

THE BATAVIA HISTORIAN

Vol. IX, No, 1

January, 1968

Published by the BATAVIA HISTORICAL SOCIETY

He held it always as a maxim, that History did not greatly serve . . . to the ordering of a man's life. For he counted it as, in certain ways, more effectual than Philosophy, which indeed instructs men with words; but History thrills them with examples and makes them partakers of things and times which are past.

-Gassendi in Life of Peiresc.

NEXT MEETING

SUNDAY, JANUARY 28, 1968 at 3 PM

IN THE BARTHOLOMEW CIVIC CENTER

PROGRAM

ELECTION OF OFFICERS

"OLD MILLS OF THE MIDWEST" BY MISS RUTH NORTHRUP

Miss Northrup will illustrate her talk with her own slides. The Refreshment Committee is Mrs. Florence Joslyn, Miss Alice Storer and Mrs. Eldora Hoover, Miss Northrup is the former librarian of the High School. Her interesting subject covers mills run by wind power and water power.

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

President	Miss Eunice Shumway
Vice President	Miss Ruth Northrup
Secretary	Miss Joan Kane
Treasurer	Ralph C. Benson
Trustee for Two Years	Mrs. Victor E. Anderson
Trustee for Two Years	Harold Patterson

FROM YOUR PRESIDENT:

This is the time to review the past year and look ahead to the new one. In retrospect we can say that we have had four excellent programs with many participants. Our membership has increased so we know that there is genuine interest in Batavia's past as well as the present and future. Our most urgent task is to find a place to store and display all the artifacts which we have, and may receive.

Since this is the Sesquicentennial Year for Illinois, we also must show our pride in this fine State.

In conclusion I personally wish to thank you for the fine spirit of helpfulness, which is an essential factor in our success.

Eunice Shumway

Our December meeting was built around the subject of Bells. The weather was beautiful and this brought out a crowd that filled every chair in the Center. The program included the Bell Ringers from the New England Congregational Church of Aurora directed by Rev. Drexel V. Mollison and a group of high school singers under the guidance of Mr. Elwood Willey. Bob Larson gave recordings of all five church bells of Batavia. Then Miss Erma Jeffery and John Gustafson spelled each other off in talking about the bells here, past and present. Mrs. Agnes Perrow and Wm. B. Benson had displays of old bells in the cases. The Board members served refreshments.

The whole town was shocked to hear of the sudden death of J. Harrold Blair on Monday, December 4th. He was president of our Society in 1965 and initiated the practice of having some form of music on our programs. Harrold was a prominent soloist and sang the tenor role for years in Handel's Messiah when it was given here. We will miss him.

We are grateful to our hardworking officers. They have given much time and effort to the organization.

We thank the Furnas Electric Co. for printing, folding and addressing our Newsletters. We also thank the Misses Viola McDowell and Harriet Chamberlain for stapling and stamping the same.

Another thank you goes to the Aurora Beacon News and its reporter, Mrs. Marge Holbrook, for publicity and coverage of history items about Batavia.

We are grateful to the following people who have given us mementos recently. They have also been thanked by letter.

Mr. Austin Runde for a map titled, "Chikagouland as the Indians Knew It," also for a copy of the Elgin Courier-News for June 25, 1936, containing the complete edition of the Kane County Centennial Programs.

Mrs. Laurie Carlson, Sr., for twelve old books.

Mr. Philip Talbot for framed portraits of nine former Batavia postmasters.

Mr. Ralph Moore for two photostatic copies of an Abraham Lincoln letter to Mr. T. C. Moore and two copies of the incorporation papers of the Village of Batavia.

Carl W. Johnson for a bridal photograph of his Father and Mother.

Mr. Ralph Schacht for eleven small photographs of buildings recently razed or burned in Batavia.

James Hanson for three silver spoons from the Anna Wagner Estate.

In my last newsletter, I asked you for names of other strawberry growers than those I had mentioned. You were most helpful. Carl Harold called me and said that he thought Rev. Wm. Minium, a retired Methodist minister, had the largest strawberry patch in Batavia. This was on Church Street. Mrs. Pearl Ellis called and stated that her mother, Mrs. Montgomery, bought strawberries from a brother of the East Batavia School janitor, Claburn Turner. He had a plot on Park Street.

Later I received a letter from Harry Strain now living in Santa Barbara, California. When he lived here, he picked strawberries for F. E. Pearsall who lived on Batavia Avenue south of Batavia, north of the Moose building.

Don't forget the book Batavia: Past and Present. It makes an interesting gift and only costs \$1.50. They are on sale at the Library and at the Batavia Insurance Agency.

We congratulate the Immanuel Lutheran Church on reaching their 85th anniversary. On October 12th, 1882 the Church was organized.

Dues are due. See our Treasurer, Ralph Benson, or mail him \$1.00 for dues.

THE BATAVIA HISTORIAN

Vol. IX, No. 2

April 1, 1968

Published by the BATAVIA HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Prepared by John A. Gustafson

Adlai Stevenson once said, "Here on the prairies of the Middle West, we can see a long way in all directions. We look to East, to West, to North and South. Our commerce, our ideas come and go in all directions. We want no shackles on the mind or the spirit, no rigid pattern of thought, no iron conformity. We want only the faith and conviction that triumph in fair and free contests."

NEXT MEETING

SUNDAY, APRIL 21, 1968 at 3 PM

IN THE BARTHOLOMEW CIVIC CENTER

PROGRAM

PHILIP R. ELFSTROM WILL SPEAK ON HIS EXPERIENCES' WITH THE CHIGAGO,
AURORA & ELGIN R.R. CO.

ROGER BEELS WILL TALK ON "EARLY BASEBALL IN BATAVIA."

Our Secretary, Miss Joanne Kane, will lead the audience in group singing two old-time songs "I've Been Working on the Railroad" and "Take Me Out to the Ball Game." Nostalgia plus! Phil Elfstrom was with the "Third Rail" as manager from 1949 and Roger Beels knows more about early baseball here, without a doubt, than anyone else. Remember "Rahaj's Colts", a boy's baseball team?

The Misses Sadie Lundberg, Mary Anderson and Freda Lundberg compose the Refreshment Committee.

Since our last Newsletter, we have received the following mementos. We are most grateful for all of them.

Miss Amy Bartholomew for one reel of Movie Film, 100 feet, showing our beloved school teacher, Miss Grace McWayne.

Mr. and Mrs. J. A. Burnham for two copies of the magazine "The DeKalb Chronicle" for December 22, 1894 and December 23, 1899.

Mr. Paul Cable far an old hand lantern, lit with a candle, used and undoubtedly made by Mr. E. C. Newton.

We thank our Vice President, Miss Ruth Northrup, for a most interesting talk on "Old Mills of the Midwest" illustrated with her own excellent slides.

Bill Rachielles let us take a little booklet lent to him by Austin Runde. It was issued in 1896 and contained sixteen Batavia store and factory ads, most of whom we had heard about before, but some were new to us. Far instance:

“Vandervolgan & Rachielles. Manufacturers of Carriages, Buggies and Wagons. Horse Shoeing a Specialty, Repairing, etc. Pipe Fitting Done to Order. 56 Batavia Avenue.” We remember Amenzo Vandervolgan and his son Arthur but they were well drillers. The Rachielles whom we knew were not horse shoers or manufacturers. 56 S. Batavia Avenue was the location of the old two-story “Sons of the North” building razed some years ago. Do you know anything about these partners?

We are all saddened by the death of Mrs. H. N. (Ruth Doty) Jones. Her passing has left a deep void in the ranks of our society. She was chairman of the committee which got out the booklet Batavia; Past and Present. Her memory was clear and precise and she was an authority on the early history of Batavia. No one can take her place. We extend our sympathy to her family.

On January 15th Miss Ethel Alexander, sister of Mrs. Margaret Allan, died. We can remember her millinery shop on the corner of S. Batavia Avenue and Main Street, where Bentz Bros. Service Station is today. She started her shop there in 1905 and carried it on for twenty years. She has been a member of our society since its inception.

The Society has at present seven life members as follows:

Miss Eunice Shumway	August J. Mier
Mrs. Mary A. Strange	Wmo B. Van Nortwick
Norman Johnson	John A. Gustafson
Mrs. Norman Johnson	

Life membership dues are \$25.00. This money is a big help in the operation of our Society. Our expenses are kept at a minimum but we do have expenses. We need new annual members too. Encourage your friends to join.

At the end of this Newsletter you will see your membership status. If you are in arrears for 1965 or 1966, you will not receive another Newsletter until your dues have been paid. We must do this because of the increase in postage rates.

Thank you for your help in listing the Batavians who raised strawberries commercially. To date the list includes the following growers, Martin J. Abernathy, L. C. Carlow, Rev. Wm. Minium, Mr. Turner of Park Street, all on the east side; H. W. Williams, Thomas Guyder, F. E. Pearsall, John B. Nilles and George Gunzenhauser on the west side. You see Batavia was quite a “Strawberry Center” in the early 1900’s.

Mrs. Elmer Coleman called us recently and read part of an article which her late husband had written for his immediate family about Batavia as he remembered it as a boy. His manuscript should be imitated by many old-time Batavians. You will recall events and stories about Batavia and its people that are important and that should be written up now or they may be lost

In the late 1890’s and the early 1900’s many Batavians, often the women of the families, trekked out to the common cow pastures which were on the edge of town, nights and mornings. They were loaded down with a milk pail, milking stool and a pail of feed and they went to corral their cow and milk it. They waded through wet grass, dust, in rain or in heat - the cow had to be milked at a certain time twice a day. I remember two pastures - there were many more - VanNortwick’s pasture west of Batavia and a pasture near Lockwood Hall. Please write or call me relating your memories. How much did it cost to board a cow in these pastures? How long was the season? What was the total number of cows in pasture?

There was another way to take care of these cows. Some owners hired a boy to take their cow out to pasture, after milking, every morning and to bring it home every evening. If the pasture was close by, the cow was taken back to the pasture after milking. I was one of those boys, I led a cow across Batavia Avenue, night and morning, from Van Nortwick's barn to Van Nortwick's pasture. This would be some problem now with today's traffic.

Is Betsy Lyon, the first wife of Col. Joseph Lyon, buried in a Batavia cemetery?

In what ward did Robert Alexander live in 1884?

When did E. G. Dixon serve here as station agent for the Burlington Railroad?

How old is the Paul G. Bosse house? Both Eunice Shumway and I worked on that problem.

Does anyone have a portrait of A. O. Mallory or any biographical information about him? Who were the members of the 1912 Batavia Basketball Team?

Our Society, along with 140 other local societies in Illinois, has been asked to join the Congress of Illinois Historical Societies, annual dues \$7.00. There are several advantages in joining a state organization like this. The primary reason for being is that the Congress wishes all local societies to name the Congress as the repository in trust for historical material held by affiliates to preserve such material in case of the dissolution of the local society. Their object is to have a continuing, permanent organization which will hold the material so that it will not be lost through neglect if the local group is ever disbanded. However, your officers want assurance that we could determine the disposition of our possessions, therefore the following Article XII will be a part of our Constitution By-Laws. A copy of this article will be sent to the Congress before we join.

ARTICLE XII. In case of the dissolution of the Batavia Historical Society, all decisions concerning the disposition of its possessions shall be determined by the current officers and Board of Trustees of the Society.

Yes, we had allowances when we were young. Dad sometimes let us keep half of what we earned, usually it wasn't that much. Our money was needed to help pay the grocery bill. This made it a family affair.

It's tragic to see an old monarch succumb to old age and disease. The majestic Shabbona elm is dead, a victim of the Dutch elm disease. It was a huge tree, thirty-five feet in girth at the base; its age is estimated to be between 300 and 400 years. Thus it began life about the time the Pilgrims reached our shores. Fortunately we have word that the tree will not be destroyed, the trunk will "lie in state" for future generations to view with awe.

What was the total amount of water power generated by the Fox River here and used by the factories? The turbine which ran the machinery in the machine shop of the U.S. Wind Engine & Pump Co. developed 100 horsepower, we understand. But the Challenge Co., Newton Wagon Co. and the Danforth Machine Shop used water power. Does anyone know how much?

Don't forget our book Batavia: Past and Present. It costs only \$1.50 and makes an elegant gift to your friends. They are on sale at the Library and the Batavia Insurance Agency. The paper-bound copies of Historic Batavia are all gone. There are a few cloth-bound copies left at \$4.00.

You are in arrears for the years _____, total \$ _____.
The treasurer is Ralph Benson, 207 N. Washington Avenue, Batavia, Illinois 60510.

THE BATAVIA HISTORIAN

Vol. IX, No.3

September, 1968

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" . . . a large portion of the human race is made up of defilers and despoilers who, in D. H. Lawrence's phrase, 'pull life down and devour it like vermin' and are a scourge and a menace to the rest of us."

The Winter Beach by Charlton Ogburn

NEXT MEETING

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 15, 1968 AT 3 P. M.

IN THE BARTHOLOMEW CIVIC CENTER

PROGRAM

Paper - "A Brief History of Illinois"	Mrs. Evan D. James
Song - "Illinois"	Mr. William B. Benson
Slides - "Historic Illinois"	Miss Ruth Northrup

Slides are contributed by Frank and Jane Elwood, Ruth Northrup and John Gustafson. Refreshments will be served by a committee composed of Mrs. Evalyn Mair and Mrs. Jos. Burnham.

This will be part of our program to celebrate the Illinois Sesquicentennial.

The last meeting, April 21, was varied in interesting subject matter. About fifty people attended. Miss Loretta Bolle read her article on "Batavia's Judge Lockwood" which appeared in the February issue of Illinois History. Philip R. Elfstrom spoke on "The Railroads of Batavia" and Roger Beels on "Early Baseball in Batavia." Both men spoke from long experience, Phil was with the "Third Rail" as manager from 1949 on. Rog grew up with a baseball glove on his hand.

We are saddened by the death of two of our loyal, ever-faithful members: Miss Cora V. Benson and Neal J. Conde, Sr. We extend our deepest sympathy to their families.

We have received the following mementos since our last Newsletter. We are most grateful to the donors:

The Insurance Co. of North America for a book of their Historical Collection.

Mrs. Conrad G. Kaufman for thirty items received from the Estate of the late Mrs. Ruth D. Jones.

Mrs. Kaufman is the daughter of Mrs. Jones.

Elmer Nelson for a steelyard, a weighing device.

Mr. and Mrs. Lloyd Kautz for a 1912 Bee Aitch Ess Annual.

Mrs. W. C. Spencer for the Record of the Treasurer's Report of the Perpetual Care of the Association of the East and West Batavia Cemeteries.

Vernon Derry, Aurora, for a photo of the Gas Engine Department of the Challenge Co.

The Batavia Savings and Building Association for the wooden sign "Batavia" that was on the C&NW Ry. depot before it was torn down.

No organization in Batavia has done as much for the Illinois Sesquicentennial as we have. Here is proof:

June 1. The Society furnished most of the material, 38 items originally, and helped the Batavia Junior High School, under the leadership of Charles Christianson, arrange an old-fashioned school exhibit in the window of the Board of Education Office, 109 S. Batavia Avenue. The Batavia Body Co. loaned the large Illinois flag. Mrs. P. L. Reedus furnished the two manikins. Have you seen it?

June 13. We loaned twenty-one photos from old Batavia to Ray Bergeson for the Board of Supervisors' exhibit at the Kane County Fair.

July 1. We sponsored a Band Concert given by the Batavia Junior High School Band, directed by Michael Stiers. The concert started at 7:30 P. M. on the grounds of the McWayne School. The Women's Fellowship of the Congregational Church cooperated and conducted an Ice Cream Social at the same time. Both the Band Concert and the Social were most successful. It was a beautiful evening and the fellowship engendered was invaluable.

July 8. Two members, Miss Viola McDowell and Miss Harriet Chamberlain, loaned articles from their fathers' barber shops for the window display at the Crystal Barber Shop, 121 S. Batavia Avenue.

July 30. We loaned photos, old school books, a desk, chairs, a stove, and other school memorabilia for a school exhibit at the Kane County Fair. Mrs. Marguerite Brown and our President did most of the work in setting up the exhibit. Mrs. Brown furnished much of the material. Four of the nine display cases were arranged with books, pictures, children's toys and colorful old cards belonging to Mrs. Marguerite Brown. Following is a list of the Hosts and Hostesses who served while the Fair was going on, from July 31 to August 4.

Mrs. V. E. Anderson, Mrs. Ralph Benson, Mrs. Marguerite Brown, Mr. Harold Bunker, Mrs. Joseph Burnham, Mr. and Mrs. Herbert Carlson, Mr. Philip Carlson,

Miss Sigred Johnson, Miss Joanne Kane, Mrs. Irene Kreitzer, Miss Viola McDowell, Mr. Harold Patterson, Mr. and Mrs. Raymond Patzer, Mr. Jeff Schielke, Mr. and Mrs. Sidney Svendsen, Miss Eunice Shumway.

We congratulate the Batavia Savings and Building Association for their handsome, modern building. We trust that it comes up to every expectation that they desired in the new building.

We congratulate the members of the Faith Church of the Brethren on the dedication of their new building, Sunday, July 28. It is located at 621 N. Van Buren Street. Rev. Martin Krieger is the pastor.

Two things add attractiveness to our downtown scenery. One is the twelve honey locusts planted, and well taken care of, in holes in the sidewalk on the west side of So. Batavia Avenue from Main to First Streets.

The other attraction is the flower beds in the W. Wilson Street Park, planted and cared for by the Plain Dirt Gardeners. It is an excellent beginning.

We have an eyesore also and we hope that will soon be corrected.

According to our Treasurer, Ralph Benson, we have five new members. Welcome to our group. We need your help. The names follow:

Mr. and Mrs. Jos. P. Kelly, 107 So. College Street, Batavia

Mrs. Marguerite Brown, 217 Franklin Street, Batavia

Mrs. Irene Kreitzer, 217 Franklin Street, Batavia

Marie Sink, 1607 Morrell Street, Detroit, Michigan 48209

Batavia was doing things one hundred years ago as well as today:

On May 17, 1868 the first services of the Christian Church were held in their new building.

A large addition was made to the Newton Wagon Co. plant (present Batavia Body Co.) including the present three-story front building, sixty foot square. This cost \$12,000.00. D. R. Sperry & Co. was organized. The original building was just south of the former C&NW Ry. depot (now the new Batavia Savings & Building Association). Mr. Sperry, prior to this was a partner of Sperry & Merrill and manufactured farm boilers, kettles and hollowware.

In the fall the Swedenborgians organized in the Buck Hall. They had fifteen members with H. O. Snow the leader. In 1874 they bought a lot preparatory to building but didn't build.

The Batavia vote for President that fall was - Grant, 372. Seymour, 120. Grant was Republican and won, Seymour was the Democratic candidate.

A few of the arrivals in Batavia that year were: James A. Allen, who became Superintendent of the Paper Mill; W. H. Stewart, contractor; Andrew Redborg; Thomas M. Hunter, quarryman; Henry Walt, merchant.

We still have copies of the book, Batavia: Past and Present to sell. This makes an excellent gift for your friends. \$1.00 per copy.

“In Chicago, the attendance at museums, including the Art Institute of Chicago, is greater every year than the attendance at our two major league baseball parks and our fine race tracks in this area combined.”

Ex. Governor Otto Kerner

They were strict in the old days. Here is an example taken from Record Book No. 1 of the Board of Trustees of the Town of Batavia:

July 26, 1856. Sabbath Breaking.

1. Any person who shall from and after the due publication hereof, disturb the peace and good order of the Society by labor or amusement on the First Day of the week commonly called Sunday (works of necessity or charity excepted) within the corporation of the Town of Batavia shall be subject to a fine of not less than \$1.00 nor more than \$5.00 for each and every offense.

TO: BATAVIA HISTORICAL SOCIETY MEMBERS NEW AND OLD

THIS IS AN INTERIM NEWSLETTER REPORTING MATTERS ABOUT WHICH WE FELT THE BATAVIA HISTORICAL SOCIETY MEMBERSHIP SHOULD BE INFORMED.

1. Results of the recent membership vote on whether or not to accept the CB&Q depot as a museum site and make a substantial donation from existing funds to help pay the cost of restoring the exterior. There was an astonishing answer, 84 members from as far away as California and New York responded: 83 with a "yes" vote, only one negative vote. That with the vote at the September meeting brings the total to well over 120 "yes" votes. Encouraged, the Board of Directors met and voted to pledge \$1,000 from existing funds toward the material costs of the work presently underway which includes the new roof already installed, the windows and paint. (Incidentally if any member wants to don a pair of jeans, take a chisel and chip off old paint around the window and door sills before the volunteer sand-blasters arrive or want to swing a paint brush after they leave, contact a member of the repair committee, Phil Elfstrom, Chairman, Jeff Shielke or Mary Snow who are lining up volunteers).
2. The Batavia National Bank fund has been receiving donations from the general public and also the sale of chimney bricks from the station netted \$54. This week an appeal to the public for reconstruction funds in the form of fold-out picture cards has been placed in heavily trafficked areas throughout town. These were furnished free to the Society by Bob Scott of SCOTT'S ART & PRESS shop on East Wilson Street. All funds from this appeal and those donations from members of the BHS are being deposited in our own building fund and include the very generous gift of \$500 from Harry Strain in California as well as substantial contributions from the Walter Woods, Harold Hall, Mrs. Patricia (McGeachy) Torn, and a gift in memoriam to John Hettinger from his wife, Ella.
3. With renewed community interest in the museum project, there has been a marked increase in the donation of items of historic interest. A fascinating old Swedish wooden spinning wheel and set of stone cutting tools used in shaping the lovely stone in the Episcopal and Catholic churches from the Lyle Hendrickson estate courtesy of Mrs. Kenneth Knecht. An ancient L. C. Smith typewriter was given by Gus Lund's daughter, Mrs. Werner Amrein. A wonderful black stovepipe hat worn by George Burnett of the old Burnett Funeral Parlor was given by Mrs. Ruth Huxtable and the Stephen Lusteds gave an ancient Kane County Atlas in near perfect condition.

4. Others outside the organization have joined in to help us in our museum project. The Arthur McIntosh firm offered the U.S. Windmill from the old Wallace farm. "Bosco" Hall, the City of Batavia and Lenny Johnson have already moved the wheel and vane into Hall's office garage and will have moved the frame structure by the time of the next regular newsletter. The American Legion has given us window space to display posters which further explain and illustrate the depot project.
5. As a final item of interest, the Batavia Historical Society's Board of Directors went on record in support of the Park District referendum to be voted upon Tuesday, October 21st. It has been planned that offices of the Park District would be established on the second floor of the "Q" station and thus the major portion of maintenance, protection and operational costs would be borne by the Park District. Two members of the Historical Society are candidates for the unpaid five commission posts: C. C. McCune and Mary Snow. Come to the public meeting for film presentation and discussion of the proposed Park District, 8:00 P.M., Wednesday, October 15th, Civic Center.

Harold Patterson
Chmn., Board of Directors

At the September 14th meeting of the Batavia Historical Society a progress report was given on the status of the C. B. & Q. Depot reconstruction.

As most of you know, the building was purchased by a group of civic minded Batavia business men and offered to the Society three months ago in June. Since then through the generous efforts of Al Johnson's Roofing Company and carpenters from the V. F. W., a new roof has been installed, custom made windows ordered for installation, and the building will be painted before late fall.

THIS HAS BECOME A COMMUNITY-WIDE EFFORT and a fund has already been established with the BATAVIA NATIONAL BANK.

Having twice discussed this matter of the C. B. & Q., it was the enthusiastic and unanimous opinion of the membership present that the Society should assume a significant responsibility in the restoration of the depot.

Therefore, the following resolution was unanimously adopted by the members present:

"It was moved by Miriam Johnson and seconded by Walter Wood that the Batavia Historical Society members present approve the gift of the (C.B.&Q.) building and make a substantial contribution from existing funds. A letter must be sent to absent members asking their ratification by Sept. 22, 1969."

Therefore, please indicate your vote in the square below and return your ballot immediately so that it may be registered in the September 22nd count.

THANK YOU

Harold Patterson

Batavia Historical Society
639 South Van Buren
Batavia, Illinois 60510

YES _____

NO _____

Your Signature _____

THE BATAVIA HISTORIAN

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"The power by which we recall past scenes, the rapidity with which they are brought in review before us, the faculty by which we can range o'er creation, and dwell upon the past and future, demonstrates that man was indeed formed in the image of his Creator and destined for immortality. By the contemplation of the past, we feel our span of existence extended; we enter into the thoughts, hopes and aspirations of generations before us, and in such moments, hold communion with the departed spirits of antiquity."

Preface to the Connecticut Historical Collections of 1830

NEXT MEETING

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 8. 1968 at 3 PM

IN THE BARTHOLOMEW CIVIC CENTER

PROGRAM

CHRISTMAS STORIES
MUSIC PROGRAM

MISS ERMA JEFFERY
BATAVIA HIGH SCHOOL CHORUS

Directed by Mr. Elwood J. Willey

Refreshment Committee is composed of Mrs. Walter Wood, Chrm., Mrs. Herbert Anderson, Miss Isabell Colberg, Miss Caroline Nelson and Mrs. Agnes Perrow.

The Nominating Committee is composed of the following members: Mr. Frank Elwood, Chrm.; Mr. Robert Larson; Mrs. Joseph A. Burnham; Miss Erma Jeffery and Miss Anne Johnson.

They will report a full slate of candidates for office for 1969 to be acted on at the first general meeting of the new year.

Everyone thoroughly enjoyed our program for our September meeting. The 85 people there heard a paper "A Brief History of Illinois" read by Mrs. Evan D. James, Mr. William Benson sang "Illinois" and Miss Ruth Northrup showed slides of "Historic Illinois." The whole program was in commemoration of the Illinois Sesquicentennial.

We are the grateful recipients of the following mementos:

From Mrs. Pauline Campbell. 84 - 5x7 or 8x10 photos of Historic Batavia Views, also 57 duplicates of the same, one box of Batavia slides for our Slide Library and five Tiles from the fireplace in the razed Wade House.

From Mrs. Marguerite Brown. An engraving of the Batavia Central School Building, a photograph of Abraham Lincoln and an Invitation to the Rock City Social Club given January 27, 1887.

Geneva Historical Society, One oil painting 20 by 27" of the War Record of 1st Lieut. Charles E. Smiley.

Mrs. Reedus. Two linen stand-up Collars, one with Wm. VanNortwick's name in it, the other with JRM (J. R. Moore) initials in it.

Miss Caroline Nelson. A Nurse's Uniform which she wore in World War I.

Frank G. Elwood, 10-5x7 and 9-8x10 photos of Historic Batavia Views.

We are saddened by the death of Mrs. Folke Saaf, one of our members, and the death of Norman Johnson, a life member. We extend our deepest sympathy to their families.

A young student of the Batavia Schools called me and wanted to know the latitude and longitude of Batavia. I had to tell him that I didn't know and sent him to our library to look it up. Since then I have found that we are in latitude 42 degrees North and 88 degrees West of Greenwich. I do know that Batavia Township is the southern portion of Township 39 North, Range 8 East of the Third Principal Meridian. Our altitude is 719 feet.

Speaking of our township, Mr. Fred W. Schussler, who is an ex-president of the Aurora Historical Society, was here some time ago, for information as to why Batavia and Geneva were two separate civil townships. I told him I would look it up, also that I would call Mrs. Margaret Allan of Geneva, and let him know what I found.

I found this statement in the book Commemorative, Biographical and Historical Record of Kane County, Illinois (1888), page 969 under the title "Batavia Township:"

"This (Batavia and Geneva) is the only congressional township in Kane County that has been divided and made into two civil townships under the general law of township organization. It was originally Sandusky precinct, and as there are two villages, Geneva and Batavia, and each feeling ambitious to furnish a supervisor, the one township was made two and each took the name of the village-Batavia and Geneva. While it was Sandusky it had two voting places."

Mrs. Allan says, as far as she knows, there was no fracas or bad feeling, the two towns mutually agreed to be separate townships.

Regarding the source of limestone used in the Chicago Water Tower, I have the following citations sent to me from the Chicago Historical Society by Mr. Larry A. Viskochil, Reference Librarian:

1. "Originally built of Lemont lime stone . . ." Herald-American, Dec. 28, 1952
2. "It is known as Lemont lime stone . . ."

Townsofolk, Oct., 1948, p. 11, 21.
3. Lemont limestone had become scarce, and the city prior to then had been patching the tower with stones saved from wrecked buildings of similar construction. For the 1963 restoration, however, the city found a two-man quarry in Joliet-apparently the last source of fresh supply."

Sun-Times, July 11, 1965
4. "For the building material Boyington chose native Lemont lime stone, quarried not far from Chicago."

Tribune Grafic Magazine, Feb. 27, 1949

Prior to receiving the above citations, I had the following references:

5. "On the way home we turn through the streets of Lemont to look at the old stone store buildings, churches, schools and then return to the city for another look at the Chicago water tower, built of limestone from Lemont, in 1869 . . ."

Tribune, Sept. 10, 1967, dept. "Nature Afoot,"
by Mrs. May Theilgaard Watts.
6. The rough-faced yellow limestone, once much used in Chicago buildings, was quarried near Joliet. . . ."

Illinois Architecture by Frederick Koeper
P. 44, "Water Tower," Chicago, 1867-69

Of course, there were many buildings in Chicago built of Batavia limestone, but we have no record of any specific building in that city. We do have a record of the following buildings in other cities which were made from Batavia stone.

Definitely all of the stone buildings in Batavia. Someone should make a complete list of these which include factories, store buildings, churches, schools, homes and barns, both past and present.

Then, there are the following - or were:

The Bushnell House at Beloit, Wis.

The railroad and college buildings at Galesburg, Ill. The C&NW Ry. bridge piers at Geneva.

The C&NW Ry. shops at West Chicago and at Crawford Ave., Chicago. 500 cords of stone were furnished for a Normal School building at DeKalb. A cord of wood contains 128 cu. ft. Is a cord of stone the same? If it is, 500 cords would be 64,000 cu. ft.

The Post Office at Wheaton (1897).

Do you know of any other buildings which you know definitely were made of Batavia stone?

We received an order for three of our books from Mrs. Anna E. Roland of Chicago. We sent her the books and asked her a little about herself, as she used to live in Batavia. Her father's name was P. August Beckstrom, and they lived on Prairie Street, then moved to Park Street. He worked at the Appleton Mfg. Co., then for 36 years, beginning in 1904, was a foreman at Flint and Walling Co., Kendallville, Ind. There were four children in the family, three girls and one boy. Does anyone remember the family?

The old stone building at 17 N. Water Street has been razed to make way for a parking area. This was an old timer, dating back at least to 1860. We have two references to this building.

Martin Michelson wrote a series of articles for the BATAVIA HERALD in 1936 titled, "Around Batavia in 1870." He says: "The old stone building north of Wilson on Water Street, now occupied by the Lenio family, was built by Charles Johnson, who has two lime kilns that we can inspect just north of the spot where the depot stands now"

Then Frank Smith, in 1948, wrote another series of recollections for the same paper. These recollections were titled, "Batavia in 1875." We quote - he is walking south on N. Water Street: "South of that (Doty and Norris Pump Factory, later the Prairie Remedy Co. building,) and for 90 feet south, was the back end of my father's lot. Then came the Johnson house. Mr. Johnson was killed when building a stone wall to protect his property from the railroad when he was struck and run over by the engine. The house still stands"

That's the extent of our knowledge about this house. Does anyone have anymore information about the house or Mr. Charles Johnson?

Dues are due. See Ralph Benson.