

THE WAPSIPINICON

A newsletter published quarterly by the
TISKILWA HISTORICAL SOCIETY
Named "Volunteer Institution of the Year" in 2010
by the Illinois Association of Museums

VOLUME 14

MARCH 2019

NUMBER 1

MUSEUM ON MAIN

Our collection includes more than 7,100 artifacts, displayed to preserve and interpret local history. Our museum is housed in an 1855 Illinois Historic Landmark Building (the former Methodist Church) at 110 East Main Street, Tiskilwa.

MUSEUM HOURS
EVERY SATURDAY
9:00 TO 2:00

**Admission is free,
 and our volunteers
 will show you
 around.**

For private or group
 tours,
 call Ed Waca
 at 815.646.4016.

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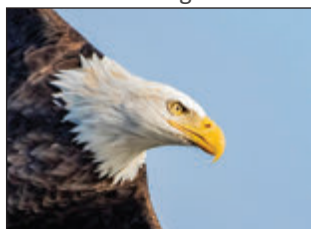
SPRINGTIME IN TISKILWA OFFERS A VARIETY OF PROGRAMMING

Old Man Winter and Mother Nature may have combined for a one-two punch this year, but their antics haven't stopped your historical society board members from scouting out three engaging programs for this spring. Monday-evening programs begin immediately following brief announcements at 7:00 p.m.

MARCH 11: It's time machine time! You're invited to the 1868 retirement celebration of magnate **John Deere**, as he reflects on the history of the self-scouring plow and a few of his struggles along the way. Portraying John Deere, historian **Brian "Fox" Ellis** (at right) will engage the audience in discussing 100 years of agricultural history. Brian, who makes his home in Bishop Hill, is also an acclaimed author, storyteller and naturalist, selected by Illinois Humanities Council to be part of their Road Scholar Speakers Bureau. The IHC enables non-profit organizations to offer fascinating and free humanities programs to their communities at little expense to the local organization. As you may recall, last fall we hosted presentations by Bob Morrissey in October and Darlene Rivero in November – both to great acclaim – through IHC's Road Scholar program.



APRIL 8: We're proud to present one of Tiskilwa's very own, **Dave Horst** (THS '74), to share his photos and entertaining observations about the astounding variety of wildlife, especially birds, that inhabit nearby waterways. As we're sure you'll agree as you look at his photos of an eagle and a white egret, Dave is not only a photographer – he's an artist! In April, Dave will share local nature portraits, including soft-shelled turtles, eagles, egrets, ospreys, butterflies, great blue herons, and even sandhill cranes. Dave explains that, while he's been a photo enthusiast most of his life, about five years ago he "decided to try photographing birds, particularly birds in action, as well as other wildlife as it presented itself." Armed with a good camera and a lifetime of acquired skills and techniques, Dave has ample opportunity to practice his art during his frequent walks along canal paths, in local woods, and through nature preserves.



MAY 13: As you well know, one of our most beloved nearby nature trails is the **Hennepin Canal Parkway**. To learn more about its construction, history and current status, we've invited **Gary Wagle**, president of the **Friends of the Hennepin Canal**, to share insights and historic photos. Gary provided this photo of *The Marion*, the first vessel to ply the waters the entire length of the 75-mile canal and its lock system in 1907. Now a resident of Galesburg, Gary tells us he spent his childhood on the banks of the Hennepin Canal, "making it my playground where I swam, fished, rode my horse, ice skated, hiked, explored, camped, and dreamed." For Gary, the canal continued to be a pleasant destination into adulthood, as he taught high school in the Quad Cities for 35 years. When he retired in 1998, he decided to organize the Friends of the Hennepin Canal to "create an interest group consisting of citizens who love and want to preserve our canal."



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Bob Sash (Chicago)

About 2019 MEMBERSHIP:

If your name is not listed here,
perhaps you've forgotten to renew??
(See page 5 for renewal form.)

The Hennepin Canal Parkway

Editor's note: When Randy Senneff invited Gary Wagle to speak about the Hennepin Canal, we took a closer look at our canal collection.

Today, the Hennepin Canal Parkway offers a prime recreational trail through the lovely countryside of northern Illinois, passing locks, aqueducts, fields, and streams. Its banks and waters are used by birders, hikers, bicyclists, photographers, equestrians, fishermen (and women), and even plain old non-hobbyists who merely want to go for a stroll to enjoy nature.

When the U.S. Corps of Engineers completed the canal in 1907 at the cost of \$7,319,563.39, it was hailed with great celebration as a shortcut for east-west commerce, joining the Illinois River at Bureau Junction and Mississippi River at Rock Island. The first boat to travel the full length of the canal that year was the *Marion*, piloted by **Captain Rambo**. Nope, not making this up.

However, by the time the full canal was completed in 1907, it was too little too late. Not only had the railways eclipsed water transport, but also the canal was already too small for a new generation of barges being constructed for river traffic.

The first recorded interest in a canal connecting the Illinois River with the Mississippi came in an 1834 meeting, called at the court house in Hennepin by **Augustus C. Langworthy**. (This is the same Dr. Langworthy who founded the town of Windsor, which included the part of Tiskilwa lying in Arispie Township.) But it was another thirty years before surveys of possible routes were undertaken in 1864, 1870, and 1874. Unfortunately, nothing came of these early surveys, and it took almost twenty years for interest to revive, land to be acquired, and construction to begin.



Left: "Lock 10, 8 o'clock shift." Right: "#3 1898 Lock 10; 4 o'clock shift."

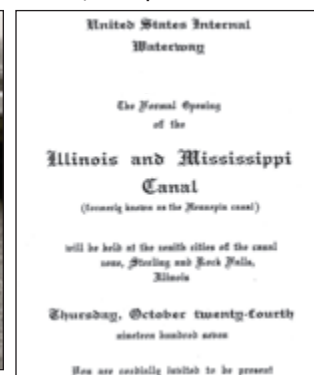
In its early planning stages, it was known as the Hennepin Canal. However, to increase the national image, in 1888 the name was changed to The Illinois and Mississippi Canal.



Many Tiskilwa folks will recognize the scene of Lock 11 on the right, as it appeared in an early 20th century photo.

The canal was operated by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers as a navigable waterway from October 24, 1907, to July 1, 1951, when it became an Illinois state park. Ten years later, old gates were removed and replaced by concrete headwalls to maintain a five-foot channel depth. On August 1, 1970, the state of Illinois assumed full ownership and officially renamed this waterway the **Hennepin Canal Parkway**.

The canal retained a bit of a claim to fame, however, as the first American canal with locks constructed entirely of concrete. To that time, the traditional facing for canals had been cut stone. But concrete construction was stronger, more durable, and half the price of cut stone. As such, this design served as a prototype for the construction of the **Panama Canal**, completed in 1913.



Left: "The I & M Canal: Fishing Boats in Lock No. 11 near Tiskilwa, Ill."

Right: The invitation is to the formal opening of the canal "held at the zenith cities of the canal zone, Sterling and Rock Falls, Illinois."

Below: "Lock 7, Bridge 4, I & M Canal, near Tiskilwa, Ill."



Sources: "When Tiskilwa Was Young" (1985) by Mary B. Steimle; "The Continuing Journey of the Hennepin Canal" (1998); publications by the Friends of the Hennepin Canal; "Engineering a Dream" (2007) by Betty Marchon. Over the past thirteen years, these photographs have been given to Tiskilwa Historical Society by Howard Clement (THS '37), Betty Scott Mercer (THS '38), Lisle Vaughn (THS '59), and also in a collection of photos submitted to Tiskilwa's Bicentennial Committee by Leslie Battey (THS '16) and then passed forward to us.



Rest in Peace, Gail.

*We mourn the loss of our dear friend and Board member, **Gail McCauley**, who passed away on February 9, 2019. Gail always brought her special spirit of enthusiasm and fun to all our T-H-S activities. She was a font of good ideas as well! Gail is pictured here with Ed Waca on September 22, 2018, helping to serve at our "As Is" Open House for the new Gallery on Galena. We extend our sincere sympathy to Paul, Kimberly, Lisa, Kelly, Greg, and all of Gail's family.*



UPDATE ON GALLERY ON GALENA

(FORMER AMERICAN LEGION HALL)

Fingers crossed! If things continue to progress apace, we'll be able to host a Grand Opening of the Gallery on Galena on a most appropriate date: **Memorial Day, May 27, 2019**. Society member and Navy veteran **Jennifer Fisher** is now making plans for an 11:00 program in the East Park. Following the ceremony, we'll invite everyone over to the Gallery on Galena to enjoy the renovations, new displays, and snacks.

Starting last fall and continuing through the winter, Board members **Bill Wendle, Randy Senneff, Ed Waca, plus a few of their friends and family** have led the charge, creating quite a transformation in the interior of the building – on both the main and lower levels. At press time in mid-February, a majority of the projects have been completed, including replacement of the roof, twelve windows, and three exterior doors; installation of new gutters, all plumbing and all wiring; installation of attic insulation and construction of a new bathroom.

Next up – installing a new furnace, completing the drywalling process, installing several new light fixtures, refinishing the wood floors (**Michael Dittmer Wood Flooring** has offered to do this project), painting new walls in the bathroom and stairwell, replacing the siding or painting the exterior, and landscaping.

Thanks to the generosity of members and non-members alike, we've raised more than \$5,000 since our December issue! In addition, **Robert Plummer**, owner of **RP Lumber Company** in Edwardsville, is providing a 15% discount on materials purchased at RP in Princeton. **We're eager to finish our work and could use some volunteer help!**

There's still plenty to do, but we're hopeful we'll meet our self-imposed May 27th deadline.

We are thrilled by your overwhelming, heartwarming response to our special appeal for contributions to our Building Fund. **Thank you** to these **Building Fund Friends (BFFs)**, several of whom are second-time givers. Between mid-November and press time, we've received donations from these generous people:

Ray Anderson, Donald & Pat Bachman, Lee & Bev Bachman, Stan & Marilea Bensen, Sally Berg, Steve & Sandy Borge, Chuck & Joan Bruder, Cliff & Kathy Cartwright, Thelma Knapp Casper, Debra Coe, Bob & Cindy Davidson, Bob & Sharon Galloway, Cecille Gerber, Dave & Kathy Gerber, Bob & Judy Glaser, Randy & Patty Hassler, Rita D. Hastings, Ben & Rinnea Holman, Barb Hughes, Adnan Imtairah, Scott & Valerie Jensen, Barbara Kasper, George & Connie Kauffman, Dick & Melaney Madsen, Alice Malloy, Betty McComber, P.J. McKay, Lee & Connie Miller, Tom & Sonny Miller, Sally Munson, Patrick Murphy family, Irene Nordstrom, Ed O'Neill, Linda Ordway, Scott & Sondra Owens, Marilyn Madsen Pattelli, Jay Perry, David & Pat Rosenquist, Dan Russell, David & Julie Sampson, Bob Sash, Janice Sash, Dan & Julie Sims, Phil Smith, Peggy Stratton, David L. & Leslee Beams Stacker, John & Mimi Thompson, Gretchen Van Heukelom, Nita Von Holten, Russ & Barb Wagner, Bob & Linda Wheeler, Deb Cotter Wehrli, and Glen & Judy Wright.

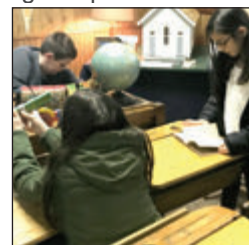
HOLIDAY VISITORS "CATCH THE SPIRIT"

DURING COUNTRY CHRISTMAS IN DECEMBER

Bright sunshine welcomed dozens of visitors to our three-block party on Main Street December 8 – to walk Tiskilwa during Country Christmas, an annual event organized by our historical society. Once again, Tiskilwa Community Association provided fir trees along Main Street for a decorating competition.



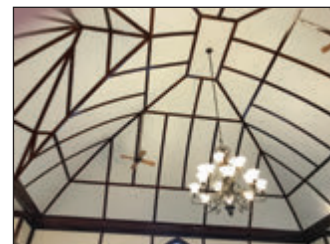
Kelly's Place earned first prize for "An Angel Gets Her Wings," in memory of Barb Hopper.



Our young visitors like to snoop in the school display.



Members **Barbara Quick Schaefer** of Peoria and her brother **Richard Quick**, St. Louis, came to honor the memory of their dad, **Edward Quick (THS 1910)**, architect of the former Mennonite Church. This year, **Janice Sash** organized tours and treats at the church, now home to the **Tiskilwa Bible Church**.



To help everyone "Catch the Spirit" during Tiskilwa's Country Christmas, the **Covered Bridge Chorus** brought its special brand of barbershop harmony to the Museum on Main. Under the direction of **Dale Fiste** (far right), the chorus helped us continue our annual tradition of contributing to the **Bureau County Food Pantry**, this year with almost 90 pounds of food.

P.S. We're pleased to note "Posey" managed to photo-bomb once again!

THANK YOU TO THOSE WHO'VE ALREADY CONTRIBUTED FOR 2019.

TISKILWA HISTORICAL SOCIETY BUILDING FUND: APPEAL FOR 2019

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ ZIP _____

AMOUNT ENCLOSED = \$ _____ DATE: _____

Please & thanks: Jot "BUILDING FUND" on the check's memo line since it is a separate account from annual Memberships & Sponsorships.

IN MEMORIAM

We thank you for these memorials received since our December issue:

Aina Bachio
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History Mystery For MARCH



Who flooded their family's lawn each winter in the 1950s and 1960s so that Tiskilwa kids could have a skating rink? (Answer in column 2)

History Mystery Solved As many of our members will recall, that skating rink was at the **Allen & Mary Murphy** home. Several friends on the "Remember Tiskilwa" page reminisced about fond memories of skating there, as well as on the canal, the creek, the tennis court, and even the land dam pond! Thanks to **Jerry Murphy** (THS '63) for capturing this image from his DVD of Murphy home movies.



*We get by
 with a little help
 from our friends...*

Yes, friends, we need more volunteers to help us stay open on Saturdays. If local members step up even twice a year, our staffing worries would go POOF! Won't you be our neighbor?

We're planning an orientation at **10:00 a.m. on Saturday, April 13, at the museum** to answer any concerns and show you around. Our staffing is set up on the buddy system so that you'll always have a sidekick. Don't worry -- Nobody knows everything about our collection nor our town. Mainly, it's a matter of extending a warm welcome to all visitors, and if needed, jotting down a question you can't answer. Won't you come on down on April 13th? You may even find it's kinda fun!

WILL YOU CONTINUE TO SUPPORT OUR EFFORTS?

IF YOUR NAME DOES NOT APPEAR ON PAGE 2, check the date of your most recent renewal on your address label. **Sorry, but this is the final newsletter we will be able to mail to you without receiving your 2019 membership dues.**

TISKILWA HISTORICAL SOCIETY

(PLEASE CIRCLE YOUR CHOICE OF AMOUNT.)

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Individual \$15 Family \$20

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ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED



*As avid walker and photographer **Jerry Murphy** noted when he shared this photo on Facebook on January 31, 2019, "It isn't too often that Bureau Creek freezes over. I don't care for the bitter -26° temperatures, but it does paint a beautiful winter wonderland."*

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HEDRICH**

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