

GAZETTE

A family publication dedicated to our unique heritage

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Landmark Showcase

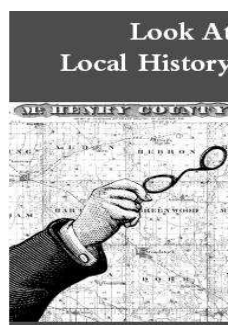
The McHenry County Historic Preservation Commission (HPC) applauds preservation efforts and encourages McHenry County residents to take pride in the accomplishments of the past. We strive to promote our historic heritage through protection and education and to date, the HPC has recognized 18 significant sites and structures across the county with more to come! We call these our McHenry County Landmarks. McHenry County is dotted with pioneer cemeteries and each one of them has a particular story. The Carr-Harrison cemetery is no exception.

The Carr-Harrison Cemetery



Joseph Carr purchased land that encompassed the western half of the cemetery in 1837. In 1842 neighbor John Harrison purchased land that included the eastern half. It was highly unusual for adjoining landowners to develop separate but neighboring cemeteries. Typically, when a first death occurred in an area, a suitable piece of land was set aside as a burying ground. This land would serve the neighborhood thereafter. Both the Carr and Harrison families were large and this may have been the reason for the separate burying grounds. It was a grim fact that a large family could easily fill a small cemetery given the high mortality rate of the times.

Like so many neighboring rural families, the Carrs and Harrisons eventually joined in marriage in 1860 and the two small family cemeteries became one. The ground is still in use and tended by both families 160 years later.



The County Board and several communities around the county have once more declared the month of May the *Look at Local History Month*. All manner of displays, programs and activities are planned around town and there is something going on just about every day! Here is a sampling of the many things offered in May:

On Sunday, May 7th at 2:00 p.m. the McHenry County Historical Society Museum presents a program on women's fashions and museum dolls entitled *Me and My Dolly* a combination of theater entertainment and education that takes the audience on a time trip between the 1880's and the 1950's. An antique quilt show will also be open for viewing. Call 815-923-2267 for information on this and many other events.

On Saturday, May 7th from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. at McHenry County College, The McHenry County Historic Barn Preservation Association is hosting an all day Barn Preservation Workshop. For information on registration, costs, and topics contact the college at 815-455-8697

Beginning May 7th, 1 – 4pm Crystal Lake opens their Summer Sundays Heritage Series with tours, hands-on demonstrations and displays at the historic Colonel Palmer House. Call 815-455-1151 for information.

Come join the McHenry County Historic Preservation Commission as we designate another scenic country road on Sunday May 7th, 2:00pm at the intersection of Pioneer and Rt. 31 in McHenry. And join us Saturday May 20th, 1:00pm in Cary as we proudly add the historic Trout Valley Stone Gate (Hertz Farm) to our list of impressive county landmarks. Call Gloria Mack 815-363-1058 for information.

View the complete list of local happenings at the McHenry County Historical Society's website:
www.mchsonline.org

Old-Fashioned Fun



No flower is more valued for its beauty and scent than the fragrant rose. When the tomb of ancient Egypt's pharaoh, Tutankhamen (King Tut) was opened, archaeologists found several jewel-studded boxes filled with rosebuds and rose petals. Written accounts of the discovery say the roses kept their fragrance after 3,000 years! Ancient Romans were obsessed with Roses too. They slept on pillows stuffed with rose petals, wore garlands of roses, ate rose-flavored food and the famous Roman fountains and public baths often had rose scented water bubbling through the water pipes!

Queen Victoria loved her formal gardens and greenhouses. Everything the queen amused herself with became a fashion for others to follow so it didn't take long for Victorians to make gardening a favorite pastime. Flowers were a common motif or design in this heavily decorated time period. A wide variety of whole flowers, leaves and petals were used in numerous Victorian craft projects but none as frequently as the popular rose. One fashionable project of the times had people making beads out of rose petals!

Rose beads have a long history. Scented rose beads have been used as prayer beads in many cultures for centuries - we can tell just by looking at the word where the rosary got its name. The Victorians perfected the recipe for rose beads by adding fixatives and binders and were able to create durable beads that retained their scent for years. Rose beads were strung and worn

as jewelry as well as placed in drawers and chests to scent linens and clothing. They were also given as gifts and tokens of affection.

There are nearly as many recipes for rose beads as there are varieties of roses. The simplest recipe calls for mashing the petals into a paste, then molding and drying the beads. While this simple process does work, the scent won't last long. Durable beads with longer lasting scent can be made by adding extra ingredients.



Gather two gallons of rose petals on a dry day when flowers are in full bloom (Be sure not to pick roses that have been treated with pesticides). Use scissors to cut away the white base of each petal. The Victorians used a mortar and pestle to mash their roses and some Victorian recipes call for mashing this paste once a day for three weeks! However, today's modern food processor does a thorough job turning petals into a smooth paste. We achieve the same effect with much less effort. Adding a little water at this point will make smoother paste.

After the petals have been ground to a smooth paste, it's time to add fixatives and binders. Two botanicals used in making rose beads are Gum Benzoin (a resin) and Ground Orris Root (a fragrance stabilizer). These ingredients will do more than add a little scent, they make your beads more durable. Your beads will improve with age and last for years if you use 1 oz. of each for every 2 quarts of petals. Both Gum Benzoin and Orris Root

can be found at well-stocked health food stores and some craft stores.

Traditionally the paste was processed in an iron pot, the iron giving a deep, rich, black color to the beads. If you want your beads to stay a natural reddish brown color you can use an enamel pot. Victorians would have slowly simmered this concoction on their stoves for days but we can cook our batch overnight in a crock-pot. Today's modern kitchen gadgets allow us to same time. Victorians would have loved them!

Allow the paste to cool and when it is cool enough to handle, add a few drops of rose oil (also found in craft stores and health food stores).

This not only adds more scent, it keeps the dough from sticking to your hands. Roll small amounts into small balls - remember that these beads will shrink a bit as they dry. Make a hole by sticking a toothpick or skewer through each bead. As they dry, it is important to twirl and slide the beads back and forth several times each day to prevent sticking.



When your beads are thoroughly dry you can lightly polish them with very fine sand paper then buff them with a soft cloth to bring out their natural shine. Don't coat them with varnish, lacquer or other sealer. String the beads onto a necklace and as you wear your rose beads the oils from your skin will darken and polish them even further and you will notice that the warmth of your body will release their rosy fragrance! Use them the same ways Victorians did and enjoy the scent of roses long after the blooms are gone. etc) a day!

History in your pocket ↻



Bookstores and library shelves are filled with fiction and nonfiction books but did you know there was a time when books were rare in the United States?

People have always had a need to write things down. The thoughts and ideas of many societies and cultures have been found written in scrolls of various materials, painted or chiseled in relief upon temple walls, baked into clay tablets, stitched into cloth, carved into wood and painted on animal hides.

The Royal Library of Alexandria in Egypt was once the largest collection of written knowledge in the world. Founded sometime at the beginning of the 3rd Century BC, during the reign of Ptolemy II, the library was believed to have stored 400,000 to 700,000 parchment scrolls in its heyday including 24 papyrus scrolls of Homer's famous *Odyssey*. It is said that nearly all were destroyed by fire at the hands of barbarians.

Many small moments in history lead to the books we enjoy today. Johann Gutenberg's printing press allowed him to move small blocks of letters in such a way that words could be printed fast and therefore books could be mass-produced quickly. Although the printing press was credited to Gutenberg, it was built upon the ideas of many other people over a very long period of time.

Here are a few of the many advancements that led to our modern books: The screw-type press was used to make wine and olive oil for hundreds of years throughout Europe and Asia. Famous explorer Marco Polo brought back block-print technology from his travels through Asia. Egg-based *tempera* paint led to the development of oil-

based inks. Papyrus, a fibrous water plant, not only gave paper its name, ancient Egyptians pounded and flattened it into the first paper-like writing material. Paper made from wood pulp as we know it was a Chinese invention brought to Italy sometime in the 12th Century.



Before the printing press, all books had to be copied by hand and this was very time consuming and expensive. Few people outside the clergy and men of science could read a book let alone own one. Mass-produced, inexpensive books encouraged everyone to read and learn. Before long, literacy spread through Europe and with it the seeds of social change. Books were all the rage and a fashion to follow!

By 1500 there were roughly 1,700 printing presses in Europe producing about 20 million volumes - That's about 40,000 different books! Literacy sparked the Renaissance; that era known for its creative thought and artistic accomplishment. We are familiar with the names of the greatest creative minds of that time - Leonardo DaVinci, Michelangelo, William Shakespeare, and Sir Isaac Newton,

When books became common and everyone could afford to own and read one, ideas were shared like never before. Books literally changed the way people saw their place in the world! Old issues and questions that had stood for thousands of years and never really made much sense were examined.

This time of discovery was known as the Enlightenment. Ideas of equality, public education, and social betterment were found upon

the pages of opened books. Everyone had questions and sought answers. One important question of the day was, *Why were kings necessary when intelligent people could govern themselves?*

Colonial Americans also asked these questions, they too saw their place in the world differently. Books were written telling of a perfect societies where people could be equal, govern themselves and make the most of their lives. Americans believed they could build a Utopian society here, shaping their own destiny without a king.

The books of the Enlightenment become very important to Americans. They were the foundation for America's most unique ideas - the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution of the United States.

Books were a very big deal to colonial Americans. People waited in lines on the docks to buy any book off newly arrived ships and it didn't matter what language they were written in either - someone would be found to translate!

Benjamin Franklin often shared his personal collection of books and came up with the idea to create the first lending library in 1731. Everyone loved the idea and the project was very successful. As a matter of fact, his library was very similar to libraries today.

Americans are still hungry book hounds. Our own Library of Congress rivals the ancient Library of Alexandria. Today it is the largest library in the world, with more than 120 million items on approximately 530 miles of bookshelves. The collections include more than 18 million books. The Library continues to grow by 10,000 items (books, manuscripts etc) a day!



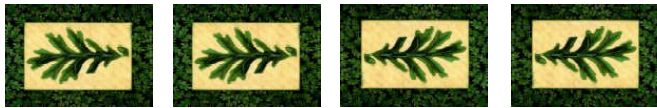


Hunting for Everyday History

Learning about the past is as easy as asking your parents, grandparents, older family members and friends about their childhood. Discovering their history can be fun and interesting.

In each issue, the Gazette offers questions to ask on your Everyday History Hunt. In this issue we ask:

“Do you remember going to the barber or to the beauty parlor as a child? “



Do you know the whereabouts of healthy, grand old trees still standing in McHenry County yards and fields? Do you have any family stories to share concerning our majestic leafy residents? The McHenry County Historic Preservation Commission is working on a special project that would recognize our wonderful old trees.

Help us find the oldest trees in the county!
Email us at: GazetteEditor@mchhpc.org



Come see us on the web!



The McHenry County Historic Preservation Commission (HPC) is now online. Stop by our new website and find what the HPC is all about!

- Our county’s wonderful old landmarks can now be seen in a slideshow complete with their fascinating histories.
- Read the amazingly detailed Comprehensive Landmark List, a joint venture of several dedicated preservation groups.
- Learn about the new Scenic Roads program and where to go to enjoy those roads already designated.
- Get answers to frequently asked questions (FAQ’s) about the work we do.
- Acquaint yourself with the Landmark Program and other preservation efforts in the county.
- Discover the roots of Historic Preservation in the United States.
- Find links to other online historic preservation sites and discover what other agencies and groups are doing to preserve our country’s heritage.
- You will even find printable versions of every issue of the *Gazette!*

And there’s more!

We can work together to recognize, preserve, and protect McHenry County’s treasures. Have you discovered a potential Landmark or know of another lovely Scenic Road? Do you know the whereabouts of an old site, structure, or district in danger through neglect, vandalism or development? You can use our printable Nomination or Endangered Sites forms and let us know!

Garden Folklore



County residents are out tending their garden plots and flowerbeds to make them ready for planting. Did you ever wonder how gardeners know what to do? Folklore has been passed down through the centuries to help remember important facts or steps in gardening. Here are just a few -

“Plant corn when the leaves on the oak tree are as big as a squirrels ear.”

“Rain before 7, dry by 11.”

“When spider webs in air do fly, the weather will soon be very dry.”

“When you can sit on the ground with your trousers down, then it is safe to sow your seeds.”

“Plant four little seeds in each hole. One for the blackbird, one for the crow, one for the cutworm, and one to grow.”

“When leaves show their undersides, be very sure that rain betides”