavia October 29th from 10 A.M. until noon. Bill Wood as "barker." Reservation may be made to the Museum by October 25th. Fun!

Remember that your Society needs your talents and time as typists to help Dorothy Hanson, as guides as contributing members.

The next time I write to you we shall have experienced the first leg of a mild/cold winter. Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. Do come to the annual meeting and see the Kaiser's nose.

Lucile Gustafson, Historian

Excerpts from HISTORIC BATAVIA by John Gustafson:

April 6, 1917, war was declared on Germany. Some men volunteered. Some waited to be drafted, but before the war was over, more than three hundred young Batavians were in their country's military service. The whole town was in service as far as co-operating with the war effort is concerned. Children in schools bought stamps and bonds, pretending that they were sinking submarines or firing guns.

With the signing of the armistice on November 11, 1918, the whole town took a holiday. Fellows around town had an effigy all ready for the occasion. For some time, too, they had been gathering old lumber and branches. Early in the morning, on that fall morning, while the bells were ringing crazily and the whistles were shrieking, the effigy was strung up to the cross arm of the street light where it hung until it was brought down by the burning pile beneath it. That was the mood at the end of World War I.