

Grundy County Historical Society Newsletter



Volume 2,
Issue 4
October 2014

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Facebook: Museum of the Grundy County Historical Society-Illinois
Museum Hours: Thursday, Friday, Saturday
10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

Group Tours by Appointment—Call for Appointment

The Grundy County Historical Society Newsletter is published four times a year. It is distributed to members of record free of charge via e-mail and USPS. Subscriptions to the Society start at \$20 annually. Applications can be downloaded from our website, <http://www.grundycountyhs.org> or write to us care of the address above.

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MUSEUM NEWS

STEPPING OUT ON THE TOWN



This new exhibit showcases gloves, purses, and shoes, showing how a new outfit meant new shoes, new gloves and purses as well as jewelry—all had to match one's outfit. Yesteryear was a time of elegance and being best dressed and a part of our history. Times changed in the late 50s and 60s bringing about the leisure suit as well as the demise of hats and gloves for all except, perhaps, English royalty.

SEPTEMBER 23RD HISTORICAL SOCIETY MEETING

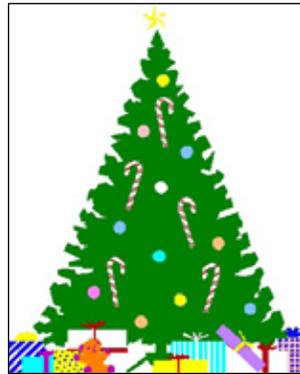
Matt Boucher of Dwight was our speaker. He has worked with drone technology. The drones he uses are propelled by four small blades and look more like children's toys than marvels for farmers. The drones scout crops, locate tile lines, and providing thermal images of livestock—saving farmers a lot of time and money in the process. He spoke on the rules and legislation currently governing drone technology. One example he gave? In 20 minutes, a farmer can scout about 650 acres of farmland, a task that would take several hours on foot and cost \$400 per hour by plane. His enthusiasm was evident and the lecture gave extremely good reasons for using drones.

ADVERTISING AND GIVEAWAY GIMMICKS



We have a new exhibit featuring pens, pencils, rules, ashtrays, matches, kitchen utensils, a board game, and other items all of which highlight past and current businesses located in Grundy County. Perhaps you have some of these same items, or others that we don't have in our collection. Remember, if you have a junk drawer or desk, go through it and DONATE anything you don't plan to use, if appropriate to Grundy County, to the Museum.

FESTIVAL OF TREES NOVEMBER 28-30



Now that summer is behind us, it's Festival of Trees time again. The committee is preparing to get underway October 1st. We will have a wonderful array of trees, wreaths, and centerpieces again this year along with a few **very special surprises!!** Just to peak your interest though, there will be a Disney themed "Frozen" tree decorated by JoEllyn Johnson and Reeves Funeral Home will be donating a beautifully decorated "Garden" tree. Lawrence Advertising will be donating a beautiful Holiday table service for 4 again this year as a raffle item with **Raffle Tickets** available starting September 25th.

We are now looking for decorators as well as volunteers for the days of the event. The Festival will take place November 28 and 29 from 10 a.m. to 7 p.m. and November 30 from 1 p.m. to 3 p.m. If you have some time to assist us please call Sue Cunnea at 815-942-4044 or 815-931-0241. There will also be a sign-up sheet at the October meeting. This will be our 19th year hosting this event and with everyone's help this can be another great Festival of Trees!

GRUNDY COUNTY TRIVIA

Do you know where the "shakey bridge" was located? Or the year of its construction? If not, find the answer elsewhere in this newsletter.

COAL CARVINGS

Another exhibit currently displayed in the museum is carved coal. Yes, coal! Anthracite coal is a very hard and shiny substance. Someone took the time to carve different things out of coal proving that artistic talent can always find an outlet.

MANIKINS

We are happy to have two new manikins brought in by Ken Sereno. We are often unable to display some of our items

because we do not have enough manikins. The male, Steven, is now dressed as a Morris Herald Delivery boy delivering the newspaper to the Martha Slyter home (a replica in the Museum) and the boy, Roger, is delivering a package to the machine shed. Manikins are VERY expensive and we are delighted to have two more in our collection.

MUSEUM UNCHANGING? NOT OURS!

Changes in our Museum exhibits happen frequently! You never know what you may find on exhibit. Do some of our exhibits stay the same? Sure, but we try to make them interactive where possible yet while still protecting our artifacts. Kids are encouraged to touch a strong box, a piece of copper which was transported here during the last ice age, or a telegraph key.

WORD SEARCH

See if you can find all the following words in this Word Search. Good luck!

- AUX SABLE
- BRACEVILLE
- CARBON HILL
- CHANNAHON
- CLARKSON
- COAL CITY
- COLEMAN
- DIAMOND
- DRESDEN
- EILEEN
- ERIENNA
- FELIX
- GARDNER
- GARFIELD
- GEBHARD
- GOODFARM
- GOOSE LAKE
- GREENFIELD
- HIGHLAND
- ILLINOIS CITY
- INTERURBAN MUSEUM
- JUGTOWN
- KANKAKEE CITY
- MAINE
- MASTODON
- MAZON
- MINOOKA
- MORRIS
- NETTLE CREEK
- NORMAN
- SARATOGA
- SOUTH WILMINGTON
- SULPHUR SPRINGS
- VIENNA
- WAUPECAN
- WAUPONSEE

NEW MEMBERS

The following folks have joined their memberships in the Grundy County Historical Society. We thank you for your support of the society and the museum!

From Morris, IL: Joan and Don Bixby
Carla Ferrara
Kris and Patty Houchin
Alfie Rodriguez
Carol Walker
Judie Roth.

From Waterloo, IL: Chris Prombo.

From Coal City, IL: Deborah and Michael Youskevitch

FACEBOOK

Don't forget to visit our Facebook page which is kept up-to-date by Dorothy Cunnea. You can find information on museum news, events, and our programs as well as Grundy County Trivia, local news and events, 100-year Grundy



County flashbacks from the *Morris Daily Herald*, “On This Day in History,” old photographs, event photographs and interesting books from the museum’s collection. Can you help us identify the Mystery Photo? Facebook also has other articles and discussions. If you wish to access our Facebook page, request a friendship from Museum of the Grundy County Historical Society—Illinois. We welcome all comers. As of this printing, we have 302 followers.

LOOKING—ALWAYS LOOKING . . .

. . . for school programs, organizations’ programs, membership books, plat maps, dance cards, playbills, advertising gimmicks, and any other Grundy County memorabilia you may have but no longer wish to keep. Remember us instead and don’t throw them away. Throw them to us along with any information you have regarding the item. Thank you!

RADIO

The Museum is on the radio the first Monday of every month. Listen to “Look Who’s Talking,” WCSJ, 103.1 on your FM dial, from approximately 9:15 a.m. to 9:30 a.m.

UPCOMING DISPLAYS

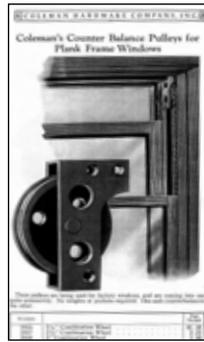
During November through January, in conjunction with this year’s Festival of Trees, there will be a display of dolls from the Doll Menders Doll Hospital. Owner Rosalie Jostes of Channahon has met many interesting dolls in her line of work. Don’t miss this upcoming collection of unusual and unique doll “personalities.”

COLEMAN HARDWARE REVISITED . . .

Continuing our story of the Coleman Hardware Company . . . last time we talked about the historical Coleman Hardware Building. This issue presents several of the products once manufactured at this historic facility. Again, some of this information has come from newspapers of the time as well as copies of Coleman Hardware catalogues, and a Museum document created by Ken Sereno.

THE SASH LOCK

A **sash window** or **hung sash window** is made of one or more movable panels or *sashes* that form a frame to hold panes of glass, which are often separated from other panes by framing or by smaller windows. Although any window with this style of glazing is technically a sash, the term is used almost exclusively to refer to windows where the glazed panels are opened by sliding vertically, or horizontally in a style known as a sliding sash, or sash and case (so called because the weights are concealed in a box case). The sash window is often found in Georgian and Victorian houses, and the classic arrangement has three panes across by two up on each of two sashes, giving a six-over-six panel window, although this is by no means a fixed rule. This type of window provides a maximum face opening for ventilation of one-half the total window area.



Each sash is provided with springs, counterweights, or compliant weather stripping to hold it in place wherever the window is positioned. Many early farmhouses and homes had windows where both the top and bottom halves were moveable: the top could be lowered or the bottom could be lifted up for ventilation. Today, these are not commonly found in new homes.

Each window needed a shade to close off the view from the window for many purposes. Sometimes to block light from entering, sometimes to prevent peeping toms. But for whatever reason, shades were common in homes years ago.

Because Nineteenth Century and early Twentieth Century homes were not built to specific standards, each and every window could be a different size so a custom made shade was a necessity for every window in the home. Where did one go to get shades? One went to Hornsby’s where they cut shades to fit the home’s windows. It was the customer’s responsibility to measure the window openings per supplied instructions and it was Hornsby’s responsibility to have people trained to cut shades correctly.

TOYS

In 1889, the Coleman Company entered into manufacturing a line of about 45 types of small iron toys. There were 22 toy trains, ranging in size from a small ten-cent toy to a more elaborate train, with a full complement of passenger coaches and Pullman sleepers. There was even a miniature model freight train. There was a line of ten different sizes and styles of banks, some with key locks and others with genuine combination locks. There were also a line of toy trucks, six different-sized toy sad irons, and a line of toy cooking utensils including spiders and kettles.

Nowadays, such terms as *sad iron* and *spider*, when referring to cooking utensils, are obsolete and may no longer be understood by most people. To fully understand history, one needs to become acquainted with terms no longer in popular use.

WHAT IS A SAD IRON?

From the Library of Congress’ *The History of Household Technology*: “Women of the time undoubtedly would have



been using a sad iron to press their families’ clothes. One meaning of sad in nineteenth century dictionaries was heavy. Although many of these irons were small, they were very heavy. When sad irons were heated near an open fire or on the stove, their handles became red hot. Women tried wrapping aprons or towels around the handles, but

Built in 1839 crossing Nettle Creek at entrance to Gebhard Woods.

still burned their fingers. Mary F. Potts endeared herself to countless women when she patented a much lighter sad iron with a detachable wooden handle.”

The Coleman company manufactured a line of sad irons that were self-heating. A kerosene heater attached above the sole plate of the iron was ignited to provide the needed heat to press the cloth.

WHAT IS A SPIDER?

When someone tells you they used a spider in the kitchen, they're not talking about an eight-legged creature whose only purpose in the kitchen might be to snare fruit flies.

A spider, also called a skimmer, is a wire cooking utensil that is useful for removing food from a cooking liquid, whether it be hot water or hot oil. Typically, a spider has a shallow wire bowl on a long metal or wooden handle. It is handy



© Goett

for lifting fried foods from cooking oil; removing eggs, potatoes or vegetables from boiling water; skimming foam off simmering broth or soup; or lifting food out of ice water during the blanching process. It is a handy tool that, once you use it, you'll find yourself reaching for it again and again.

Most often today the spider is used in Chinese cooking to remove food items from a wok. It most likely derived its name from its appearance, which resembles a spider web.

Our museum's Indian carving all decked out for this year's Corn Festival. Display was assembled by Debbie Steffes and Brenda Larson. Thanks, Debbie and Brenda!



HELP YOUR MUSEUM!!!

We are working hard to increase our collection of Native American artifacts and information, especially anything dealing with Shabbona. If you have any documentation that we could copy or know of someone who has artifacts that we could display either permanently or on loan, please tell them of the Museum's interest. We have recently received a copy of the document giving 20 acres of land to Chief Shabbona in perpetuity in Grundy County. This makes Grundy County the only county in the State of Illinois which has a Native American reservation.

Grundy County



Historical Society

Grundy County Historical Society
and Museum
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Morris, IL 60450

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