

Batavia Historical Society

*P. O. Box 14
Batavia, Illinois 60510*

Vol. 34, No. 1

April 1993

THE BATAVIA HISTORIAN

BIOGRAPHICAL PROJECT UPDATE

Last summer, we asked society members to submit family information to be added to the biographic file in our museum's research room. Several of you did send in data and it is being added to the file.

There are many, though, whose families are not yet included in the file. Please take a few minutes and send us the names, birth dates, birth places, death dates, current residence, marriages/children, etc. of each generation in your family who has lived or is living in Batavia. Add a few sentences that tell a little about each family, too.

Remember, it is part of our job as a society not only to resurrect the past, but to record the present so that it will be available when it becomes the past.

Send your data (form enclosed) to the Society, Box 14, Batavia. Non-members' family information is welcome, too. Let's build the file.

PRESIDENT'S COLUMN

This is my first attempt at the Society newsletter, and I must start out with an apology at its lateness. I understand many of you look forward to this newsletter and as the year goes on, I am sure they will be more frequent.

I do appreciate the assistance from any Society members who would like to submit articles or stories that we may all share. If you have any items of interest, please direct them to me.

The Board of Directors met once this year and has several goals in mind which will enhance our organization. We are looking into enlarging our Society through a membership drive aimed at new residents and younger members.

Another goal is to further preserve our excellent collections of papers, books and writings in a controlled environment. A committee has been working with the Regional

History Center at N.I.U. in DeKalb investigating several alternatives. We will keep you updated on this project.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

To allow you an opportunity to get to know your Board of Directors, we will be featuring a brief biography on each Director in upcoming newsletters. Look for this feature, entitled "Biographies of the Board".

WHAT IS THAT RED DOT?

If you noticed a red dot on the address label of this newsletter, it serves as a reminder that your 1993 dues have not yet been paid. Please mail your dues promptly to the address below to insure continued receipt of this newsletter.

Treasurer
 Batavia Historical Society P.O. Box 14
 Batavia, IL 60510

The following is a listing of current 1993 Officers and Directors:

<u>OFFICE:</u>	<u>OFFICE HOLDER:</u>	<u>TERM ENDS:</u>
President	Robert Popeck	Dec. 1994
Vice President	Marilyn Robinson	Dec. 1993
Recording Secretary	Patty Will	Dec. 1994
Corresponding Secretary	Georgene Kauth	Dec. 1993
Treasurer	Elliott Lundberg	Dec. 1994
Historian	William Wood	Dec. 1993
Directors:	Ray Anderson	Dec. 1994
	William Hall	<u>Dec.</u> 1994
	Robert Cox	Dec. 1993
	Carole Dunn	Dec. 1993

The above constitute the Board of Directors for the Society and are the voting members thereof. The following positions are non-voting services to the Society:

Museum Volunteer Coordinator	May Lundberg
Museum Sales Inventory	Bunny Kline
Museum Curator	Carla Hill
House Plaquing Coordinator	Bob Pikrone

COFFIN BANK AND VAN NORTWICK ROOM

The Batavia Park District, along with Carla Hill and the entire Historical Society, is looking forward to Batavia's Windmill City Festival for the opening of the Coffin Bank Exhibit.

The Spring meeting of the Batavia Historical Society will be held April 25 at 3: 00 p.m. Members are asked to meet at the Batavia Civic Center; from there we will progress to the Depot for the dedication of the new Van Nortwick Room. Don't miss this important event.

DEPOT REOPENS

The Depot has reopened for the 1993 season. Thanks to Carla Hill and May Lundberg, along with their many volunteers, we should again have a wonderful year.

(AUTO)BIOGRAPHIES OF THE BOARD

ELLIOTT LUNDBERG

I was born on South Harrison Street in Batavia in 1918. Except for four years in the service from 1941 to 1945, I have lived on the West side of Batavia my entire life.

I was educated in the Batavia school system, starting at the Blaine Street School, then the old Grace McWayne School, and finally the old High School on Batavia Avenue from which I graduated in 1936, during the Great Depression.

Before entering the service in 1941, I worked at Campana. At that time they were renting space in the Appleton Building which houses the current City Hall. They then moved to the corner of First Street and Batavia Avenue, then on to their present building on North Batavia Avenue in 1938. I also worked at the Batavia Body Company and at the Challenge Company for a few years.

I served in the U.S. Army during World War II, spending 3 1/2 years in the Southwest Pacific area. After being discharged in August 1945, I went back to work at the Challenge Company until the Garsson scandal that caused its demise.

In October 1947, I started work at the Batavia National Bank on East Wilson Street. At that time, Mr. H. T. Windsor was

3 President, Mr. Walter R. Johnson was Vice President and Mr. Ernest R. Nelson was Cashier. Mrs. Ruth Freelund, Mrs. Gladys Noren, Miss Eleanor Meyer (later Issel) and Miss Dora Hicks were the other employees.

The Batavia National Bank was sold and in 1970 Mr. Robert F. Riley became President. The name was changed to Batavia Bank and, after being sold a second time, finally to Gary Wheaton Bank of Batavia. I retired in 1980, but continued going to the bank one day a week until the end of 1992.

My wife Noma and I have been married since 1949 and have five children - James, Kathryn Chesley, Carl, John and Dan.

ERRORS AND OMISSIONS

The November 1992 newsletter had more than its share of mistakes. In the picture of the Green Pheasants football team on Pg. 4, Weldon Hopkins' name was omitted. He was the first man in the back row. Bussy Nelson corrected the name of the sixth man in the middle row, identifying him as "Fats" Seyller, not Don Scroggins. The latter was the name listed on the back of the photo. In the compliment to Marilyn Robinson on Pg. 6, a spelling error was erased, but the correction was not made. It should have read," for the exceptional programs she arranged this year".

I would also like to add another "Thank you" while making corrections, this one to Tom Mair for making numerous copies of old photographs for the Society's files whenever I ran across one I felt was needed or when a different size would be more useful.

-Jim Hanson

AUTOBIOGRAPHIES OF THE BOARD

BOB POPECK

Not being a true native Batavian, my parents moved to a small farm on Hart Road in 1947 from Cicero, Illinois. I attended Louise White Grade School; my 8th grade class was the first experimental class to merge within the senior high, similar to a junior high school. While in high school, my parents purchased the Drake home on Park Street.

At that time I enlisted in the U.S. Navy, and upon my return to Batavia joined employment with the Larson Becker Co. In 1960 I became a full time member of the Fire Department, serving with Chief Bud Richter, Charlie Beckman and Bob Hodge. In 1963 I switched my hat to the Police Department and joined the force with Chief Marshall, George Kramer, Dick Clark, Lee Johnson, Bill Thrun, Oscar Benson, Dick Jobe and Butch Ward. After several years I was promoted to Sergeant.

I was very interested in photography and introduced many new ideas of photography into the Police Dept. I also held a part-time job with the Jody Advertising Co. in their photo dept. which was housed within the old Capital Theater building. I was appointed Chief of Police in 1970 by Mayor Robert V. Brown. I left the Department in 1974 and assumed the Administrative Assistant position with the City of Batavia.

Always having a keen interest in Batavia's history, I was elected to the Board of Trustees of the Historical Society in 1987 and in December 1992, took over the office of President of the Society.

I REMEMBER HOLIDAYS ON THE FARM

By Helen Bartelt Anderson
(Part One of a three-part series)

Mama enjoyed holidays. Even on a busy farm, each little holiday was celebrated in some way. We knew that on New Year's Eve we could stay up a little later to "kick the slipper". Even the hired man (we called him Thruny) joined in the fun. We each in turn laid down on the floor, head toward the door, placed a slipper on the toes of one foot, then kicked it backwards over our heads. If the toe of the slipper landed with the toe pointing toward the door, that would mean "going out" and trouble ahead, but if the toe pointed in, happiness and prosperity would come to that person in the new year.

Most often New Year's Day was spent at Luessenhop's (Mama's cousins on County Farm Road - now Fabyan Park-way). We would have roast duck or goose with all the trimmings. Being of Pennsylvania Dutch descent, there was always a bountiful feast. Of course, the food was raised right there on the farm. Each person tried to be the first to wish the others a Happy New Year.

After dinner, the men would adjourn to the barn to enjoy an after dinner cigar, while the boys stood around and tried to act interested in the conversation. The women would wash dishes and also get caught up on the latest neighborhood gossip.

Dish washing on the farm at that time was considerably different than most city women enjoyed. There was no electricity and no running water. Water had to be carried into the house in pails.

Most kitchen ranges had reservoirs alongside the firebox. When filled, especially when the stove had a steady fire, the water would be nice and warm for dishes, etc. Stoves burned wood, which also had to be carried into the house. Sadie's kitchen sink was in the pantry, but it did not have a drain, so when there were lots of dishes to be washed, Sadie washed them on the kitchen table. Then there was room for guests to gather around the table and dry dishes. Soap, like nearly everything else, was handmade of lard or bacon fat and Lewis lye. Lard made the whitest soap.

Ground Hog's Day was not ignored. If nothing else, it caused much conversation with eyes on the morning sky. Of course, it nearly always happened that the ground hog did see his shadow, and we were in for six more weeks of winter.

Next was Valentine's Day, which meant many hours of preparation. We cut valentine hearts from old wall paper sample books and decorated them with pictures from Sears catalogues or magazines. Paste was made of flour and water. We exchanged valentines at school, with an especially pretty one for our teacher.

I remember we had vacation from school on both Lincoln's and Washington's birthdays. Before our days off we learned much about these two great men. At home, Mama made cherry pies.

The Bartelts are of German descent, but if we had anything green, we wore it on St. Patrick's Day. We did not know who St. Patrick was nor why it was a holiday, but we made shamrocks and colored them green in honor of the day.

From March 1st until around St. Patrick's Day, there was much viewing to see who would find the first robin. If the robin was high up in a tree, it meant that the finder would be in good spirits all summer, but if it was on the ground, the viewer could expect a pretty dismal season ahead.

The next big holiday was Easter. At school we made paper Easter eggs of every color, pasting them to brown paper baskets which we used to decorate the windows of our school. We also made rabbits of brown construction paper and pasted colored eggs around them. Mrs. Perrow brought real pussy willows. We made pink flowers of crepe paper and fastened them to branches. Our schoolroom was beautiful. I believe we had spring vacation the week after Easter.

I don't remember going to church on Easter Sundays because Mama usually had the family to dinner, but I do remember going with her to Charlie Bird's on E. Wilson St. or Mrs. Alexander's to have new hats made. One year Charlie Bird made a pink braided straw hat for me. I felt very grown up.

When Roger and I were quite small, we would run downstairs on Easter morning and look for the nest the Easter Bunny had left for us. This bunny nest was made in one of Papa's old felt hats, lined with straw. In the nest would be not brightly colored eggs, but brown, tan or dark red, with our names and other designs. They were beautiful. Mama kept all this a secret from us, but when we got a little older, we helped her make them. She would steep different colored onion skins on the back of the cook (continued on Pg. 7)

BIOGRAPHIC PROJECT

Father's Name _____
Date of Birth _____ Place _____
Death Date _____
Married _____ Date _____
Date of Birth _____ Place _____
Death Date _____
Children: _____ Birthdate _____ Deathdate _____

Comments on family history

USE A SEPARATE SHEET FOR EACH FAMILY UNIT

Mail to Batavia Historical Society
Box 14
Batavia, IL 60510

Name of submitter _____ Phone No. _____

stove. Then she added the eggs which became hard-boiled at a temperature just below boiling. At the same time, the onion skins, dyed the eggs in brownish tones, depending on the color of the natural eggs. Designs were made with wax before she put the eggs into the natural dye.

Pickled eggs were a tradition on the Easter dinner table. On Saturday before Easter, Mama put hard boiled eggs in a fruit jar with pickled beet juice. By the next day they were a beautiful shade of pink. I have continued with this tradition, hoping that our children will keep alive this Pennsylvania Dutch tradition. I continue to serve pickled eggs in the same beautiful dish that Mama used and wonder how old this lovely dish is.

HIRED GIRLS

By Joe Burton

In a well written and highly informative booklet, two Batavia brothers, Laurens and Kenneth Wolcott tell us what it was like to "keep house" back in the days before electricity and modern, push-button gadgets existed. The booklet, entitled "Life In The Good Old Days" (1872-1910), a copy of which is in the archives of the Batavia Historical Society, covers a variety of subjects, including a chapter on "Hired Girls".

The authors relate that there were very few wealthy people in Batavia at that time - possibly the Newtons, the Van Nortwicks and one or two others - who could afford a full time live-in maid. "But", the authors say, "many of our friends and neighbors had a 'Hired Girl' and kept her busy 10 or 12 hours a day, 7 days a week.

After all, in those days, female help was seldom used in industry. There were a few - a very few women clerks in baking, grocery and dry goods store, etc. Most girls left school at 14 or 15 very few went beyond high school. When girls finished or quit school, they were eligible for housework. Reasonably accomplished, competent, experienced girls were paid \$3 or \$4 a week. (Plus room and board, of course}."

Here are a few of the jobs the girls handled around the home, as described by the authors:

- "Keeping the home fires burning, in the kitchen all day, winter and summer: in the various stoves all around the house during cool or cold weather;

Gathering all kerosene lamps from every room in the house, cleaning and polishing all lamp chimneys, filling lamps and return all to their respective locations;

- Sweeping and dusting with broom and dust cloth, every room in the house at least once a week: living room and dining room brushed up daily;

- Complete laundry for the entire family including 'boiled shirts' for the men; ruffles and flounces and many skirts, shirt-waists and unmentionables for the women and girls; all bed linen for the family and guests, if any, also table linen - tablecloths and linen napkins. All washed by hand, hand scrubbing in water pumped and carried outdoors, hung up to dry, taken down, carried back into the house, sprinkled, folded and later ironed with a heavy, hot flat-iron heated on the hot stove, summer or winter;

Baking - cakes, cookies and pies, as well as several large (continued on next page)

loaves of bread to be raised, kneaded and baked twice a week;

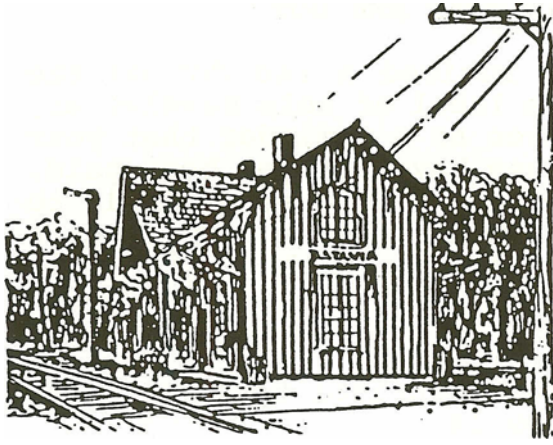
Preparing, cooking and serving twenty meals a week including washing and putting away the dishes, setting table for the next meal, etc.; and

Baby-sitting afternoons and evenings.

This list is far from complete. There is much more, particularly for families with babies or small

children, or (as in our case) when horses, cows or chickens are kept. The Hired Girl was not ordinarily involved in the outside care of the animals, but it always involved extra dishes, hot water, dirt tracked in, etc."

If you would like more insights into "Life In The Good Old Days", stay tuned; the Wolcott Brothers' memoirs are about 100 pages long!



Batavia Historical Society

*P. O. Box 14
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Vol. 34, No.2

November 1993

THE BATAVIA HISTORIAN

ANNUAL MEETING AND POT LUCK SUPPER

The holiday season is approaching and that means it is time for the annual meeting of the Society and the potluck supper with all the wonderful dishes prepared by our members. Be sure to mark your calendar so as not to miss this year's meeting.

Date & Time: Sunday, December 5, at 5:00 p.m.

Location: Bethany Lutheran Church Fellowship Hall

Supper: Please bring a dish to share and your own dishes and silverware. Meat, rolls and coffee will be furnished.

Program: Shirley Chaney, storyteller of Sycamore will give a program of Christmas legends, stories and song.

Meeting: A business meeting of the Society will precede the program. Included will be the election of the following positions on the Board of Directors, each for a two-year term: vice president, secretary, and two directors.

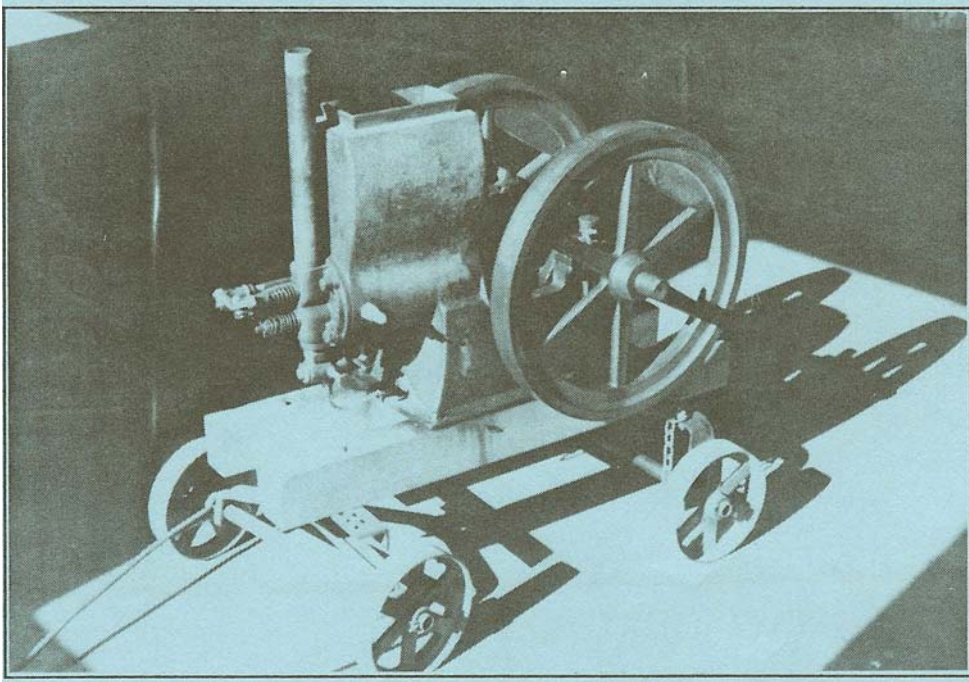
PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

The summer had a few interesting twists to it. A family who has always had the history of Batavia at heart and has made some wonderful contributions to our Society is the Curtis Benson family. This time it was their son Robert, a collector of historical items, who made a decision to part with his CHALLENGE hour glass gasoline engine. This type of engine, known as the hit and miss type, runs with several different forms of energy to keep it going.

Bob made us an offer, and it was purchased with board approval for \$600. Curt Benson stopped me the other day and said that the engine had been appraised by a fellow collector who informed him that there are only three of this type around and is now worth \$2,000. The engine is in wonderful condition and visitors to the Depot Museum in July at the Windmill City Festival saw our engine running hit and miss in its traditional fashion on the lawn of the museum.

The board also thanks Donna and Curt for their donation of the many Batavia High School year - books and the wonderful picture from the Colombian Exposition of the windmill display.

Continued page 2.



Our New Challenge Hit and Miss Engine

Crmitil/uedfrom page 1.

I hope that most of you have been and are aware of the great progress of the Batavia Riverwalk. This project, when completed, will be an enormous gift to all of Batavia and to those who visit the city.

Several of our Historical Board members sit on several different committees involved with the planning of the Riverwalk, helping to maintain its place in Batavia's history.

Along with them the city officials have kept up the pace in their landscaping of the City Hall Building (The Appleton Factory). Major plans were enacted, and a new parking lot and street were laid. Incorporated in the design was a large traffic circle (70 foot wide) to break up the shape of the conventional street. As we looked at this circle, it became apparent that it needed to be a focal point of the city building. Several ideas were discussed and a decision was made to try and procure three original Batavia-produced windmills and erect them within the circle.

I undertook the project and brought it to the Society Board for their input and support. It was well received and I was given a green light to continue my

quest. I have since become good pen pals and acquaintances of several windmill collectors throughout the United States. As of now, I have narrowed the search for these mills and am about to accept two of the three. My collector friend in Kansas has a good handle on the Appleton Goodhue and has in his possession a good quality Challenge Mill. My other collector in Nebraska had a beautiful wood U. S. wind engine, but the worst thing happened on July 8, 1993. This mill plus five others were destroyed in a wind storm. He will be rebuilding them this winter.

Funding for this project will be with some society funds and funds the Riverwalk committee has received from the recently disbanded Batavia J.C.s. The committee was asked if they wished to earmark these funds for a special undertaking and they chose the windmill project.

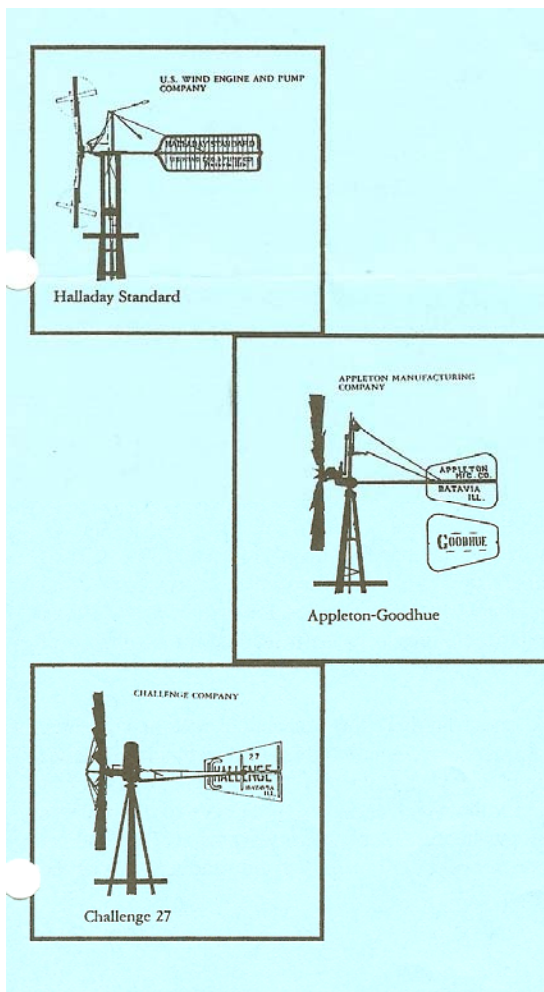
My plan when the mills are procured by the collectors is to travel west and inspect them and ready them for shipping to Batavia. Once they are back home, whatever restoration is needed will be done to allow them to stand side by side in a place of honor. Our completion goal is late spring or early summer of 1994.

Continued on page 3.

Continued from Page 2

The base area will be beautifully landscaped to fit in with the windmills. There has been discussion on the possibility of displaying windmill related products within the base area such as water pumps, pump jacks and storage tanks, all of which would be Batavia manufactured products.

I hope you share my enthusiasm in bringing the mills home and proudly displaying them. They are a great part of Batavia's history and both young and old can reminisce about them and enjoy seeing them.



SOME HAPPENINGS IN BATAVIA 100 YEARS AGO

Cold weather was in evidence back in the winter of 1893. The mercury dipped to 20 degrees below zero.

Boxing was a popular sport. One Wednesday evening numerous "sports" of Batavia assembled in the second story of what was known as the old engine house but later was Henry Hendrickson's bakery to witness a contest between Johnnie L. and Billy Smith. From the second round to the sixth, it was anybody's fight, but when Johnnie rushed his man around the ring, and reached Smith's jugular, Smith sat down and was counted out.

Vance Helm is believed to be the youngest telegraph operator in the world. The Batavian, who is 11 years old, clicks off and receives messages at the important office of Colton to the entire satisfaction of his employers and is a complete master of the intricate details of his profession.

A Batavia woman, Mrs. Asentha Miller, whose first husband served in the war of 1812, died at the age of 106. She was the oldest woman in Illinois at the time.

Total population of Batavia in 1893 was 4,541.

Captain D. C. Newton, an old and highly esteemed Batavia citizen passed away at the age of 61. His family came to Batavia in 1854 and founded the Newton Wagon Works.

Batavia was well supplied with music teachers with twenty to teach piano and organ. Prof. John Geiss was a good band instructor as was proven by the efficiency of the Rock City Band. Miss Alice Williams had a large music class in Aurora; Joe Patterson and S. A. Hunt taught the guitar, banjo and violin, and Prof. Hunt was the musical instructor at the Aurora Normal and Business College.

Taken from a 1942 issue of the Batavia Herald.

COUNTY RECORDS PROJECT PROGRESSES

The County Records Project is underway. After nine months, we have records from such old friends as Levi Newton, John VanNortwick, and Samuel Lockwood. We've also found some new acquaintances who were in Batavia in the 1840's. These include Stephen Bush, Randall Spaulding, and George Arnold.

Marilyn Robinson is indexing the records as they come to the Society, and they are stored at the Depot Museum. The ones received so far are ready for researchers to use.

The records themselves reveal the names of many old Batavia businesses, interesting funeral facts, and names of heirs. The papers are sorted every Thursday at the Campana Building by volunteers from all Kane County historical and genealogical societies. Our time is from 12:30 to 3:30 each Thursday. Those who have worked thus far are Patty Will, Bill Wood, Marilyn Robinson, Carole Dunn, Dot Hanson, Kit Milkie, Bill Hall, and Cathy Fairbairn.

Everyone who has worked agrees that it is fun searching the old papers and meeting representatives from other societies throughout the country. For these reasons, the time goes very-fast: Because of the volume of records available, the sorting will probably take at least a year before they are all distributed. We are currently sorting in the 1918-19's.

If you would like to help with this fun, important project, please call Marilyn Robinson at 879-2253. Marilyn is coordinating the project for our Society.

BIOGRAPHIC FILE GROWS

The Society's biographical file is growing as a number of entries for the project arrived in response to the article in the last newsletter. It is not too late to send in your family's history for the biographical file. Forms for this purpose are on pages 7 and 8.

Anyone who has ever lived in Batavia should be included in the file. It is not just to record the past but to preserve today so that data will be here when today becomes the past.

Send your family biography to Batavia Historical Society, Box 14, Batavia, IL 60510.

I REMEMBER HOLIDAYS ON THE FARM

By Helen Bartelt Anderson

(Part Two / Watch for Part Three in the next newsletter.)

Summer vacation usually started on Memorial Day. Some years we had a picnic. It was a time to take off long underwear. A time to take off shoes and stockings and go barefoot. I remember one year Mama took us to town to see the parade. We lived outside the Batavia School District, so we were not invited to march in the parade with the other school children. I remember going to an ice cream parlor after the parade for ice cream cones. Ideal Confectionery was owned by Gus Kapinas.

July 4th---One spring Papa was plowing in a field quite some distance from our house. He turned up a couple of huge rocks. Not saying a word to anyone, he went out to the field before daylight on the 4th, put a stick of dynamite between the two rocks, lit the fuse and quickly ran out of the way. The blast must have awakened everyone for miles around. That was his way of celebrating. No doubt cultivating corn took up the rest of the day.

Mama celebrated the 4th by cooking a delicious dinner of ham that had been smoked in the smoke-house then packed in salt brine in big twenty-thirty gallon crocks. Mama tried to have new potatoes, cooked in their skins, and fresh peas from the garden. Some years, when there was a late spring, the gardens were also late. Cherries were nearly always ripe by the 4th, so we would have fresh cherry pie.

Labor Day was made a national holiday in 1894, so it was still a fairly new holiday when we were growing up. It did not in any way affect farmers. Labor Day was a big day for farm children because it marked the beginning of school the following day.

Like most children, I started school with new dresses. Mama's cousin, Oma, would make two gingham dresses for me each year. One dress could be worn for a week or more without laundering because I wore coverall aprons over the dresses. These aprons were made of dark calico, were sleeveless, slipped over the head and tied at the sides.

Continued on page 5.

Roger probably had new clothes, too. Boys wore denim bib overalls and high-top shoes. Boys often had trousers made from their father's worn ones, especially in winter. When it was really cold, boys wore a pair of made-over pants with their bib overalls over the top.

Halloween was great fun. There was usually a party at school. We bobbed for apples, tried to take a bite out of an apple tied on a string and tried to pin the tail on a black cat while we were blindfolded. Our schoolroom was real spooky with bats, black cats and witches everywhere. We carved pumpkins and learned the poem, "The Goblins'll Get You if you Don't Watch Out"

Mama and Papa belonged to the Farmers' Community Club. One year they had a masquerade party on Halloween, at the home of Wilton and Elsie Lehman. As Papa drove our Model T into their driveway, a man with blackened face jumped in front of the car, waving his arms and yelling. I screamed and cried louder and longer than anyone. I spent the rest of the evening on Mama's lap.

"--One year Papa made costumes for all four of us of Catalpa leaves. I do not remember if we won a prize. Farmers had fun, too, in spite of long days of very hard work.

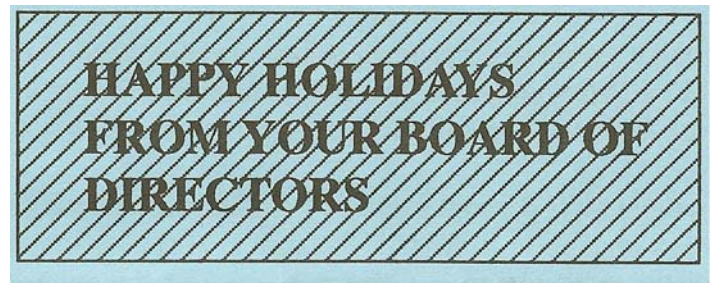
Life on the farm was and is controlled by seasons and weather In the late fall, farmers checked the ears of corn to see if they were ripe enough and dry enough to be picked. If there was still moisture in the ears, the picking would have to wait until the com was ready. Then the husking season would begin. Farmers wore heavy canvass gloves with husking pegs strapped over the mitts to rip open the com husks. Even though these heavy gloves were worn, the farmer's hands would be chapped and sore. Every night they would rub an ointment into them.

Each ear of com was picked and tossed into a box wagon that had bang boards on one side to prevent the ears from landing in the field. Two faithful horses pulled the wagon, walking slowly up and down the rows. The husker could pretty well keep up with the horses.

Thanksgiving Day was the deadline when all husking

should be finished. Sometimes weather conditions prevented this from happening. If all went well, Thanksgiving would be celebrated by a traditional dinner probably at Aunt Kate's and Uncle Mike's in West Chicago. Because Mama lived with them for many years before she married Papa, they were like grandma and grandpa to Roger and me.

At school, we made pictures of com shocks and pumpkins. We colored and cut out pictures of turkeys although we did not have roast turkey for Thanksgiving because turkeys were not raised on the farm. Our teacher read stories to us about the Pilgrims and the Indians. We learned the poem, "Over the River and through the Woods to Grandma's House we Go."



REQUEST FROM ACCESS/HERITAGAE COMMITTEE

The Access/Heritage Committee is seeking new members and needs volunteers. This committee is under the auspices of the Access Committee, and sponsors historically related projects. The Heritage Committee and the Society have worked together on such things as the Cemetery Walk and the Windmill lectures last year. If you are interested on serving on this committee, please contact its chairman, Jody Haltenhof at 406-1138.

BASKETBALL MEMORIES (Part 1)

By Ken Peddy

My interest in basketball started in the year 1924. I was 10 at that time on a farm with my parents and sister on Averill Road, now known as Fabyan Parkway. I attended Louise White Grade School on Washington Avenue in Batavia. I was in 4th grade and played basketball after school in the gym.

Batavia High School had a very good team that year. Pinoke Johnson and Carl Anderson (still living) and Earl Bergeson, Hub Johnson and Leonard Carlson (all deceased) were the starting five players. My dad took me to all their home games that year. They defeated everyone in the district tournament at East High School-Aurora.

They then went to Joliet High School the next week and defeated two more opponents before running into Elgin High School which had a good team that year, too. To let the fans at home know if the team won, the fire whistle blew after each victory. The few fans who were lucky to have radios listened to the broadcast over WJOL, Joliet. Batavia lost to Elgin in the sectional final 31-19. This was before super-sectionals. Elgin continued down state and were crowned state champions for 1924. Incidentally Elgin won the crown in 1925, too.

I had to enroll as a freshman in Geneva High School because we lived in Geneva Township. It was quite a change for me. My sophomore year to my surprise, a former teammate of mine from Batavia moved to Geneva. His name was Andrew Mitchell (nicknamed Sonny.)

In those days the first game of the night was called the curtain raiser. It started at 7:30 p.m. Players that were not good enough to play with the varsity (heavyweights) were allowed to play with the lightweights. Freshmen, sophomores, juniors and seniors, were all on this team. Mr. Clarence Halter coached the lightweights, and Mr. Carl T. Nelson, the heavyweights. There were only two coaches in those days. We only had three sports in high school - football, basketball, and track. Our basketball gym only seated about 400 people. It was always packed when we played Batavia and St Charles.

The score board hung on the north end of the gym. No electric scoreboards at that time. Each number was heavy cardboard, and two guys flipped over the number when the teams scored. The time was kept by two men from their respective schools at the scorer's table. They each had stop watches. There was no 10-second line at midcourt or 3-second line in the free throw area. The clock was stopped after every basket, and a jump ball at the center circle was done by the two centers. You could only have four fouls before disqualification.

Geneva's lineup in 1930 and '31 was George Wilson, Mully Noren, Sonny Mitchell, Carl Nickels and Ken Peddy. We played and won a game over at Sycamore 8-7. We also played a lightweight game at Dundee and we won 11-10. Another game at Wheaton, we lost 13-12. Believe it or not we traveled by the Third Rail to Wheaton and walked from the train station to Wheaton High School to play the game.

The Little Seven Conference was composed of the following schools-Dundee, Sycamore, Naperville, Wheaton, St. Charles, Batavia, and Geneva. In later years as some of the schools grew in size, they withdrew and joined other conferences. The teams that left were Wheaton, Dundee, Naperville and St. Charles. When these teams left, schools like Mooseheart, Cary Grove, and Belvidere filled in for a while, but they didn't last long.

Our senior year of basketball, we accomplished something Geneva had not done in at least 15 years. We defeated Batavia on their floor 22-17.

Continued on Page 9.

BIOGRAPHIC PROJECT

Father's Name _____
Date of Birth _____ Place _____
Death Date _____
Married _____ Date _____
Date of Birth _____ Place _____
Death Date _____
Children: _____ Birthdate _____ Deathdate _____

Comments on family history

USE A SEPARATE SHEET FOR EACH FAMILY UNIT

Mail to Batavia Historical Society
Box 14
Batavia, IL 60510

Name of submitter _____ Phone No. _____

BIOGRAPHIC PROJECT

Father's Name _____
Date of Birth _____ Place _____
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Name of submitter _____ Phone No. _____

In 1931 we lost 35-25 to Harrison Tech from Chicago in the district tournament in St. Charles. Harrison Tech went on and finished third in the State.

After graduation in 1931, we all went our separate ways. Not many students could afford to go to college in those depression years. After high school, I played some basketball with the Green Pheasants from Batavia. Their games were played in the old Batavia High School gym. We played teams from the valley and Chicago.

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED FOR WORLD WAR II ORAL HISTORY PROJECT

It's the year 2050. A young Batavia researcher is studying the second world war that took place over 100 years before. He's read every book on the subject that he can find. He knows all the facts and all the numbers. Yet, wouldn't it be something if he could actually listen to the voices of Batavians who lived during the war? Wouldn't it be something if he could hear them sharing their stories as if they were right there in the room with him?

The Batavia Historical Society, in conjunction with the Illinois State Historical Society's World War II Oral History Project, is seeking volunteers to recount their war-time memories and make that possibility a reality. A trained interviewer will record these experiences for posterity.

The tapes will be made available to researchers, local historians, students and genealogists through a depository at Batavia's Depot Museum and at the Illinois State Historical Library in Springfield.

Anyone who lived during World War II and has memories of that time is a desired candidate for an interview. Combat veterans, prisoners of war, soldiers who never got overseas, housewives who coped with rationing, farmers who stretched rubber tires to the limit, or children with memories of the war, all have valuable input for future generations.

To be interviewed, or to learn more about the project, please contact Project Coordinator, Jenny Scott, at 406-9046.

Dear Historical Society Members,

The 1993 season has been a time for change at the museum.

The arrival of the long awaited VanNortwick furniture and the renovation of the room finally was accomplished.

The Coffin Bank and Caboose projects are well underway. The discovery of additional, matching display cases has given our main room a more uniform look, and we are anticipating the arrival of a new alarm system and exterior lighting for the building.

Throughout the years, the museum has always had a dedicated group of volunteers, and I would like to thank them all for their dedication to the museum. A special thanks goes to our weekly ladies-Dorothy Hanson, Helen Anderson, and Marilyn Phelps; to Walter and Georgene Kauth for overseeing the opening of the museum on the weekends; to May and Sadie Lundberg for scheduling volunteers for so many years; and to Marilyn Robinson, Bill Wood, and Bob Popeck for being there to help out whenever I needed them.

We have had several volunteers who have had surgery or been ill this year, and we are praying for their complete recovery.

The 1993 limited edition Christmas ornament this year depicts Bellevue Place and has recently arrived. Each of the volunteers will receive one as a thank you gift, and additional ornaments will be available for purchase.

I would like to close by wishing everyone a Merry Christmas and a Happy, Healthy, New Year!

Sincerely,

Carla Hill

DUES TIME AGAIN!

BATAVIA HISTORICAL SOCIETY MEMBERSHIP: 1994

Dues

Individual:	\$3
Joint/Family:	\$5
Sustaining:	\$10+
Life (each):	\$50
Business or Institutional	\$10
Bus./Inst. Life	\$100

Name (s): _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State _____ ZIP _____

Mail to:

Treasurer, Batavia Historical Society
P. O. Box 14, Batavia, IL 60510

Prompt payment of dues is appreciated! Dues may be paid at the Annual Meeting to the treasurer at that time.

If you would like to give a membership as a holiday gift, send the above information and dues to the Society indicating it is to be a gift. The gift membership card will be mailed to you so that you may enclose it with a personal card or note.