

# ECHOES OF CEDARVILLE

**JULY 2019**

*Cedarville Area Historical Society*



## *Edler—Waelti Accordion Duo July 16*

Cedarville's Bobbie Edler and John Waelti from Monroe will make a return trip to the Cedarville Museum stage on Tuesday evening, July 16.

Missing the 2018 scheduled trip because of an accident, the couple were last heard in the museum on May 12, 2015.

Although the duo specializes in European folk music, their selections are widely diversified.

The 7:30 p.m. program will be the third in this year's summer live music schedule. The cost is \$10 per person with complimentary refreshments served during the social hour after the performance.

For reservations call Jim Bade, CAHS society president at 815-563-4485.

A simple elevator to the second floor LeRoy Wilson Theater is available for visitors who are handicapped.



*Bobbie Edler  
and John  
Waelti in previ-  
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July 16 pro-  
gram.*

**Cedarville Teacher, Principal of 50's Dies;  
Obituary, Special Article on Pages 2 and 3**



# Former Cedarville Principal Remembers Village

*(This month's mail brought the editor a delightful letter from Don Morris, Cedarville teacher and principal from 1956 to 1960. I am sure Don, now living in Desert Hills, Arizona, would not mind my sharing parts of it with newsletter readers. Jim Bade)*

Though born in Freeport in 1932, Cedarville has always seemed to have a special place in my heart with so many good memories, particularly those four years I served as a teacher, school principal and volunteer fireman.

Though I attended Freeport's Lincoln School during many of my early school years, I always had an interest in Cedarville and its history. My grandfather James T. Morris, Sr., worked most of his life for Henney Motor Co., which had its early roots in Cedarville. And my father James T. Morris Jr., had many dear Cedarville friends when he worked at Henney's for several years before he became manager and instructor at the old Hillcrest Airport. Unfortunately he was killed in Georgia in 1943 in a U.S. army air force plane

In my high school years, Raymond Kerr and I spent a lot of time in Cedarville visiting friends, particularly his future wife Donna Fry, daughter of then Cedarville Mayor Virgil Fry. We were also there for many special events when I sang bass in an old time quartet at music festivals on the stage of the Community House. Back then I had an old 1931 Ford coupe and we often drove to the village to enjoy the food and activities during Old Settlers Days and other community holiday celebrations. I could name other persons, but Clyde Kaiser really had a key influence on my life.

Yet, in those late 1940s and early 50s, little did I know that my wife, Patricia, and I would later come to love Cedarville even more as our home. We had known Cedarville School Principal Clifford Crone and his wife, Ireta Dyslin Crone, from our Freeport years. (Her folks owned the little grocery store

across the street from Lincoln School where I went to get candy as a kid.) When Cliff became assistant superintendent of Freeport (area) Schools in 1956, he encouraged me to apply for the position he was leaving. I did and became teacher and principal of Cedarville School with only one year's experience teaching sixth grade in Indiana. (My new job included football, basketball and baseball coach, assistant custodian and snow shoveler when custodian Chris Bertram was "overloaded". Thus, I was kind of a "man for all seasons.")

*This article is a reprint of an article written by Don Morris for the December, 2012, Cedarville Area Historical Society newsletter. That year was the last time Don and his wife, Patricia, visited the village. The article was written at the request of the president of the historical society.*

Moving from Indiana, we pulled our 40 foot long house trailer up the steep hill and I parked it in the school yard for a few days. We always wondered what Cedarville folks thought when they looked up the street and saw a house trailer sitting there. Fortunately that location was only for a few days until Kenneth Knowlton was kind enough to let us put our trailer on his property. It was handy there, but we later sold the trailer and had it moved out of the woods and we moved into the old two story brick house next to the Jane Addams home.

Now, as for those four school years, I must say I loved them all, yes all of those wonderful kids I had the privilege of teaching. Yes, loved them but sometimes didn't enjoy teaching some of them as much as others. But then I remembered that I wasn't always a

perfectly lovable student either. In fact, in Miss Miriam Parriott's first grade class at Lincoln School, I sat behind a girl with long beautiful braided pig-tails. I didn't actually pull on them, but I loved to just touch them. Miss Parriott warned me not to touch them anymore, but I seemed to forget that warning. When she saw me do it again, she didn't say a word but just came to my desk, picked me up by one arm and spanked me with her other arm. Fast forward 22 years to the day I introduced Miss Parriott (now Mrs. Conner) as the Cedarville School principal who replaced me when my wife and I moved to Arizona. I kidded with my students that if they didn't behave, she would paddle them too!

During the summers of 1959 and 60 I was at the University of Wisconsin earning my masters degree. My mother, Credella Grant, who lived across the street from the Methodist Church and next door to Margaret Frank, took care of our three little girls, so Pat could go to Madison for a few days and we could swim, canoe and visit museums.

We sure loved our old house, loved Cedarville and still do today. But in 1960 we had another very interesting job opportunity with the Scottsdale, Arizona, schools. I returned to Cedarville for another school year, finished my masters degree at Madison and reluctantly said goodbye to Cedarville. We loaded our old Ford station wagon and a trailer with our belongings and drove non-stop to Arizona, arriving just in time for the pre-school orientation program before meeting my new fifth grade students.

So many good memories of Cedarville have stayed in our hearts and thus we've often re-visited the village. Unfortunately we could not make it this year. We must also plead guilty to helping deplete Cedarville of other good citizens who have moved to Arizona: Ray and Donna Fry Kerr, the Gene Ramsdell family, Kenneth Rice. Come visit us in the winter and enjoy our sunny days, but in the summer it is very, very hot. But in the end, appreciate a small village like Cedarville with all its wonderful roots and history as a stable community.

## Donald Morris, 86, Dies in Arizona

Donald Nelson Morris, 86, principal, teacher and coach at Cedarville School from 1956 until 1960 died June 17, 2019, in Desert Hills, Arizona. Complications of Alzheimer's disease were the cause of death.

He is survived by Patricia, his wife of 67 years, and four children, 19 grandchildren and six great grandchildren.



*Donald Morris  
In 1956*

Don had an extensive educational career. Attending several colleges and universities, he had a bachelors degree in history, a masters degree in educational administration and supervision and a doctorate in elementary education. He was known as a teacher, principal, professor, author and speaker.





*What a glorious spread of food!*



*More than 30 members of the Phillips family from around the country gathered for lunch and a tour of the Cedarville Museum on Saturday, June 22. There were too many for CAHS board member Lisa Goodwin to get the names of everyone she photographed so just enjoy the hectic activity of the three hour get-together. Early members of the family settled the Damascus area.*



*Organizer Bart Macomber outlines day's activities.*



## *Now Here's a Little History on History*

*In the later part of the last century, Cedarville had a pretty good local historian by the name of Clyde Kaiser. Before he died he left the historical society with copies of some of the information he had gathered over the years. Following is a condensation of a talk he made in 1980 before a local senior citizens group.*

In 1930 or a few years before:

There was no natural gas line to supply us with heat for our home. Most homes were heated by coal furnaces and on winter mornings dark coal smoke rose from the village chimneys. The coal storage bins were either a bin in the house basement or from an outside coal shed. The coal had usually been purchased from the Meyers Brothers coal yard at Scioto Mills or Red Oak or from Hillmer's or Zartman's or Patterson's in Freeport. It was usually Illinois soft coal from southern Illinois and cost \$5 or \$6 per ton.

There was no Cedarville water system to supply us with water in abundance at the turn of the faucet. A central water supply did not come until about 1945—1950.

The village homes had their own wells with an outside pump which was hand operated. Some homes did not have their own wells but shared one with their neighbors. Some were drilled wells; other were shallow and hand dug. Few wells had tested water and varying degrees of contamination could

degrees of contamination could be found. There was at least one open well with a wooden frame with wooden windlass and a bucket which was lowered. (Located at the Anna Sills residence in front of the house and close to the sidewalk at 60 N. Stephenson (where Dan and Bobbie Edler now live). The cistern pump supplied the soft water from rain water caught from the roof of the house. This shallow water pump often was in the kitchen. Water supply was dependent on rainfall.

The outhouse or privy was a common sight and usually screened in the summer and fall by a thick planting of hollyhock and located near to the alley where it was easy prey at Halloween time for a handy turnover.

The barns that lined both sides of the alley housed the driving horse or team and sometimes a cow that was taken to an out-or-town pasture at night and in the morning during late spring, summer and early fall by a boy for at the most 25 cents per week. These barns were gradually disappearing and being replaced by garages to house the increasing number of cars.

The ice box was literally a box with a compartment that held a chunk of ice. As the size of that chunk diminished so did its cooling power. The ice was usually bought at Strohm's ice house located by the store at the northeast corner of Cherry and Mill streets. By the 1930s

Some persons with autos and whorled in Freeport would get "artificial" ice made by an ammonia refrigeration process at the Balles ice house just north of the Vanburen bridge in Freeport, but this was more costly.

As of this date (1980) the ice box is a collector item for antique collectors. Anyone under the age of 40 cannot imagine a house without its refrigerator and



*Clyde Kaiser*

deep freeze, frozen ice cubes and food storage for unlimited periods of time. The ice harvest on the frozen creek with its cutting, loading and packing in the ice house with sawdust is interesting but almost unbelievable to the young folks of 1980.

Radio was in its infancy. In 1930AC radios with built in speakers were just becoming available, quickly replacing the

wet cell battery operated head phone sets. Television was still 20 years in the future for the average household.

Early radio was a wonder. It almost required an engineer to handle the knobs and the dials. Broadcasting stations were usually 100 watt power. Atmospheric conditions determined the quality of reception. Late night programs often came from distant places while nearby stations might not be received. Locally here, a station from Shreveport, La., with a Colonel Henderson was picked up quite often. His nightly tirade against chain stores (Chain stores were just appearing and were considered dangerous to the economy) found many listeners.

The WLS Barn Dance was popular. The song "It Ain't Gonna Rain No More" was a hit and everyone who had a buck or two bought a ukulele. Dance bands such as Coon Sander's Orchestra, Wayne King, the Aragon Ballroom, the Trianon Ballroom, Ted Weems, Art Kassel were the bands and places where programs were heard from. WLW, Cincinnati, had "Moon River Time" at 11:45 p.m.

Sports became alive and the world series came into the households. Graham McNamee, announcer, made an exciting and breathtaking rapid fire description. Floyd Gibbons was a popular news announcer and Gabriel Heater came on each evening with his opener "There's good news tonight." H. V. Kaltenborn later became an evening household visitor via radio. *(Turn to the next page)*

In the 1930's the listening audience of radio was introduced to the comedy team of Freeman and Gosden who appeared as Sam and Henry on WGN, Chicago. This team evolved into the characters of "Amos and Andy" who rose to national notoriety. This series first was a fifteen minute show, five nights a week. Its listening audience exceeded any previously broadcast or stage production. To illustrate, when Amos and his wife Ruby were expecting their first child, two million letters were received from listeners suggesting a name. When Madame Queen, Andy's girl friend, brought a breach of promise suit against Andy, the events were so tense and yet so hilarious that a Freeport theater, The Lindo, according to the projectionist there, followed the pattern of many theaters and shut down the feature picture for 15 minutes and piped in radio's Amos and Andy. Otherwise, attendance would have suffered.

In later years radio brought on Fibber McGee and Molly, Edgar Bergen and his dummy Charlie McCarthy, Mortimer Snerd, The Green Hornet, The Lone Ranger and many others. Audiences of the 1980's are re-hearing these classics over radio again for many were recorded and preserved.

A new highway was being built from the Wisconsin state line through Cedarville to Freeport. The bridge across Cedar Creek by the bluffs was being built in 1927. The pavement was laid through Cedarville in 1928. Now in 1980, the

1927 bridge is being replaced by a longer, wider and more modern structure.

The 1930 era is remembered well by those who are *(in 1980)* in the 60 year or older age bracket. It was the time of the Great Depression too. Young people of today *(1980)* say "Why didn't you have money during the Depression?" To answer that just talk to the people of the age bracket just mentioned and they'll talk of unemployment, bank failures, bread lines and empty pocketbooks. Social Security was still in the future and Roosevelt's New Deal was still a dream.

**Cedarville Area Historical Society**  
**P. O. Box 336, Cedarville, IL 61013**  
**Phone: 815-563-4202**

**Web site**  
**[www.cedarvilleareahistoricalociety.org](http://www.cedarvilleareahistoricalociety.org)**

**E-mail**  
**[info@cedarvilleareahistoricalociety.org](mailto:info@cedarvilleareahistoricalociety.org)**

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