



# MACOUPIN COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

## From the President,

Welcome to 2024 and our 1st taste of real winter weather. We have a challenging year ahead of us. I'll highlight what I see as our top three challenges.

The John C. Anderson House needs a new roof. There are two layers of shingles on the roof now so it will be a tear off job and the roof is a long way up above the ground. We have an estimate of \$131,000. to tear off the old roof and put on a new roof. We are in fund raising mode. Mary Tinder and Bobbi Bates have written for a grant. This grant had to be sought through a municipality, and the City of Carlinville has allowed MCHS to apply through the city. *We need a fund-raising committee and the board is seeking volunteers.*

MCHS is in a dispute with a local governmental entity over the validity of an easement granted in 1906. The governmental entity is threatening to build a street through the middle of our property. MCHS has retained attorney Sean Rees to represent us. If there are lawyers or others with real estate expertise who could research statute and case law we will appreciate the assistance. *This dispute could lead to litigation.*

The leadership of MCHS is aging and a number of us are experiencing serious health problems. There are fewer of us than there were just a few short years ago. Some of our dependable workers are no longer with us or no longer able to work. Keeping MCHS operating is getting more and more difficult for us. We need help! The Board is willing to listen to suggestions for recruiting new, younger members who can take



**Time to Step Up**

MCHS into the future. *Anyone willing to be on a committee to recruit new members?*

That's three urgent issues. When I was still working, I was told that people can focus on a maximum of three crises; beyond that we lose focus. So I'll stop here. We need help.

Dan Hauter, President

## Annual Meeting Plans Announced

When: Monday, March 18, 2024

Doors open at 5:30pm. Dinner serves at 6:00pm. Meeting will begin by 7:00pm and will be followed by special program (to be determined).

Where: Legion Home Smokehouse Grill  
Carlinville American Legion Home  
554 Ramey St., Carlinville, IL 62626

Members are encouraged to attend to discuss and vote on several **important** items:

1. Three (3) board members' terms are ending, and 2 **MUST** be replaced according to Society by-laws (directors may serve no more than two consecutive 3-year terms). Dan Hauter and Wally Pocklington will be vacating their positions on the Board of Directors. Board member Greg Brown has served one term and has indicated he would be willing to serve a second if the membership votes to do so.

Any members interested in serving on the board for a 3 year term may contact a current board member to offer their names for voting consideration. Nominations may also be taken from the floor during the Annual Meeting. Candidates should be prepared to present a few words at the meeting to describe their strengths, interests, and qualifications as the best candidate to help MCHS face current challenges, plan, execute and move projects forward.

2. President Dan Hauter will present an update on current state of affairs at MCHS – roof replacement needed on the John C. Anderson Home, volunteer staffing shortages, renewed emphasis to rebuild membership losses.
3. Annual membership dues are payable beginning March 1, 2024 (beginning of our fiscal year). Dues may be paid at the Annual Meeting. Here's a thought...bring a friend with you to the meeting who would be interested in joining MCHS! New memberships are welcomed!!!!



*Do you have an hour to spare?*

(continued on page 5, Annual Meeting Dinner Reservations)

## Winter Projects in Museum

Late summer 2023 saw the refinishing of hardwood floors in the main floor and second floor hallways and the main stairs and landing, all by Pro Style Finishes. By the end of January, the carpeting was down in the same areas, by Heinz Furniture and Flooring.



This type of labor used to be done by volunteers at MCHS; however, we no longer have the youth or numbers to do such labor ourselves. This project was accomplished through the efforts of a grant from The Bayer Fund. In addition to the grant, funds designated as specific to the house for repairs and maintenance were provided by sponsors and others' donations.

The repairs in the third floor big bedroom were begun in summer as well, but the presence of bees in the eaves delayed roof repairs, which delayed completion of the bedroom repairs.

The doorway to the servants' stairway on second floor has been refinished. The door itself is still in the basement waiting for stain.

Fall Festival boasted a new Sponsor Tree, made from pallet wood fastened to a tall tree stump near the back of the house. Over the winter a similar project was planned to start. Designed to be portable, the new project will be a directional signpost pointing to various buildings and activities on site. It will be in use during festivals and other events.



Inventory continues on contents of the museum. The kitchen is over half finished. Inventory consists of finding or creating an inventory number for each item and loading it along with description and other pertinent facts into an Excel spreadsheet on the computer.

While cumbersome, the task of inventory facilitates locating certain items in the overcrowded museum and insuring said items.



## Harvest Dinner a Huge Success

The Harvest Dinner 2023, "Under the Midwest Moon," was an unforgettable evening at the historic John C. Anderson Home on Saturday evening, October 7. Our lucky winner, Jill Chapman, along with her 11 guests, enjoyed a five course dinner, dinner entertainment, a private tour of the home and memories to last for a lifetime.

The Dinner was presented by Chef Rob Lagerlof of Ullevi Fun Fine Dining, along with his Sous Chefs, Scott & Janie Peterson, and Macoupin County Historical Society.

And yes, we have already started planning for next year's Harvest Dinner!

No event of this magnitude is possible without the generous donations of supplies and labor we welcomed. Prairie Farms Dairy, Starr's Primal Meats & Package Liquor, and Blooms N' Maters BNM generously provided supplies. Country Event Rentals of Carlinville furnished the Harvest table and chairs. Chef Rob Lagerlof and his Sous-chefs catered the delicious dinner. Shawna Ashby, Alana Dixon, Samantha Dixon served the meal. Our back kitchen staff, Greg Wiles, Brett Wiles, Mack Rowatt and Sally Strohbeck took care of clean-up in the Red Barn. Cheryl A Gardner & Elissa Graham opened the gift store to our guests. Brandy Drew took charge of the photography and social media advertising. We extend a very special thank you to the aforementioned donors and to everyone who worked at ticket sales and who donated towards this raffle.

Last but certainly not least, Deb Wiles. A very special thank you for your vision, your dedication, your time, your efforts, your passion and most importantly, your love for this home.

## Red Barn's a Cookin'



Fall Festival 2023 drew the big crowds we haven't seen since before Covid. The Red Barn produced some great food and wonderful help. The food was so popular we ran out both days.

We were fortunate so many volunteers came to help, including some students who chose us as their volunteer commitment. In addition, our morning crew has begun to grow in years of service, all because we believe it's just not the festival without biscuits and gravy.

Part of his year's breakfast crew was, from left to right, Carson (3 years), Tabitha (3 years), Vicki (first festival), and Ellie (2 years) in front.

## Big Dog Wins Hunt

Each year in October, MCHS members join together for a cookout on the grounds. For several years now, we have been inviting some young people and their families: members of a local Boy Scout Troop, a 4-H club or a church youth group.

The young people especially enjoy the scavenger hunt created just for them. They are divided into teams and given a list of items to find on site. Each hunt requires they consult some of the "old people" sitting around the fire.

The winners of the 2023 October Scavenger Hunt were Jack Lohnes, Leo Bendorf and Audrey Metzger. Their team name was the Big Dog Construction Co., one of the 2023 sponsors of MCHS.



## Otwell Corn Contest Revived

Throughout the summer of 2023, the Macoupin County Agricultural Antique Association promoted the reenactment of the *Otwell Corn Contest*. At Fall festival, the entries were displayed and the winner, Natalie Royer, was announced. Second place went to Quincy Harding, and third to Jonathan Royer.

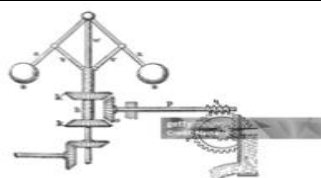


The original *Otwell Corn Contest* was a national corn-growing contest for young farmers that took place in Carlinville, Illinois in 1905. The contest was organized by Carlinville native Will B. Otwell and involved thousands of young people from across the country. The contest was among the earliest beginnings of club work that evolved into 4-H.

The original contest was a significant event for farm boys and girls. The contest was so successful that it attracted 8,000 farm boys from across the country. The contest offered \$1 premiums to the winners, and equipment manufacturers offered premiums such as a three-wheeled riding plow, a walking cultivator, a fanning mill, a high-grade bicycle, a double harrow, a washing machine, a one-hole corn sheller, a box of 100 bars of soap, and even a windmill.

The contest was a major attraction at the St. Louis World's Fair, where a pyramid of corn grown by the farmer boys of Illinois was displayed.

A large display of Otwell memorabilia is located in the second floor hallway of the MCHS museum.



Working Timepiece Needs Many Small Parts

Are you a part?

## Save the Days

Would you like to help preserve the way of life of those who settled Macoupin County? There are many ways. Whether you live nearby or a thousand miles away, surely there are some things on this list you can manage to do.

- **cut the cost of postage** by providing us your current e-mail address and phone number. We promise not to sell or otherwise share your contact information...
- **cut the costs of advertising** by sharing our Facebook posts promoting our events.
- **promote our presence** in the community by attending our free monthly meetings with guest speakers, our festivals and our Christmas Shows.
- **encourage your friends and relatives** to become members of MCHS.

## Anderson Gardens Grow

Most farmsteads and many town homes have traditionally included a garden or two. The Anderson property was developed as a farm; thus, it included gardens of vegetables, fruits, herbs and flowers.

Today, our local Master Gardeners nurture their flower garden and landscaping spots on the property. And now Rod Eichen is encouraging expanding other garden spots, centered around the old farmstead just west of the Anderson House.

The existing grape arbor is freshly pruned in late winter. When the old apple tree produces, another of our members makes excellent cider with a very old cider press he inherited from his father. A small orchard is in the works, and perhaps some berries. The Anderson property is beginning to host its very own "Victory Garden."

Several rows of potatoes were planted last spring and sold through the Country Store at Fall Festival. Did you realize the property already produces honey? Of course, we also produce our own broom corn and our own sorghum for molasses. The honey, though, is more of a challenge. Only honey deposited in a hive is easily collectable. Unfortunately, Anderson bees like to colonize inside

machinery and the exterior walls of buildings as well.

*Turkey Wing Broom made with our own broom corn raised at MCHS.*



## Ray Riffey Passed

Long-time active member Ray Riffey, passed away October 23, 2023. Ray was born on February 8, 1928 on the family farm outside of Girard, IL. After graduating high school, Ray joined the Marine Corps and served with distinction in Korea.

Ray was employed by MJM Electric Cooperative for 32 years as the Member Services Director and retired in 1993.

Very active in the Macoupin County Historical Society as long as he was able, Ray kept his membership active, stopping by to visit from time to time.

Ray was preceded in death by his parents, his stepmother, Sallie Riffey, his wife Eileen, and his sister, Eileen. He is survived by his son, Roger (Lisa) Riffey of Katy, TX, daughter, Patti (Chip) Hiestand of Princeton, WI, numerous grandchildren and great-grandchildren and sisters, Kay Torrens of Bloomington, IL, Cheryl Huddle of Springfield, IL and Marti Bingham of Vandalia, IL.

Davis-Anderson Funeral Home, Carlinville, IL was in charge of arrangements. Burial followed in Pleasant Hill Cemetery, Girard, IL. Memorials were made to Emmanuel Baptist Building Fund or Macoupin County Historical Society.

## Bill Crawford Passed

Bill Crawford, 94 of Carlinville, IL passed away October 20, 2023. Bill was born on May 6, 1929 in Nilwood, IL. He married Patricia L. Totsch December 3, 1950. Bill served in the US Army as a military policeman during the Korean War. He worked as a barber in the community for 30 years and then as a photographer for 20 years.

Bill remained active in the Macoupin County Historical Society for many years. Many remember him working the attic of the museum during festivals.

Bill was preceded in death by his parents, wife, Patricia Lou Crawford and sisters; Josephine Remling, and Marge Tremaine. He is survived by a daughter, Cynthia McFarland (Dennis) and a son Stephen Crawford (Carol). Also surviving are two granddaughters, one great grandson and several nieces and nephews.

Davis-Anderson Funeral Home, Carlinville was in charge of arrangements. Burial was in Prairie Lawn Cemetery, Carlinville. Memorials were made to Land of Lincoln Honor Flight.

## Themes Announced

The decorating theme for Spring Festival 2024 in the Anderson House will be antique and vintage clocks. We are still discovering clocks donated years ago in closets and wardrobes as we do a room by room inventory. Some items have lost their inventory tag and number, and so the search to properly identify those items is extensive. In addition to the clocks currently in the house, we will be displaying a private collection on loan.



For Fall Festival 2024, the Anderson House will be decorated in homemade brooms. The MCHS group *Brooms on Breckenridge* is busily creating a variety of brooms for this event, in addition to training new members in the craft at the monthly meetings. Similar brooms

will be for sale in the Country Store.

Those interested in the *Brooms on Breckenridge* training should contact Sue Ann Barto (217-825-4282).

## Museum Contacts:

**Museum Office** 217-854-2850  
Genealogy 217-854-2850

Wednesdays 10:00—2:00

e-mail [Mchs.museum@yahoo.com](mailto:Mchs.museum@yahoo.com)

Web page [Mchssociety.org](http://Mchssociety.org)

Facebook

[www.facebook.com/MacoupinCountyHistoricalSociety](http://www.facebook.com/MacoupinCountyHistoricalSociety)

## Brooms on Breckenridge Meets

Some of the broomcorn that was grown on the Macoupin County Historical Society's grounds last year was used by each broom making class offered by the *Brooms on Breckenridge* group. They meet at 7 pm in the Ruyle building on the Macoupin County Historical Society's grounds. The February 6th participants made cobweb brooms with plated (woven) handles and tied brooms. Individuals each brought a 12 to 18 inch stick for a handle and \$10 for other supplies.

*Brooms on Breckenridge* offers free lessons to anyone interested in learning to make a variety of brooms. Each month the group makes a different kind of broom and embellishment. For information on meeting times, etc., contact Sue Barto or Rod Eichen (page 7).

## Raffurty School Hosts Gramophones

The Raffurty one room schoolhouse on MCHS grounds was a big hit at Fall Festival 2023. Ray Litzau entertained and educated crowds of guests with his working gramophones on display.

Ray often visits schools and organizations as a guest speaker and demonstrator. His interactions with the visitors to the schoolhouse at times turned to “shop-talk” and further encouraged word to spread of his addition to the Fall Festival events.

We hope to see Ray and his gramophones again!



## Please Support Our Sponsors

The donations made by our sponsors enable us to produce this newsletter, print and ship publications, make improvements on our buildings and train volunteers. We value our sponsors' contributions and ask that you support them in your shopping needs. We print their names in every issue of our newsletter and periodically on our Facebook page.

To join our family of sponsors for 2023, contact the office (217-854-2850) and leave your contact information or contact Janell Ramey or Deb Wiles (page 7).

*(From page 1, Annual Meeting)*

## Annual Meeting Reservations

A wonderful, catered meal will be offered by Chef Tim Snodgrass at a cost of \$25 per person. The menu as follows: Smoked Chicken, Smoke Beef Brisket, Potatoes Romanoff, Baked beans. Salad, selection of Pies & Cakes, Drinks,

The deadline for your reservation will be March 10, as we will need to turn in final numbers to the caterer. Payment in advance would be appreciated; however, we will accept payment at the door on the 18<sup>th</sup> as long as you have reserved your meal. Contact any board member (see page 7) for your reservation

**Don't Forget to Reserve Your Dinner!**

**For vendor contracts, stop by the museum on a Wednesday, 10:00—3:00, or download from webpage: [Mchssociety.org](http://Mchssociety.org)**

## 2023 Sponsors

### Tier 3

- Area Heating & Air Conditioning
- Big Dog Construction
- Curry Ready-Mix
- Firm Foundations Realty
- Goodman Agency
- Heinz Furniture
- Jersey’s Roadside Service
- J. F. Boente Sons
- Koster Construction
- PJ's Tire & Service Center
- Plaza Truck Service
- Starr’s Primal Meats

### Tier 2

- |                                    |                         |
|------------------------------------|-------------------------|
| Bright Smiles Dentistry            | Macoupin County Asphalt |
| Carlenville Eye Care-Katie Goodman |                         |
| Edward Jones-Hadley                | MJM Electric Coop.      |
| Fenton Family Chiropractic         | Mother Rd Antique Mall  |

### Tier 1

- Carlinvilla Motel
- Cisler Associates Real Estate
- Kravanya & Boente Family Dentistry
- My Sister’s Closet
- State Farm-Richard Oswald
- Victory Lane Motors

### Tangible Donations

- |                       |                    |
|-----------------------|--------------------|
| Bloom Aqua Systems    | Pro Style Finishes |
| Country Event Rentals | Rob Lagerloff      |
| M & M Farm Service    | Ruff N Tuff        |
| Mark Kaiser           | Steve Bormida      |
| Mike Graham           | Steve Oberman      |
|                       | Glass Cutters      |

## Country Store Open

The Country Store offers something for everyone. Fresh rhubarb sold out early last year at Spring Festival. This spring, look for farm fresh eggs, rhubarb and specialty preserves and pickles plus old fashioned toys like jacks.

Hand crafted brooms produced locally by the *Brooms on Breckenridge* group will be offered until the limited supply is gone.

Those interested in learning to make their own brooms may sign up for lessons with storekeeper Sue Ann Barto. (page 7)

**Gift Shop Is Open**  
during Spring Festival, most other events  
and most Wednesdays, 10:00-2:00

## Lost & Found, etc.

**Needed:** a team of horses, mules, donkeys or oxen and wagon to give rides (and earn some \$) at Spring Festival.

**Still Time to Reserve** your booth for Spring and Fall Festivals. Contact Nancy Mihalek, vendor coordinator, or download a contract from our Web page.

**Found:** Highly prized black walnut sticks, branches and nuts on the grounds of MCHS. First come first serve.

**Needed:** A sketch artist to demonstrate and sell at Spring Festival. Contact Nancy Mihalek (page 7)

**Needed:** Volunteer to stain and seal a door, on sawhorses in basement of museum.

**Needed:** Your name, e-mail address and phone number if you would like to receive our newsletter.

**Reminders:** The decorating theme for Spring Festival 2024 will be *antique and vintage clocks*. Check out the Anderson Museum.

**Needed:** Volunteers to sit in a room of the mansion during Spring Festival. 1-2 hour shifts. Contact Julie Anderson (217-971-0320)

**Blacksmith Shop Is Open**  
**Wednesdays 10:00-2:30**  
**Every 4<sup>th</sup> Saturday**

# Macoupin County Historical Society Officers – 2023

Title	Name	Phone	Cell Phone	E-mail
President	Dan Hauter	217-854-9725	217-710-8056	dhauter45@gmail.com
Vice-President	Audy Schmedeke	217-854-8228	217-825-8888	schmedeke@gmail.com
Secretary	Libby Klocke	217-965-4563	205-527-9636	libby62690@gmail.com
Treasurer	Julia Beardslee		360-623-9731	juliabeardslee3@gmail.com

## Board Members

Name	Phone	Cell Phone	E-mail
Roger Anderson		217-710-8867	Andersoncattle35@yahoo.com
Julia Beardslee		360-623-9731	juliabeardslee3@gmail.com
Greg Brown		618-567-1512	gregb@fgmarchitects.com
Libby Klocke		217-965-4563	libby62690@gmail.com
Paul Mihalek		217-556-2179	paul_mihalek@yahoo.com
Wally Pocklington		217-825-4448	acjaseacl@motion.net
Audy Schmedeke	217-854-8228	217-825-8888	schmedeke@gmail.com
Deb Wiles	217-854-3446	217-710-1452	Dwiles@frontier.com

## Committee Chairmen/Contact persons

Committee	Chairman/contact	Phone	Cell Phone	email
Brooms	Sue Ann Barto		217-825-4282	
Curators	Barb McCormick Janell Ramey	217-854-3099	217-710-5989	janelleramey@yahoo.com
Community Outreach	Deb Wiles	217-854-3446	217-710-1452	Dwiles@frontier.com
Food	Sally Strohbeck		561-706-2835	Mygalsal59@yahoo.com
Genealogy	Libby Klocke	217-965-4563	205-527-9636	libby62690@gmail.com
Gift Shop	Cheryl Gardner		217-825-9249	529gcgardner@gmail.com
Grounds	Jim Foster	217-851-5486		
House Maintenance	Paul Mihalek		217-556-2179	paul_mihalek@yahoo.com
Newsletter	Janell Ramey Cheryl Gardner		217-710-5989 217-825-9249	janelleramey@yahoo.com 529gcgardner@gmail.com
Membership	Cheryl Gardner		217-825-9249	529gcgardner@gmail.com
Room Sitters	Julie Anderson		217-971-0320	
Sawmill	Paul Mihalek		217-556-2179	paul_mihalek@yahoo.com
Sponsors	Janell Ramey		217-710-5989	janelleramey@yahoo.com
Treasures Market	Mary Schmedeke	217-854-8228	217-825-8887	mkschmedeke@gmail.com
Vendors	Nancy Mihalek		217-556-4853	Mchs.museum@yahoo.com
Xmas Decorating	Kendra Mize	618-402-6620		



**Museum Office and  
Genealogy  
217-854-2850**

**Spring Festival  
Decorating Theme  
in the museum is  
Antique and  
Vintage Clocks.**

Macoupin County Historical Society  
P. O. Box 432  
Carlinville, IL 62626

NON-PROFIT ORGANIZATION  
U.S. POSTAGE PAID  
PERMIT #293

Return Service Requested



### Macoupin County Historical Society

Membership Type   Single    Family    Life    Renew    New

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_   e-mail \_\_\_\_\_

Amount Pd \$ \_\_\_\_\_ By    Cash    Check # \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Family Membership = \$25.00   Lifetime membership = \$300.00

Indicate areas where you would be interested in helping at the Society

- Food Service                       Accounting                       Christmas Show
- House Tours                       Housekeeping                       Building Maintenance
- Newsletter                       Genealogy                       Grounds Maintenance
- House Decorating                       Publicity                       Recruiting/Membership

Demonstrate old time -methods. List \_\_\_\_\_

What are the best times for you to help \_\_\_\_\_

What is your area of historical interest? \_\_\_\_\_

**Vendors!**

Spring Festival—May 25,26

Contracts on website:

Mchsociety.org

Call Nancy Mihalek

218-556-4853