

ECHOES OF CEDARVILLE AUGUST 2012

Cedarville Area Historical Society



Work Starts on Museum Elevator

Construction of a shaft to house the elevator in the Cedarville Museum started July 27. When completed, the lift will make all museum services and exhibits accessible to every museum visitor regardless of physical abilities.

The current schedule calls for the \$36,000 project to be completed by the end of September. The out-of-pocket cost to the Cedarville Area Historical

Society will be \$32,000 with \$4,000 being covered by volunteer labor of society members..

The \$32,000 was raised through membership contributions and a \$2,200 grant from the Cedarville Lions Club. An early \$20,000 contribution from an historical society member was the catalyst that enabled the money to be raised in about a month.

Banner Construction Company of Freeport was chosen as the lead contractor for the shaft between the first and second floors of the museum. Nu-Trend Accessibility Systems of Moline, Il., will supply and install the actual lift. Christopher Eye and Associates, Freeport, are the project architects. Steve Myers, CAHS board member, will coordinate the work of historical society volunteers.

The museum's two first floor rooms house the exhibits. The second floor has the research library, the 84-seat LeRoy Wilson Theater and the artifact storage room. The lift will open into the theater.



Steve Myers temporarily removes one of history murals during elevator construction.

Jane Addams Festival September 22

The Cedarville Area Historical Society will stage the ninth annual Jane Addams Festival Saturday, September 22. This year's event marks the 152nd birthday of the Nobel Peace Prize winner and founder of Chicago's Hull-House who was born in Cedarville.

The day's events will include a 5K run or walk on the Jane Addams Trail west of Cedarville with trophies and medals in fourteen categories plus games for all ages, a picnic lunch, festival t-shirts and a free museum tour.

All events except the run or walk will take place at the Cedarville Museum on top of the Second Street hill west of Mill Street.

The 5K run or walk will start at 9:30 a.m. at the Wes Block Trail Head south of US Rt. 20 bypass and end at Cedarville Road with awards to be presented approximately at 11 a.m. at the museum. Pre-registration is \$15; registration at 8:30 a.m. on race/walk day is \$18. All registrants will receive a festival t-shirt. Registration forms will be available in August at the normal distribution points of the historical society newsletter, at the Cedarville Museum, through the mail and in the September CAHS newsletter.

There will be fourteen age and gender groups in the 5K run. The overall fastest male and female will receive a trophy.

First, second and third place finishers in the fourteen groups will receive medals.

The games for all ages will start at 11 a.m. at the museum. There is no registration or cost.

The \$2 picnic lunch, consisting of a hot dog on a bun, chips, lemonade or ice tea and a dessert will also be available at 11 a.m.. The free tour of the museum will be available throughout the festival.

CAHS President In Local Civil War Talk September 18

Jim Bade, president of the Cedarville Area Historical Society, on Tuesday, September 18, will present highlights of the Civil War exploits of the 46th Illinois Infantry Regiment, "the Stephenson County regiment."

The 7:30 p.m. talk will be at the Cedarville Museum. Admission is \$2 for historical society members and \$3 for non-members. Free refreshments will follow the talk.

More than 50 per cent of the original 1,000 members of the regiment were from Stephenson County and a high percentage were from the Cedarville area. Bloody Shiloh was their major battle.



*Andrew, son,
on bass*



*Carl and his
magic fingers
kept the pro-
gram lively.*

*Brother
Clyde is a
guitar magi-
cian.*

*The quartet
proved learn-
ing music
history can
be fun*



*Dianna,
charming
wife and vo-
calist*



Remember the Sixties? Just Ask Rick Noble

(Rick Noble is back, way back. The former Cedarville resident remembers growing up in the village as a student in the 1960s.)

The knife whizzed by me and struck the tree with a *thwup*. Its impact twanged an arpeggio of vibration through its carved bone handle. Mike Ottenhausen was practicing knife throwing before we walked to Cedarville School and testing several from his collection for the best balance. Mike was the Huckleberry Finn of our neighborhood and not one to be constrained by social conventions. Besides being the only fourth grader with a knife collection, he also kept pigeons, handled snakes and once tried to fly by jumping off a shed clutching a half-sheet of plywood. His restless imagination and reckless spontaneity would make him a candidate for fidget-neutralizing medication nowadays, but back then he was merely considered “spirited.”

The yarns he spun were both fanciful and intricate, requiring quick thinking and fine embroidery. Following an unexplained absence at school one day, I asked him where he’d been. His eyes grew wide as he told me he’d been kidnapped by gypsies who intended on selling him into white slavery. The imagery as to what happened, where it happened, and detailed descriptions of the perpetrators made the story almost plausible. Then again, his escape closely resembled last week’s episode of *Bonanza* and his trek back to town in the time allotted needed some work. I wasn’t offended; I knew he was just trying it out on me first.

So naturally on November 22, 1963, Mike happened to be the only student who went home for lunch at noontime. And he came back with his most cockamamie story to date: The President of the United States had just been shot. There were no radios, TVs or other means of connecting the school to the outside world except for the single phone in Mrs. Conner’s basement office and if she was unavailable, no one else would dare pick up.

I admit I was surprised by how uncharacteristically ill conceived this tale was and his insistence at unabashedly repeating it to grownups. The other kids all chanted “liar, liar, pants on fire” and the teachers promised a protracted stint in the cloak room if he didn’t knock it off. At last he was ordered to lay his head down on his desk, arms folded over top, and told, “Just you think about it, Mister.” I watched his shoulders heave as he stifled a sob.



Rick Noble, 14, with his 1960s version of the shaggy Frisch-style haircut

When confirmation of the news eventually broke from a more reliable source, there were no apologies offered. Everybody was in shock. The rigid structure that was our afternoon school routine simply evaporated and we all wandered home in a daze and huddled around our tiny black-and-white television sets, waiting for someone in authority to make sense of it all. But, no one did. Professional newscasters took long pauses and had to clear their throats of emotion when recounting the events. A blur of days later, I saw my normally unflappable mother’s eyes fill with tears as we witnessed John-John’s final salute to his father’s horse drawn casket on this, his third birthday. In a flash, Camelot had vanished and along with it, our innocence.

Up until that moment, my whole life had revolved around my family, friends and school. This was the first intrusion by events outside of Cedarville. The second would come seventy-seven days later

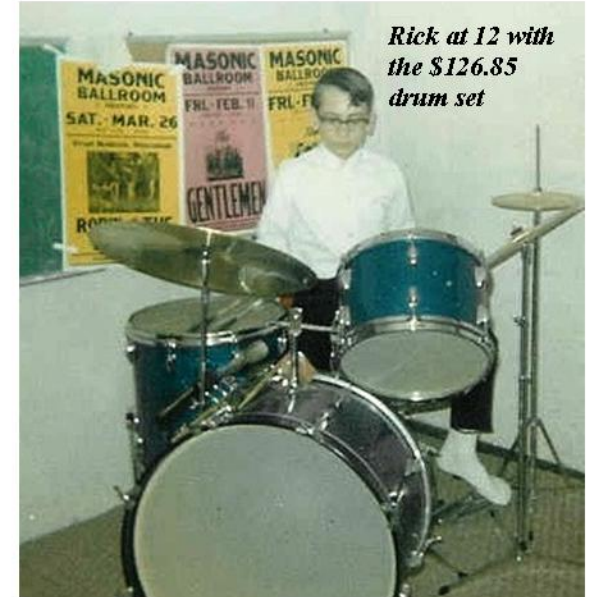
when a group of musicians from England was scheduled to invade America amidst a wave of hype. We were all anxious and weary and looking for a little distraction, so we can be forgiven our exuberance. It’s odd how memories get sorted, but when I recollect those days, three things meld together in my mind: John F. Kennedy, the Beatles, and accordions.

The Beatles’ performance on the *Ed Sullivan Show* did to accordions what JFK’s hatless appearance at his inaugural did to fedoras — seemingly killed them overnight. Tons of us kids were taking accordion lessons in the early ’60s and I was eager to join the ranks of ham-fisted youngsters trying to knock out *Lady of Spain* just like Myron Floren on *The Lawrence Welk Show*. Grandpa Fink had scrounged up an old one, barnacled in garish mother-of-pearl inlays and with a diamond design on the bellows that grew and shrank as it wheezed. But on a cold Sunday night in February, four nattily-dressed Brits showed up on TV playing a parent friendly version of rock and roll and accordions were forever relegated to the dustbin of history. In their stead were electric guitars and drums along with the sudden possibility, no matter how improbable, of being mobbed by screaming teenaged girls. At nine-years-old I cared little about such matters, but even I suspected this had never happened to Mr. Floren.

My brother begged Mom for guitar lessons until she finally relented on the condition that he’d stop playing with matches. She may have been a soft touch, though. After all, Mom had gotten a full ride scholarship to Aquin High School as the piano accompanist for the choir. Music was in our blood. So once a week Mom would haul him to Collier’s Music Store in Freeport lugging his secondhand guitar with its warped neck and strings so far from the fretboard they made his fingers bleed. But he kept on practicing *Billy Boy* over and over to the point that, besides Brylcreem commercials (A little dab’ll do ya.) they’re the only lyrics I remember from that era.

I had my sights set on a sparkle blue drum set

from the Spiegel catalog. Mom was hoping to avoid the \$126.85 price tag by redeeming a drawer full of S&H Green Stamps for a chintzy beginner’s set featured in the latest Ideabook. Hours of licking and pasting, however, yielded only enough books for three brass fruit-shaped Jell-O molds that ultimately wound up on our kitchen wall where they hung unmolested and undusted until the Ford Administration. I reminded Mom she was *paying* for her favorite son’s guitar lessons while I was getting drum lessons through the school band program *for free* and sealed the deal with a kid’s universal gripe, “It’s not fair.” I’ll never forget the day my drum set arrived and I bet Mom never did either. Drums may be the only instrument no parent would nag you into practicing.



Rick at 12 with the \$126.85 drum set

All of us guys started growing our hair out. Not styled long hair with a part down the middle, like the Beatles, but like a short haircut gone to seed. Within a year or two, class photos showed a progression of school boys who went from crew cuts and butch waxed flattops to shaggy hairdos with an identical giant swoop in front, sort of like Frisch’s Big Boy mascot, but without the fashion sense.

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Music was portable and everywhere. Every kid had a transistor radio, a car radio and, if they were especially groovy, an 8-track tape player. Radio manufacturers could have saved a lot of money on tuners because we were all locked onto one station, WLS, the Big 89 in Chicago. (Sunday! Sunday! Sunday! At smoking' US 30 drag strip . . .)

America was still considered a cultural melting pot back then, but our music was not. It was a stew. Each region had its own sound — Southern rock, Motown, Chicago brass, California psychedelic — all served up alongside white bread lounge lizard ballads, to make them more palatable to our folks. Pioneer rock jock Larry Lujack spun classics like the Doors' *Light My Fire*, followed by Aretha's *Respect* and Frank Sinatra's *Somethin' Stupid* all in one set. It was a crazy mixture of genres and styles and sounds propelled entirely by sheer adolescent curiosity and a driving backbeat.



There were no warning labels on records, no angry young millionaires tarted up in Salvation Army drag and no digital studio magic. Talent talked and looks . . . well, most of our new idols had unpredictable hygiene and smiles in sore need of orthodontia — much like the rest of us. Looks walked. Pop music wasn't a homogenized corporate commodity. It was a way to share your angst and nervous energy with like-minded teens everywhere. It may never happen again.



From left: Greg Johnson, Rick Nichol, Mike Noble, Greg Adams in 1964 or 65

My brother had become quite an accomplished lead guitar player in groups like *The Noblemenn*, *The Nonchalants* and *The Frost*. Girls loved him. My career as a drummer, on the other hand, had stalled because of my unfortunate tendency to speed up the tempo which I compensated for by playing even louder. After a few years, even I couldn't stand my playing. So I swallowed my pride and asked my brother to teach me guitar. Twenty minutes and a couple of wretched buzzing chords later, he proclaimed "Jeez, you're too stupid to ever learn." And he yanked his cherry mahogany Les Paul Jr. from my clumsy hands. Of course the great thing about being insulted by your cooler older brother is that after thirty-five or forty years, you pretty much get over it.

Upon turning fifty, I decided my threshold for embarrassment was sufficiently high to take up the guitar again. I'm glad I did. It takes me on sojourns back to those carefree days of my youth when the music seemed more heartfelt and less contrived. Three chords and a capo later and I'm strumming *Fire and Rain*, reliving drowsy summer afternoons listening to the Silver Dollar Survey on WLS in my 1963 VW Beetle with the peace sign in the window. And every now and then I skip into the future where I'm sitting around a campfire with my eventual, amazingly well-behaved grandkids, picking under the stars, unplugged from the world, surrounded by innocents. I couldn't do that with an accordion.



Bart Macomber, Nathan Hyland, Bob LaMay and Jerry Hyland — "Cadence"



Refreshments arranged by CAHS board member Carol Meyers

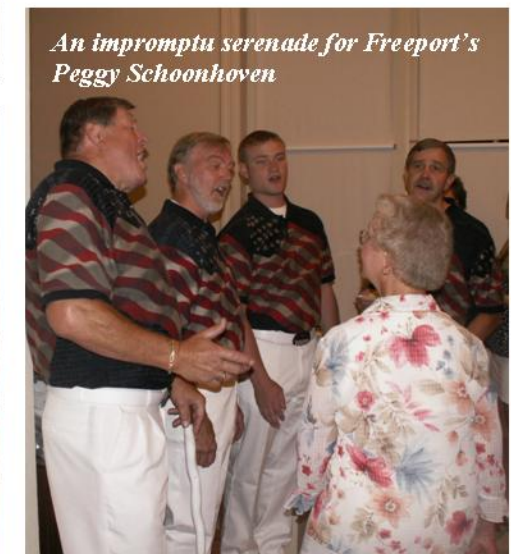


Congratulations on a great show!

Another full house greeted the barbershop quartet "Cadence" when it performed in the Cedarville Museum July 24. The music didn't stop after the scheduled program. As the audience spilled into the research center for refreshments, the quartet delighted the eaters with more than a half dozen familiar melodies that were not included earlier in the night.



Cedarville's Steve Glaze adds a fifth voice



An impromptu serenade for Freeport's Peggy Schoonhoven



“Styles Junction” will perform Tuesday evening, August 21, in the final program of the three part series featuring gospel, barbershop and country music and the history of each genre. All tickets have been sold for the series and none will be available at the door.

This ‘n That

On Saturday, July 14, members of CAHS helped Barkau Motors celebrate the 60th anniversary of their business by cooking free-to-the public hamburgers and hot dogs at the company’s north Cedarville location. Garnishes, a soft drink, water and potato chips were also furnished. Good eating, great fun!

Cook-masters and servers were Don Heilman, Dale Priewe, Harlan and Judy Corrie, Bonnie Bade and Carol Meyers.

DVD recordings of the gospel and the barbershop programs and the Jane Adams presentation by Suzy Beggins are available by contacting the historical society. Cost is \$10 each plus \$2 if mailed.

Coming soon in the newsletter: The Cedarville memories of members Peggy Schoonhoven and Nelson Ottenhausen

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