

ECHOES OF CEDARVILLE

APRIL 2013

Cedarville Area Historical Society



\$2000 in Memorials, Bequest to CAHS



The Cedarville Area Historical Society this month was the beneficiary of more than \$2,000 as a result of memorial gifts and a will bequest associated with the recent deaths of two society members.

Individual friends and relatives of Carolyn Heck McKenna Angle contributed \$1,035 to the historical society in her memory. Mrs. Angle, the wife of Bill Angle, died February 4 at the age of 87 at her rural Dakota, Il., home.

The gifts followed a March 2 memorial service in the Dakota Community Presbyterian Church.



Karl Erickson, 101, died December 13, 2012, in Freeport. In his will he directed that \$1,000 be given to the historical society. Shortly before his death, Mr. Erickson contributed \$20,000 toward the \$36,000 museum elevator.

Mr. Erickson lived on the Cedarville farm once owned by his parents before moving to Freeport in 1997. His wife of 62 years, Arlene, died in 1990. The couple had no children.

Clyde Kaiser Looks Way, Way Back

(Thirty three years ago the late Clyde Kaiser, a lover of Cedarville history and a great story teller, spoke before members of Cedarville's Top of the Hill Club, an informal collection of "senior citizens." His topic was simple: Memories of the 1930s in Cedarville, and by extension, the rest of the United States. Or as he put it: "A look at things that old folks remember and that young folks don't believe could have happened." I think his October 1, 1980, observations are worth revisiting. Jim Bade, editor.)

Fifty years ago there was no natural gas line in Cedarville to supply us with heat for our home. Most homes were heated by coal furnaces and on winter mornings dark smoke rose from village chimneys. The coal was stored either in a bin in the house basement or in an outside coal shed. The coal had been purchased from the Meyers Brothers coal yard in Scioto Mills or at Red Oak or from Hillmer's or Zartman's or Paterson's in Freeport. It was usually Illinois soft coal from the southern part of the state. It 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 the late 1940s.)

Many village homes had their own wells with an outside pump which was hand operated. Some homes did not have their

own wells but shared with their neighbors. Some were drilled wells, others were shallow and hand dug. Few wells had tested water and varying degrees of contamination could be found. There was at least one open well with a wooden frame with a wooden windlass and a bucket which was lowered and brought up by rope filled with water.



Clyde Kaiser

A cistern pump supplied the soft water from rain water caught from the roof of the house. This shallow water pump was often in the kitchen. Water supply was dependent upon rainfall.

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

(For graphic descriptions of Cedarville privy escapades, read the Peggy Schoonhoven articles in recent issues of the historical society newsletter or the collected stories of the late LeRoy Wilson, available through the historical society. Editor)

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



The left side of this structure on Mill and Cherry streets is one of the several remaining old barns in the village that once were very common.

The ice box was literally a box with a compartment that held a chunk of ice. *(25, 50 or 75 pounds. Editor)* 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 who worked in Freeport would get "artificial" ice made by the ammonia refrigeration process at Balles ice house just north of the Van Buren bridge in Freeport, but this was more costly.

As of this date (1980), the ice box is a desirable collector's item. Anyone under the age of 40 cannot imagine a house without its refrigerator and deep freeze, frozen ice cubes and food storage for unlimited periods of time. The ice harvest on frozen Cedar Creek with its cutting, loading and packing with a sawdust covering in the ice house is an interesting but almost unbelievable concept to the young folks of 1980. *(Turn to page 4)*



Undated photo of Strohm's store on the northeast corner of Mill and Cherry streets. This is a Cherry street view. A large room for dances and meetings was on the second floor.

(Continued from page 3)

Radio was in its infancy. In 1930 AC 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, Louisiana, with a Colonel Henderson was picked up quite often. His nightly tirade against chain stores found many sympathetic listeners. (Chain stores were just appearing and were considered by some people as dangerous to the economy and as the sellers of inferior products.)

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, Ted Weems and Art Kassel were the bands of choice and they broadcast from places such as the Aragon and Trianon ballrooms in Chicago. WLW in Cincinnati had "Moon River Time" at 11:45 p.m. and this program is still on in 1980.

Sports became alive and the world series came into households. The announcer Graham McNamee gave an exciting and breathtaking rapid fire description of events. Floyd Gibbons was a popular news announcer and Gabriel Heater came on each evening with his opener, "There's good news to-night." H. V. Kaltenborn later became an evening household visitor via radio.

In the 1930s, the 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 the Lindo Theater in Freeport, according to the projectionist, followed the pattern of many theatres 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 dummies Charlie McCarthy and Mortimer Snerd, The Green Hornet, The Lone Ranger and many others. Audiences of the 1980s are re-hearing these classics over radio again because many of the programs were recorded and are being re-broadcast. (*Fibber McGee and Molly, whose real names were Jim and Marion Jordan, lived in Des Plaines, Il. Editor*)

A new highway was being built in 1927 that would stretch from the Wisconsin state line through Cedarville south to Van Buren Road in Freeport. (*At that time it was known as Highway 74; now it is Highway 26. Editor*) Construction started on the bridge across Cedar Creek by the bluffs. No longer would it be ne-
(Turn to page 6)



Cars of the late 1920s and 1930s faced daunting winter obstacles.

(From page 5)

cessary to drive down Cedarville's Mill street and past the Addams property to continue north. The new bridge was completed in 1928 and the pavement south of it was laid the same year. Now — in 1980 — the 1928 bridge is being replaced by a longer, wider and more modern structure.

The 1930 era is remembered well by those who are in the 60 year or older age



bracket. It was the time of the Great Depression too. Young people of today say, "Why didn't you have money during the Depression?" To answer that, just talk to the age group I first mentioned. 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.

Today (1980) it is transistors, space travel, moonwalks, computers. Tomorrow — well, you guess it.



Construction of iron bridge over Cedar Creek July 4, 1927: Merton Memler photos

Gordon Dammann, Don and Vickie Franz Open CAHS Programs

Gordon Dammann and the husband and wife team of Don and Vickie Franz will open the Cedarville Area Historical Society 2013 evening program series with Civil War topics.

Dammann's Tuesday, May 14, talk will focus on the 1862 Battle of Antietam. On Tuesday, June 25, the Franz couple will relate the experiences of the common Civil War soldier and play several war tunes on period instruments.

Both programs will be at 7:30 p.m. in the museum's second floor LeRoy Wilson Theater. An elevator is available for handicapped visitors. Admission is \$2 for CAHS members; \$3 for others.

Dammann, who recently retired after 40 years as a Lena dentist, has numerous credentials as a Civil War authority. He has written several books, lectured extensively and is founder of the Civil War Museum of Medicine in Frederick, Md. He is also a licensed guide at the Antietam battlefield.

During his power point presentation, the audience will be given a guided tour of the one day battle that resulted in 23,000 casualties. The advent of battlefield medicine, especially medical evacuation, will be highlighted.

Don and Vickie Franz of Freeport have appeared at numerous meetings over the past several years. They recently presented a four day program at Midway Village in Rockford. They spoke at the Cedarville Museum in the summer of 2008.

For the past several years numerous of their Civil War artifacts have been on display at the museum as part of the Cedarville4 Civil War exhibit.

The June program will feature a display of many more of the artifacts in their collection.

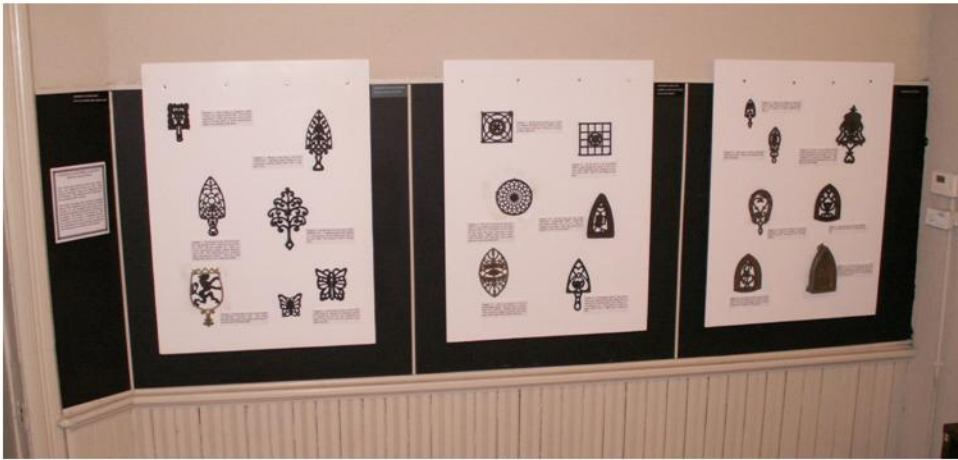
Refreshments will follow the programs.

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

Web site
www.cedarvilleareahistoricalsociety.org
E-mail
info@cedarvilleareahistoricalsociety.org
Also on Facebook

Jim Bade, President
Narcissa Engle, Vice President
Galen Bertram, Treasurer
Sharon Barmore, Secretary
Steve Myers, director
Dale Priewe, director
Caroi Meyers, director
Diane Hagemann, director
Diane Tepper, director

The society is recognized as a non-profit organization by Illinois and the U.S. government and has been designated as eligible for tax deductible gifts under IRS tax code regulation 501 (c) (3).



Twenty trivets become first of new museum exhibits for 2013

Three New Exhibits to Greet Visitors

When the Cedarville Museum doors open to start the 2013 six month season on Saturday afternoon, May 4, three new exhibits will have been completed over the winter months.

The first, pictured above, consists of twenty trivets that are part of the historical society's recently acquired collection. They were the gift of Mrs. Anita Lausch, formerly of Cedarville. They were collected by her late husband.

For those not familiar with trivets, they are the are stands that were used with nineteenth century and early twentieth century pressing irons. In later years they were manufactured simply as decorations. The historical society collection and exhibit contains examples of both kinds.

Trivets had anywhere from three to six "legs" that kept the hot irons a half inch to an inch above a horizontal surface when not being used. Most functional trivets were of cast iron although some were of brass or nickel-plated. Small trivets were made for toy pressing irons used by children. Many trivets contained advertising of the manufacturer.

Identification of the trivets was done by Mrs. Margaret Lynn Rosack of Winter Springs, Fl., author of "The Expanded A to Z Guide to Collecting Trivets", one of the premier books on trivets.

The other new exhibits will feature more than a dozen pieces of wearing apparel from the museum collection and a revisit to Scioto Mill's Blue Room saloon, made famous by the late Johnny Henke.