
WHITE COUNTY HISTORIAN

Volume 23, Issue 1

January - March, 2017



"Preserving and
Promoting our History"

2017 CALENDAR OF EVENTS

SPRING DINNER MEETING
FIRST CHRISTIAN CHURCH
APRIL 10, 6 PM

SECOND GRADE TEA PARTIES
ROBINSON-STEWART HOUSE
APRIL 24-27

ROBINSON-STEWART HOUSE
PLANT SALE
MAY 6, 9AM - 1PM

CORN DAYS
CORN TASTING &
MUSEUMS OPEN
OCTOBER

PIONEER DAYS FOR WHITE
COUNTY 5TH GRADERS
WITH THE RETIRED TEACHER'S
ASSOC.
MATSEL CABIN
OCTOBER

FALL DINNER MEETING
FIRST CHRISTIAN CHURCH
NOVEMBER

MUSEUMS OPEN DURING
WHITE COUNTY CHRISTMAS

NOTES FROM THE PRESIDENT

To White County historians everywhere,

I am David Brown the new President of The White County Historical Society. My wife Sara and I are lifelong residents of White County and have 3 adult children, 2 grandchildren and another grandchild on the way. I am a farmer and my wife owns a business in New Harmony.

I am honored to serve as President of the Society and have much to live up to. For years the Society has had hardworking and capable leadership from its officers and board, we have also had a dedicated membership who believe that maintaining and passing our historical legacy to the next generation is important. So here comes the sales pitch. Our membership is decreasing and aging, not a good combination to allow us to accomplish our mission. I challenge you as a lover of local history to ask your friends, neighbors, coworkers, relatives or anyone that shares an interest in White County history to join the society. The cost of an individual membership is \$25 and a family membership is \$35. Also for the current individual or family member you might consider upping your membership to sustaining, patron, contributing or even a life membership.

To all current Society members, I speak for all the board members in thanking you for your past and future support. The Society can't accomplish its mission without lots of volunteer support, we all can contribute to the activities of the society. Whether it's the spring teas, spring dinner, plant sale, pioneer days, activities on Corn Days, fall dinner or any of our other activities we need everyone's talents and energy. Whether you are a 25 year old that wants to connect to local history or a retiree who now has available time, we need you all and I guarantee that you will be rewarded. Ask the volunteers for the second grades teas or pioneer days, interacting with the school kids is rewarding if not hilarious. Don't wait to be asked. Ask a board member, "what can I do?"

I promise that this is my one and only sales pitch for your dollar, time, energy and talent. I do believe that you will find participating in the White County Historical Society as fulfilling as I do. Thanks for your continuing support.

David ✍

NEWS FROM THE MARY SMITH FAY GENEALOGY LIBRARY

by: Librarian Diane Waggoner

PO Box 121, 203 North Church St., Carmi, IL
618-382-8425 email: w.c.h.s-genealogy@hotmail.com
11:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m., Tuesday - Friday

News from the 1909 White County Tribune

Game Laws Condensed

You may kill 12 quails per day from Nov. 10-28 days of open season.

Prairie chickens and grouse are protected till July 1st 1911.

Netting, trapping and ensnaring quail, chicken, etc., prohibited.

You may kill 15 woodchucks and 15 mourning doves from Aug. 1st to Nov. 30.

You may kill per day 15 of each of the following, gray, red, fox or black squirrels from June 1 to Nov. 15.

You may kill 12 ducks, 10 geese, 10 brant, 20 coots, 20 rails, and other water fowl from Sept. 1 to April 15.

"Big Head"

The "big head" is a popular way of describing a common and very frequent ailment. It arises from various sources, but the real cause is lack of sense. A little money develops it in some people; a few good clothes gives it to others; a little office, where a chance is given to exercise a brief authority, is often the cause of it, while others get it by having a better job than their associates. The truth is no sensible person gets the "big head" The ones who become stuck up and stiff necked from sources of any kind are weak in their intellectual faculties.

RESEARCH FEES

If you would like us to do research for you (White County area only), please contact us.
Cost of research is \$15 per hour. Copies are 20 - 25¢ each. Shipping & handling is \$5.

Come and visit us and we will help you do your research at no cost to you, all you pay for is
the cost of copies.

TIDBITS

by: Kathleen Rister

I love a good story, especially anything to do with history or people's lives from times past. I'm fascinated by stories of how busy Main Street in Carmi used to be and all of the different stores people shopped. As a kid, I enjoyed listening to family stories about how things were done or different local places.

My parents were older than most kids my age; they grew up during the depression, a time that provided me with lots of questions to ask. My mom's family always met at Big Prairie Cemetery on Memorial Day, and that was an excellent occasion to play with cousins and listen to family history and stories. There is a headstone there for a Dr. Brimblecombe whose birthplace was Australia. I have often wondered what on earth brought a man from Australia to Southern Illinois. That is a story I'll have to dig for someday.

My grandfather Cutchin farmed in Big Prairie and lived on the Little Meadow Bank. That's the big dip one goes down right past the Maunie Road when heading to Evansville. When farming, my uncle used to see large areas of sand in the fields where the earthquake of the early 1800's blew sand up from the ground. He, like many farmers, has found pieces of Native American pottery and such.

One thing my dad told me, and I have to admit I doubted, was that Carmi used to have pretty lamp posts in the middle of two intersections. I had asked others, and no one remembered them. I've had to eat crow on that one. When viewing the DVD (I believe the Chamber of Commerce put together) of early Carmi, 'lo and behold, there's a lamp post in the middle of an intersection! My mom also told me about a public horse trough in the vicinity of the intersection of Stewart, First, and Church Streets. I have no proof of that yet, but I am not so quick to doubt now. There was also a gold fish pond next to the Fire Proof Building that stood where the city offices now stand.


And, did you know there was a jalopy car racetrack at Maude, between Grayville and Mt. Carmel? People from Carmi attended races there, and my father can remember one particularly exciting race. A 1932 Ford somehow got airborne passing the stands and you could see the entire undercarriage of the car. Dad said the people in the stands really scattered. Miraculously, the car came back down on the track.

My point in sharing all of these stories, is that this area has a rich history of events, places, and people. Our White County history is fascinating, and we have wonderful research assets in the three public libraries of our county, the local museums, and the Mary Smith Fay Genealogy Library. I hope I've piqued your interest in our history and the fabric of our past citizens' lives. From now on, I'll try to pick one subject, but I thought for my first article I'd share some of the stories that have really grown my interest in our history. I'm sure you each have wonderful stories from your families, and I hope that you write them down or record them for our future generations.

Until next time, Kathleen Rister ✍

SPRING DINNER MEETING

This is your official invitation to attend our annual Spring dinner meeting. It will be held Monday, April 10, at 6:00 pm in the Fellowship Hall of the First Christian Church. Reservations are required and must be turned in by April 1st. Dinner will be delicious, the company will be outstanding, and the program will be interesting. Please join us! It's not necessary to be a member of the Historical Society to attend so feel free to invite family and friends. Contact Paula Pierson at (618) 382-7633 for reservations.

The program will be presented by Perry Garner of Albion who will tell us all about the mussel shell button industry. There was a time when a large percentage of the world's buttons came from the glossy inner surfaces of freshwater mollusk shells harvested by citizens of many small river towns. Want to learn more about this? Join us April 10th. 

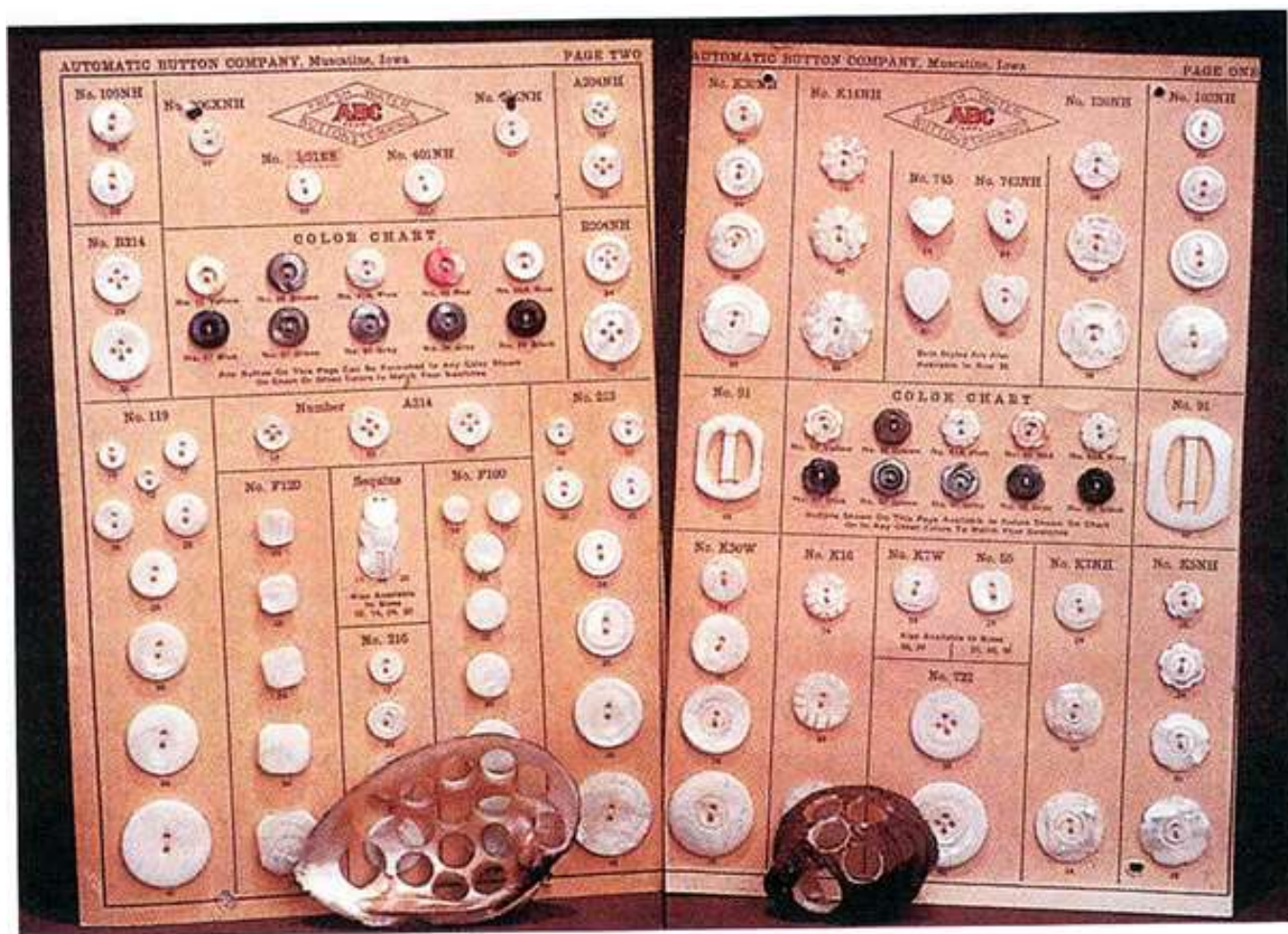


Photo Source: Muscatine Art Center, Iowa www.fws.gov/midwest/mussel/harvest.html

SECOND GRADE TEAS & TOURS



Second grade tea parties at the Robinson-Stewart House are scheduled for April 24-27. Approximately 200 White County second grade students and their teachers attended last year. The students will get to tour the house and garden and learn some local history. They will then take their seats in the parlor of the Robinson Stewart House where they will have a story and discussion on manners. Then there will be a short discussion on the history of tea. Then tea is served to the students by the hostess at each table. As the students enjoy their tea and snacks, their hostess engages them in "polite conversation" at each table. The students are told that Mary Jane Stewart, whose parlor they are sitting in, loved to entertain her friends with tea parties so the Historical Society likes to entertain the children with tea parties. This has become a very popular event for students teachers, and volunteers, and one of the Society's flagship programs to build interest in local history with our county's youth at an early age. ✍



MEMBERSHIP DUES

Dues notices will be mailed out in April so please be on the lookout for them.

ROBINSON STEWART HOUSE PLANT SALE

The Society will hold our annual plant sale at the Robinson-Stewart House on Saturday, May 7. Plants and seeds are needed. Herbs, shrubs, bulbs, as well as any annuals or perennials would be welcome. If you have any plants that need to be thinned, please dig them before the sale and put them in disposable containers. Label them and bring them to the Robinson-Stewart House the week before the sale. All proceeds go to the landscaping and yard maintenance of the Robinson-Stewart House. The House will be open for tours & refreshments will be served. Barbara Kearney will be heading this project. Please contact her at 618-218-8249 if you would like to help. ✉

Perennials that divide easily:



IRIS
LILIES
HOSTA
MINT



VINCA
ORNAMENTAL
GRASSES
PEONIES



PRIMROSE
CANNAS
GLADIOLAS



ESTATE GIFTS - SIMPLER THAN YOU THINK

If you would really like to help the White County Historical Society but are not inclined to do so during your lifetime, you may be pleased to know that there are some simple ways to make a gift to the Society through your estate. Following are a few of the simplest and most popular ways to do so.

1. Simply instruct your attorney to name the White County Historical Society as a beneficiary in your will or trust using the language below.
2. List the White County Historical Society as a beneficiary of an insurance policy, retirement account or tax-deferred annuity. Simply request a “change of beneficiary form” and use the language below to fill it out.
3. Fill out a Transfer of Death (TOD) form where you hold your investments using the language below.
4. Request a Totten Trust form from your bank and list the White County Historical Society as a beneficiary of your account(s), once again using the language below.

“_____to the White County Historical Society to be used in the ongoing stewardship of its buildings and grounds, the conservation of its artifacts and the continuation of its educational programs.”

GENEALOGY QUERY

If you have a query, please send it to the Mary Smith Fay Genealogy Library and we can add it to the next newsletter.

WHAT'S YOUR STORY?

We know that many of you have stories about a historical event of White County. We would welcome having your story to include in future editions of the White County Historian. Write your story, include your name, and mail it to Mary Smith Fay Genealogical Library at P.O. Box 121, Carmi, IL or email to rshous@gmail.com. Then watch for it in future editions of the newsletter.

MISSION STATEMENT

To preserve and promote the historical interest of White County through our stewardship of its artifacts and the historic sites and education programs and exhibits that we provide for its people

VISION STATEMENT

To make the history of White County come alive for the people of White County

MUSEUMS



Ratcliff Inn
218 E. Main Street

The L. Haas Museum
219 E. Main Street

Robinson-Stewart House
111- S. Main Cross Street

Matsel Cabin
East Robinson Street

Our museums, located in Carmi, Illinois, are open on advertised dates or by appointment only:

CONTACT INFORMATION

- ✉ Mailing Address: White County Historical Society
Mary Smith Fay Genealogy Library
PO Box 121
203 North Church Street
Carmi, Illinois 62821-0121
- ✉ Email: rshous@gmail.com
- ✉ To make an appointment to visit our museums, contact the librarian at the Mary Smith Fay Genealogy Library: call 618-382-8425 or email w.c.h.s-genealogy@hotmail.com
- ✉ If you have an item you are interested in donating to the society, contact Suellen Smith at 618-384-5672
- ✉ Comments, suggestions or contributions for the newsletter can be mailed to the address above or to rshous@gmail.com. Please include "newsletter" in the subject line.

AFFILIATIONS

The Society maintains memberships in the following:
 Southern Illinois Association of Museums (SIAM)
 Illinois Association of Museums (IAM)
 American Association of State and Local History (AASLH)
 Illinois Historic Preservation
 Carmi Chamber of Commerce

MEMBERS OF THE 2017 BOARD:

- | | |
|--------------------------------|------------------------------|
| President – David Brown | Marjorie Brown |
| Vice President - Paula Pierson | Cindy Birk Conley |
| Secretary – Ranelle Hubele | Kathy Fridley |
| Treasurer – Jeff Bohleber | Lecta Hortin |
| Valarie Berekashvili | Barbara Kearney |
| Brock Bolerjack | Past President - Gene Jordan |