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HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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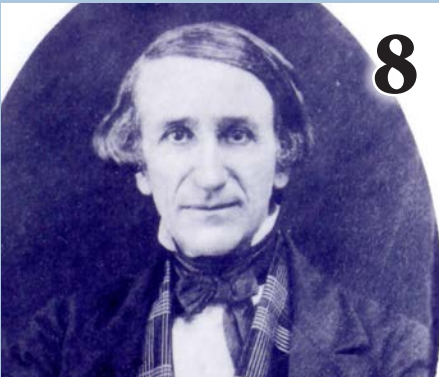
The
GOVERNOR'S
POST

Spring 2023

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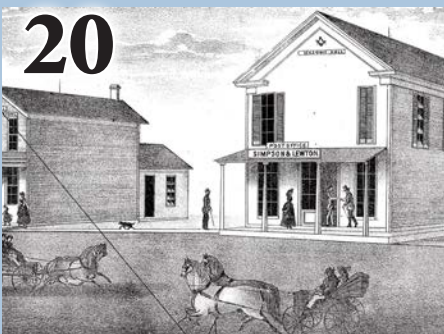
Paul Tibbets, Part III



Abraham Jonas



Lester Holtshag, American Spy



Community in Focus: Plainville

On the Cover: Postcard of girls and ducks from a scrapbook in the Society's Collection which was donated by HSQC member Mary Kay Blazel of Berlin, Wisconsin.

Message from the Director

By: Rob Mellon

I wanted to provide an update on my military service. I have been working as a Reserve ROTC instructor at the University of Missouri for the past few years, but as many of you know, I have been called back to active duty for service at Ramstein Air Base in Germany. I have been assigned to the 19th Battlefield Coordination Detachment (BCD). A BCD serves as a liaison for the Commander of U.S. Army Europe and Africa (General Darryl Williams) to the Commander of U.S. Air Forces Europe and Africa (General James Hecker). General Williams is also the NATO Allied Land Commander. We work on his behalf to build a strong relationship between the U.S. Army and the U.S. Air Force. These are both 4-star commands, so we work directly for those generals.

The BCD is located in the 603rd Air Operations Center (AOC), a secured facility on Ramstein Air Base in Germany. The AOC sustains 24-hour operations and provides command and control of all air operations in the region, including all combat, air mobility, intelligence, and air defense missions. The BCD provides a daily briefing to General Hecker and works closely with the Air Force staff sections at the AOC. The BCD helps plan, coordinate, and execute intelligence, fires, airspace management, air and missile defense, airlift support, cyber electromagnetic activities, and the deployment of nuclear weapons. This is done by articulating the Army Forces Commander's intent, priorities, objectives, and air support requirements to the Air Forces Commander.

The BCD participates in joint exercises in Europe and Africa as well as provides military assistance and advice to our NATO allies and other partners in the region. The BCD has six sections: Operations, Plans, Intelligence, Air Defense, Airlift, and Airspace Management. I work in the Plans section serving as the Deputy Plans Chief for the 19th BCD. The Plans Section plays a role in developing plans, targeting priorities, joint fires, air support, reconnaissance, space effects, and electronic warfare. Individual soldiers from the U.S. Army Reserve are often called to help support real world missions. The BCD is currently supporting operations in Eastern Europe and in Africa.

I am due to return to the Historical Society when my active-duty orders end in early fall. I am due for a promotion to Lieutenant Colonel next summer and will most likely return to the United States working as an instructor for the Command and General Staff College as a Reserve Officer. The Historical Society is dedicated to maintaining its robust schedule in my absence, and the Society's popular programs -- Woodland tours, education program, and the production of *The Governor's Post* -- should be impacted only slightly until I return.



Major Rob Mellon. Executive Director, Historical Society of Quincy and Adams County



**U.S. Army
Europe
Insignia**

The shoulder sleeve insignia worn by soldiers assigned to U.S. Army Europe. At the center of the patch is the sword of liberation which was used to restore freedom. The rising flames represent justice. The rainbow colors are emblematic of hope and represent Allied forces. The shield was originally black and represented the oppression Europe was under during WWII. The shield was changed to blue after the ultimate victory in 1945.

**603rd Air
Operations
Center Patch**



The patch of the 603rd Air and Space Operation Center. The patch is worn by members of the United States Air Force who serve at the AOC at Ramstein Air Base in Germany.

GET TO KNOW OUR MEMBERS

Gene Soebbing

One of our most underappreciated HSQAC volunteers is Gene Soebbing. A Quincy native, Gene has devoted many hours to reconstructing and refinishing several beautiful display cases for use in our Museum, Mansion, and Visitor's Center. We appreciate his generosity and craftsmanship.

Gene graduated from Christian Brothers High School and went on to earn a business degree from Quincy College. Until it closed, Gene worked for Huck Fixtures, then moved to Dyno Nobel to end his professional career.

Gene and his wife Ann (Dittmer) Soebbing have three children Danny, Kristin, and Samantha, and one grandchild, Ellie.

Among Gene's interests are antiquing, woodworking, gardening, and World War II history. A very busy man, Gene volunteers for the American Red Cross, Blessing Hospice, and Horizons. He also donates considerable time to an interdenominational Grief Share program, spending many hours helping those who have suffered the death of a loved one.

When Gene is not volunteering, playing golf, or "grandfathering," he enjoys deer hunting and working on and collecting classic cars.



Clare Goerlich

One of HSQAC's devoted, longtime members is Clare Goerlich, a retired elementary school teacher in the Quincy Public Schools.

Clare is a Quincy native who attended St. Boniface Grade School and Notre Dame High School before studying elementary education at Western Illinois University in Macomb. After completing her bachelor's degree at WIU, she continued her studies there and earned a master's degree and an advanced certificate in educational administration.

Clare married her high school sweetheart, Ken Goerlich, and they had 57 years together before he died. They have had three children – Joe, Marie, and John.

During her thirty-eight year teaching career, she was assigned to five different schools (Washington, Jackson, Jefferson, Berrian, and Monroe), working with hundreds of children. A talented educator, she certainly has had a positive effect on many citizens of Quincy.

Regarding the HSQAC, Clare mentioned that she has been involved in our activities during most of her adult life. She enjoys visiting the Mansion, walking our grounds, and attending our programs. She also



noted that she can remember exploring the John Wood Octagonal House with her sister, when they were children.

Clare's interests are varied. She played tennis for more than 60 years. She still loves to dance, work in her garden, and do landscaping. One of her passions for a number of years has been old house restoration. She and her husband have restored nine historic homes, some built before the Civil War, and one commercial building—all in the Calftown area of Quincy. She finds renovation "so interesting," and enjoys working with more than twenty tenants.

BECOME A MEMBER!

Your membership is vital to help us maintain the community's amazing architectural treasures including the John Wood Mansion, the 1835 Log Cabin, the History Museum on the Square. Sign up at hsqac.org or call 217-222-1835.

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Paul Warfield Tibbets:

Dreaming of a Life in the Clouds

Part III

By: Rob Mellon

Paul Tibbets' life was forever changed the moment he was told he would be taking command of the 509th Composite Group, which was the unit responsible for the flight planning and operational deployment of the atomic bomb. The group was stationed at the secluded Wendover Army Airfield in Utah. Tibbets personally chose Wendover because of the remote location of the base. An extremely rigorous screening process was developed to select the pilots, crews, engineers, and mechanics of the 509th so the unit was not at full strength until May 1945. A relatively large community of both military and civilian workers was stationed at the remote base in Utah, including soldiers in several fields and nuclear scientists from the Manhattan Project.

The entire project was conducted in complete secrecy, but due to the crushing stress of the program and to increase overall morale, families were allowed to

accompany the men to Wendover. Paul Tibbets' wife Lucy was one of the family members at the Utah base. She wondered about the Army's mission there and often asked about the nature of the training and about the individuals who worked on the base. Due to the level of secrecy required, Tibbets had to routinely lie to Lucy about the program. He told her that the civilians working at Wendover were merely general laborers, plumbers, and electricians. The truth was that many of them were nuclear scientists from the Manhattan Project.

One afternoon, Tibbets came home and was surprised to discover that Lucy had one of the workers fixing a plumbing issue in their quarters. The man was a scientist working at the base, but to keep up the ruse he dutifully played along. The scientist was relieved when Colonel Tibbets arrived and liberated him of the plumbing duties Lucy Tibbets had him working on. The daily lies, constant misdirection, and overall secrecy caused a

significant amount of tension between Paul and Lucy Tibbets and had a negative impact on their marriage.

In early summer 1945, the 509th was deployed to the Pacific Island of Tinian in the Marianas. There the group refined the plan to deliver the bomb, conducted practice flights, and waited for the order to complete their mission. On the afternoon of August 5, 1945, President Truman approved the use of the atomic bomb against Japan. Upon receipt of the mission, Colonel Tibbets personally selected the plane to be used and changed the name of the aircraft to the Enola Gay after his mother, Enola Gay Haggard Tibbets. He later said he always admired his mother for her quiet dignity and courageous demeanor, so he felt that Enola Gay was the perfect name choice for the plane that would deliver the first atomic weapon against an enemy target in war.

Deputy commander Robert Lewis was scheduled to be the lead pilot on the flight schedule that day and was incensed when he discovered that Colonel Tibbets had changed the name of his plane. Lewis was unaware that Tibbets had been hand selected for the all-important mission several weeks before. After a brief



Paul Warfield Tibbets was promoted to Brigadier General in the United States Air Force in January, 1959.



Operation Crossroads tested a pair of nuclear weapons at Bikini Atoll on July 25, 1946. The water column and mushroom cloud were from the second bomb which was detonated under the water during the operation.



General Carl Andrew Spaatz awarding Paul Tibbets the Distinguished Service Cross (DSC) shortly after the Enola Gay landed back at Tinian Island after the mission in Japan. (Courtesy of Air Force Research Agency.)

conversation with COL Tibbets, LTC Lewis was provided with more information. With the task clarified, he became the co-pilot on the mission.

The Enola Gay weighed an astonishing 65-tons as it taxied down the two-mile long runway at North Field on Tinian Island. At 2:45 am the B-29 Silverplate lifted off – destination, Hiroshima, Japan. Once safely in the air, Colonel Tibbets called to the men, “Attention...well boys--here’s the last piece of the jigsaw puzzle.” The crew understood the importance of the mission and truly believed that this was going to help end the war.

It was more than 2,000 miles to Hiroshima, so the Enola Gay was not due to arrive until 8:15 am. A small group of planes took part in the mission, with a few planes measuring atmospheric and an additional plane accompanying the Enola Gay close to the site. As they approached Japan, the other aircraft in the formation split off, leaving Tibbets and his crew all alone as they reached their destination. Japan had experienced a torrent of bombing raids with hundreds of planes in the days and weeks before August 6th, so a grouping of a few planes did not draw any defensive response that morning. The Enola Gay freely cruised across the sky over Hiroshima.

At 8:15 am on August 6, 1945, the crew of the Enola Gay released the atomic bomb, and 45 seconds later it detonated over the city of Hiroshima. The devastation was immediate and significant. During planning, Robert Oppenheimer had told Colonel Tibbets that the plane might not be able to survive the shock



Paul Tibbets held multiple positions at the Pentagon during his military career including serving on the staff of the Joint Chiefs of Staff.

waves from the blast. Fortunately for the crew, the immediate evasive action taken by Tibbets allowed the B-29 to weather the aftermath of the explosion. The plane returned to Tinian and General Spaatz immediately awarded Paul Tibbets the Distinguished Service Cross, the second highest decoration in the United States Army. The rest of the crew received Air Medals.

On August 8, 1945, the 509th dropped a second bomb over Nagasaki, Japan. Paul Tibbets was not on the Nagasaki flight. The next day the Japanese emperor said he would accept the conditions outlined in the Potsdam Conference, and on September 2, 1945, Japan formally surrendered. Paul Tibbets was able to visit Hiroshima that September and view the devastation. He was a veteran of several combat missions, and was pleased that the war was over and that he had played such an important role in its conclusion.

The 509th remained deployed until November 6, 1945. The group then returned to the United States and was stationed at Walker Air Base in Roswell, New Mexico. In January 1946, Colonel William Blanchard replaced Tibbets as commander of the group.

The 509th was responsible for the mission of delivering atomic bombs and famously took part in Operation Crossroads in 1946. Crossroads was the first nuclear test publicly announced and observed by an invited audience, including a large contingent from the press corps.

Operation Crossroads was created to test the impact atomic detonations would have on the U.S. Navy. A fleet of 95 ships was assembled in the lagoon of Bikini

Atoll where multiple atomic bombs were dropped. The goal was to test the impact of the detonation on naval operations as well as test the effects of radiation exposure. The natives of Bikini Atoll were displaced and relocated to nearby Rongerik Atoll. Several test animals were placed on the ships to measure the effects of radiation. Tibbets was designated as an adviser for the operation. It is believed that Tibbets was denied a more direct role in the operation because of his contentious relationship with General Norstad.

The 509th was involved in another famous incident near Roswell in June 1947. Rancher Mac Brazel discovered metallic and rubber debris from an unidentified flying object on his property and informed the local authorities. The

Continued to next page...



Captain Theodore “Dutch” VanKirk (left); Colonel Paul W. Tibbets (center); Major Thomas Ferebee (right) in 1945 hours after the crew returned from the mission that delivered the first atomic bomb over Hiroshima.

Continued from previous page...

wreckage was taken from the crash site and transported to nearby Walker Air Base in Roswell. This event has caused quite a stir with ufologists over the years. The U.S. Air Force later revealed that the wreckage was from a high-altitude weather balloon. Tibbets was not with the 509th at the time of the Roswell incident. He had left New Mexico in 1946.

Most of the service members who served in World War II left the armed forces and returned home after the war. Paul Tibbets decided to remain in the military. After leaving Roswell, he attended the Air Command and Staff College at Maxwell Air Force Base in Alabama. After finishing the leader development course, he was assigned to the Directorate of Requirements at Air Force HQ at the Pentagon. Tibbets was named the Director of Requirements in the Strategic Air Division, responsible for drawing up requirements for future bombers.

Tibbets supported the development and proliferation of new jet technologies. He believed that jet propulsion was the wave of the future in air power. He was a strong proponent of the Boeing B-47 Stratojet Program and was assigned B-47 Project Officer at the Boeing facility in Wichita, Kansas, from July 1950 to February 1952. Following his time in Kansas, Tibbets was assigned to the Proof Test Division at Eglin Air Force Base in Valparaiso, Florida. From early 1952 until 1954, he was responsible for the testing of the B-47 Stratojet. He had been actively involved in the development of the B-29 Superfortress, so he brought a great deal of experience to the new bomber program.

With his military career progressing, Paul Tibbets left Eglin Air Base in 1954 and attended the Air War College at Maxwell Air Base in Alabama. After graduating in June 1955, he was named the Director of War Plans for Allied Air Forces in Central Europe at Fontainebleau, France. He decided to leave Lucy and the children in Alabama when he went to France, which caused a great deal of marital tension. Unfortunately, a few months after he arrived in Europe, the Tibbets obtained a divorce.

Paul Tibbets met Andrea Quattrehomme while serving in France, and she accompanied him when he took command of the 308th Bombardment Wing at Hunter Airfield in Georgia in February 1956. The couple married shortly after they arrived in the United States. He remained with the 308th in Georgia until early 1958.

After leaving Georgia, Tibbets then took command of the 6th Air Division at MacDill Air Force Base in Florida in January 1958. MacDill was very near where he grew up. Returning to Florida must have reminded him of the very beginning of his flying career and the barnstorming Baby Ruth flight he took with Doug Davis in 1927.

Paul Tibbets' military career was a success, and he had progressed in rank. In January 1959 while serving at MacDill he was promoted to Brigadier General. Following his command in Florida, Tibbets was again transferred to the Pentagon where he worked as Director of Management Analysis. In July 1962 he was assigned to the Joint Chiefs of Staff where he served as Deputy



The 509th Composite Group was created during World War II. The unit operated B-29 Silverplates which were specifically designed to deliver the atomic bombs developed by the Manhattan Project. Tibbets was named the first commander of the 509th.

Director of Operations. In June 1963 he was reassigned again and was named the Deputy Director of the National Military Command System at the Pentagon.

In 1964, Paul Tibbets was named military attaché to India. He remained in India serving in that capacity until June 1966 when he returned to the United States. It was a long and decorated career, but it was coming to an end. It began on February 25, 1937, when he entered the U.S. Army Air Corps at Ft. Thomas, Kentucky, with the dream of becoming a pilot -- and ended after nearly 30 years of distinguished service when he retired as a Brigadier General from the United States Air Force on August 31, 1966.

It was time for the next chapter of his life, but one thing was for certain -- he was going to remain in aviation. His military service was ending, but his days as a pilot were far from over.

GEORGE WASHINGTON'S HAIR

HOW EARLY AMERICANS REMEMBERED THE FOUNDERS

KEITH BEUTLER

HISTORY MUSEUM
332 MAINE ST.

Sunday, May 21, 2023
2:00 PM

Dr. Keith Beutler
Missouri Baptist University

"George Washington's hair emerges as a pocket-sized counterpart to Mount Vernon or the Washington Monument, all memory-objects that richly illuminate the story of American national identity."
-- Susan Schoelwer

Benya Program Popular

The Historical Society of Quincy and Adams County sponsored a program on John Benya entitled “Benya, Master of Midcentury Architecture” presented by Quincy architect Anthony (Tony) Crane.

Benya, a Quincy architect whose career spanned four decades, was a proponent of the midcentury modern style. He designed more than 500 buildings in the U.S., including many in Quincy such as the striking St. Boniface Church at 117 North 7th which was named by the Illinois Association of Architects as one of Illinois’ 150 most important structures, and the ultra-modernistic Quincy Regional Airport, which features circular patterns and distinctive blue glass skylights.

Tony Crane, past principal partner and officer in the Architectural-Engineering firm of Architechnics, Inc. of Quincy, worked closely with Benya many years ago. Semi-retired, Crane currently practices as an architectural consultant. He is an emeritus member of the American Institute of Architects and is licensed to practice in Illinois, Missouri, and Iowa. Crane was awarded a National Council of Architectural Registration Boards certificate in 1979. He has served on the Culver-Stockton College Board of Trustees since 2011.

The Historical Society owns many of Benya’s original architectural drawings which were available for viewing following the presentation.

Architechnics, Inc. of Quincy sponsored the program.



Quincy Regional Airport



Presenter Tony Crane attended the reception following the program and is pictured with a cake featuring images of some of Benya’s most popular Quincy buildings.



*Caroline Poles,
Quincy's History
Shop Manager*

FROM QUINCY’S HISTORY SHOP

My Journey to Quincy started in Paris, France. My mother and I moved to NYC when I was 3 years old. I would take the NYC-Paris flight by myself as a child several times a year to stay with my father. I moved back to Paris when I was 18 and assisted a Parisian fashion designer with her products and displays in her shop and also the displays in the famous department store in Paris called the Gallery Lafayette. My father was living in Dubai and wanted me to move there to help with his business. I lived in Dubai during the time that Dubai was up and coming. Although Dubai was an exciting city to live in and was very innovative, I got lost several times because of its rapid growth.

My mother came to the Quincy area for a big commercial design project and fell in love with a historical home in Shelbina, Mo. She decided to follow her dream and buy the big yellow colonial home and live in it. When I came to visit her in the summer of 1999, I also fell in love and decided to stay in the US. I came back to Quincy in 2011 after having lived in several places, including Shreveport, Louisiana. While living in Shreveport I became a background extra and Sandra Bullock’s stand-in for movies that were being filmed there. I have been in a number of movies no one has ever seen....but the experience was wonderful.”

When I moved to Quincy in 2011 I took a position with Media Development (now Vervocity) and then Quincy Media as a video producer. My passion continues to be creative effective advertising and networking. I have fallen in love with Quincy, the Quincy people and the many Quincy community events. I naturally created a concierge desk for Quincy called Caroconcierge because of the many resources and connections that I have made while living here. It was suggested by Mary Winters that I just sit on a billboard and point people in the right Quincy Direction. That sounded fun but a virtual concierge desk is more comfortable.

I continue to produce videos for Mint Blue Media and volunteer by helping put on successful fundraisers with Alana’s Angels. I enjoy serving on several boards to help support the Quincy community. Managing the History Museum giftshop has been incredibly fun! We have brought in many local vendors as a way to show love and support to our community in The District. I am very grateful to be a part of the History Museum on the Square and grateful for all the wonderful people who help make things happen here at the Historical Society of Quincy and Adams County.

SIT LUX ET LUX FUIT.

THE MOST WORSHIPFUL

Abraham Jonas Esq., GRAND MASTER, of the most Honorable Society of

FREE AND ACCEPTED MASONS IN THE STATE OF ILLINOIS,

TO ALL AND EVERY. OUR RIGHT WORSHIPFUL AND LOVING BRETHREN--Send Greeting.

KNOW YE, THAT WE, AT THE PETITION OF OUR RIGHT WORSHIPFUL AND WELL BELOVED BRETHREN,

Horace L. Biss, Herman Rogers, Thaddeus Monroe, Andrew Miller, Jas. C. Lee, Dr. Ralston, John Cook
and several other Brethren, residing at or near *Quincy*, in the County of *Adams* and State of Illinois do hereby constitute the said
Brethren into a regular **LODGE OF FREE AND ACCEPTED MASONS.** to be opened at the aforesaid *Quincy* by the name of

Adams Lodge No. 1 And do further, at the said Petition and of the great trust and confidence reposed in the above named Brethren, hereby appoint,
Horace L. Biss Master, *Herman Rogers* Senior Warden, *Thaddeus Monroe* Junior Warden
for opening the said Lodge, and for such time only, as may be thought proper by the brethren thereof: It being our will, that our appointment, shall in no wise affect
any future action of the said Lodge, but that the same shall be according to the regulations of the Lodge, and consistent with the General laws of the Society
contained in the Book of Constitutions, and the laws of the State of Illinois, the said

Document showing Jonas' Masonic Membership. (Courtesy of Herman Lodge #39.)

ABRAHAM JONAS...LINCOLN'S DEAR FRIEND

This article first appeared in Illinois Heritage, the popular history magazine of the Illinois State Historical Society. It is used with permission.

By: Beth Young

If the name Abraham Jonas doesn't "ring a bell" for those interested in mid-19th century Illinois history, it should. One of Abraham Lincoln's closest friends, Jonas played a significant role in Illinois politics of that era. Jonas was also a patriarch of a large and interesting family as well as an active official in the Masonic Lodge. His is another great story.

Born in Exeter, England, in 1801, Abraham was one of twenty-two children of Annie Ezekiel and Benjamin Jonas. He and several of his brothers emigrated to the United States as young men. Abraham arrived in 1819 and went directly to Cincinnati, Ohio, where his older sibling Joseph operated an auction business. Following his arrival in Ohio, Abraham married Lucia Orah Seixas, the daughter of a Jewish Rabbi. She and their infant son died soon thereafter in 1825.

Around this time, Abraham and Joseph helped establish the first Jewish congregation in Cincinnati, and both became dedicated Masons who soon assumed leadership roles in that organization.

After Lucia's death, Jonas moved to Williamstown, Kentucky, where in 1829, he wed Louisa Block. While he lived in the Bluegrass State, Abraham was elected to the state legislature four times, served as Speaker of the House, and continued his participation in Freemasonry.

Seeking new opportunities, Abraham and Louisa moved to Quincy, Illinois, in 1838, with their five children. By 1842, they were joined by two of his brothers, Edward and Samuel, who worked with Abraham in operating an iron and carriage enterprise. Abraham also read law with Orville Hickman Browning, a prominent Quincy attorney and an eventual US Senator. In 1840-1841, Jonas moved his family to Columbus, Illinois, where he ran a mercantile business and edited a newspaper, *The Columbus Advocate*. After returning to Quincy in 1842, he finished studying with Browning and passed the bar in 1843; soon thereafter, he formed a legal partnership with Henry Asbury which lasted until Jonas' death. He ran at least twice for state legislative offices as a Whig. He was elected a state representative in 1842, and he lost a state senate bid in 1844.

During this time it seems that Jonas first met Abraham Lincoln. Details are sketchy, but the two men were probably introduced by Browning in Springfield in the early 1840's. Both were young attorneys who might have met in the halls of the Capitol. Both men were also active in Whig politics during the 1840's, and both were in attendance at the

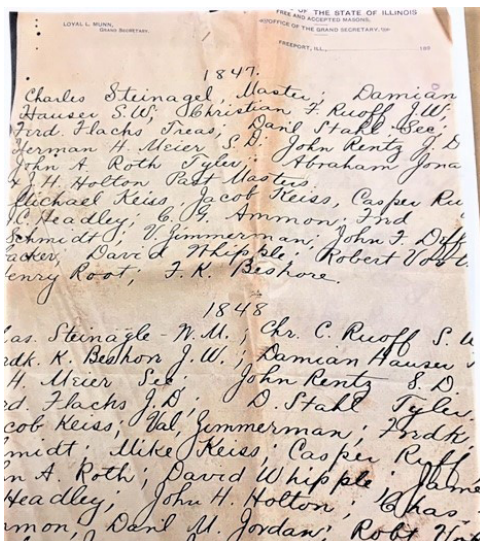
Washington Dinner on 22 February, 1843 in Springfield. Whatever the circumstance of their meeting, Lincoln and Jonas became dear friends, and as noted Jonas scholar Dr. David Frolick says, "Jonas' friendship with Lincoln would be vital."



Abraham Jonas

By 1854, when Lincoln visited Quincy for the first time, they were well-acquainted. In that year, Jonas asked Lincoln to debate Stephen Douglas in Quincy on behalf of Archibald Williams, a Quincyan running for US House of Representatives on an "Anti-Nebraska" platform.

A portion of Jonas' letter of request to Lincoln states "...all the Whigs here would be much gratified if you could make it convenient and pay us a visit, while the little giant is here. It is believed by all who know you, that a reply from you would be more effective than from any other." Lincoln did appear in Quincy for that purpose, and *The Quincy Whig* reported that he "left a most favorable impression upon all who heard him." After the debate, Jonas took Lincoln to a local oyster bar for sustenance and discussion. Jonas was also in charge of arrangements for the famous Lincoln Douglas



Listing of 1847 Herman Lodge members. (Courtesy of Herman Lodge #39.)

Debate in Quincy in 1858. Although Lincoln lost that senate race that year, his friend Jonas helped make him a national figure.

A confusing aspect of Jonas' political life is connected to his participation in the 1860 Republican Convention in Chicago. While both he and Lincoln had been delegates to the 1856 Republican Convention which named John C. Fremont as its standard bearer, Jonas' name does not appear on the list of delegates for the 1860 gathering which nominated Lincoln. This fact is important because there have been those who insist that Jonas put Lincoln's name in nomination in Chicago. Among those who believed this was Jonas' son, Edward, who wrote a letter to *The Chicago Daily Tribune* in September 1882 averring that, indeed, it was his father who nominated the future president. If Abraham Jonas was not a delegate, seemingly he could not have nominated Lincoln. Also, according to convention records, Orville Hickman Browning was the Adams County delegate, and Jonas was described as Lincoln's floor manager and was not listed as a delegate at large. As Lincoln's leader on the floor, Jonas was able to steer the nomination toward his friend by distributing bogus attendance tickets and thereby "packing the house." Most evidence suggests that, in fact, Lincoln was nominated by Norman B. Judd, a US Representative from Illinois and a good friend.

When Lincoln was elected in November, Jonas was pleased; and, although there was political disagreement among his children and other relatives regarding the pending war, seemingly all of them respected the new president and considered him a family friend. An example of this is found in an event of December 1860 which occurred when one of the Jonases from the South notified Abraham of an assassination plot against Lincoln. Jonas immediately notified his friend and possibly saved Lincoln's life.

Another of Abraham Jonas' passions was Freemasonry. While he lived in Kentucky, Jonas rose in the state Masonic hierarchy becoming Grand Master of all the state's lodges in 1833. He carried his interest into Illinois when he moved here in 1838. Soon after his arrival in Adams County, he helped establish a lodge in Columbus, Illinois, and served as its first Worshipful Master. That group surrendered its charter in 1846, and, in 1847, Jonas' name appeared on the charter of the new Herman Lodge #39 in Quincy. On 6 April 1840, Jonas was elected Most Worshipful Grand Master of the recently-established Lodge of Illinois. He is believed to be the only Mason to have been Grand Master in two states.

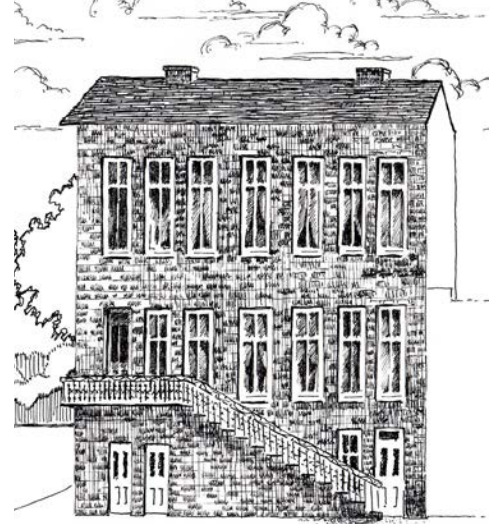
Jonas' commitment to the Masonic movement led him to Nauvoo, Illinois, where, in March of 1842, he installed a new lodge. Among those whom he initiated was Mormon leader Joseph Smith. Eventually there were irregularities discovered in the Nauvoo chapter, and an investigation followed. Dr. Wayne Temple described the situation as follows: "...in October of 1843, the committee on this subject reported that they could not pass on the returns from Nauvoo since it was perfectly clear to them that the candidates at Nauvoo were not learning the ritual and were being run quickly through the degrees in huge numbers, contrary to ancient Masonic tradition and regulations." For these reasons, the lodge was closed only to be reopened again by Jonas again in 1844.

Whatever Abraham Jonas' motivation regarding the establishment of the Nauvoo lodges, Frolick notes that "Jonas' work resulted in Mormon support of the Whig Party. Thus his two passions were joined."

In addition to his political and Masonic activities, Jonas was involved with his large and very diverse family. Most of his nine children lived in the South, having been sent there by their parents for schooling. Abraham also had other family there, including his brother George, a prominent New Orleans banker.

Of his six sons, four most certainly donned the gray of the Confederacy. The youngest, Edward, was true to the Union. And, son George B. may have served both North and South. Of the three girls, Lucia, Anna (Annie), and Rosalie, the only one about whom there seems to be much information is Anna, who lived in Quincy throughout the war and supported the North.

The life of brother George presents a conundrum. According to Robert Rosen, "George may also have served the Confederacy." *Shapell*, the impressive Jewish Civil War internet site, notes that there were two George B. Jonases on the muster rolls for Louisiana militia and speculates that these two were Abraham's brother George B., as well as his own son by the same name. Temple does not mention this, however. Instead, he cites the Lincoln Papers in the Library of Congress that indicate that George B. (the son) contacted Lincoln and requested to join Union forces in 1864. Dr. Cynthia Gensheimer concurs and states that George asked Lincoln this favor as a result of "the friend-ship existing between my Father and yourself, for so long a time." No reply from Lincoln has come to light, but according to the National Archives 1890 Federal Census Records, there



Law office of Abraham Jonas and Henry Asbury

was a George B. Jonas from New Orleans who enlisted in Battery C of the 10th Heavy Artillery out of New York. He entered the service as a paid substitute for Henry T. Bedell and was discharged for disability in July of 1865. Abraham's son Edward also vouched for his brother's Union service stating that George "left New Orleans for New York to enlist." George died in November 1906 in New Orleans.

Charles Henry was an officer in the 12th Arkansas. He was captured on 9 July 1863 at Port Hudson and was imprisoned on Johnson's Island in Ohio until 14 March 1865. Throughout his captivity, he was in regular correspondence with family members and received clothing and reading material from those in Quincy. In 1864, Charles was also given a special three-week parole signed by Lincoln allowing him to visit his dying father in Quincy. This was arranged by Anna Jonas who asked Orville Hickman Browning to expedite the reunion. Abraham died within hours of Charles' arrival. As Frolick points out, the fact that Lincoln personally ordered Charles' parole reflects "the bond of friendship between the two men."

Son Benjamin Franklin, called Frank, was an attorney in New Orleans who, in 1857, worked on a case with Abraham Lincoln, whom he remembered as a dear friend of his father. In September, 1862, Frank joined Fenner's Battery of Louisianan Light Artillery as a private. Rising through the ranks, he eventually became a major serving under General John Bell Hood. After the war, Frank served in the Louisiana state legislature before being elected to the U.S. Senate.

In an unusual twist, two more of the Jonas sons presented an example of "brother against brother" as they served at Shiloh on opposing sides. Julian Jonas' military career began in 1862 when he joined the Rebel Louisiana Crescent Regiment (24th) as a

Continued to next page...

Continued from previous page...

private and fought in the Hornet's Nest at Shiloh. After his ninety day enlistment expired, he joined the Orleans Light Horse Cavalry and was soon promoted to quartermaster sergeant. Little seems to be known about him after the war except for the fact that he drowned unexpectedly while fording the Yazoo River around 1872.

There is more information available regarding brother Edward's service. He enlisted in Adams County in August of 1861 as a member of Company C of the 50th Illinois (the Blind Half Hundred) and served under Quincy General Benjamin Mayberry Prentiss at Shiloh. Taken prisoner during that battle, he was released in an exchange in 1862 and returned to the ranks as a lieutenant. In 1864, Edward was part of Sherman's campaign to capture Atlanta. As the fighting progressed through Tennessee and Georgia, Edward's unit may have seen action against three of his brothers – Julian, Frank, and Sidney Alroy, who were among the Confederate troops in the area. According to Gensheimer, "Two days after the fall of Atlanta, in September, 1864, Julian wrote to assure Edward that brothers Frank and Alroy were with him, alive and well."

Edward left the service a colonel and returned to Quincy before moving permanently to New Orleans in 1887. At the age of seventy-four, Edward tried, in vain, to join the U S Army to fight in World War I.

Sidney Alroy has become perhaps the best known of the six. In the 1850 census record he is listed as Sam'l, presumably Samuel. For whatever reason, he apparently chose to go by Sidney Alroy or simply Alroy. In July 1861, he joined the 11th Mississippi and rose to the rank of major. Serving under Generals Earl Van Dorn, Stephen Lee, and John Bell Hood, he participated in several important battles including First Bull Run, Eleven Pines, and Chicamauga.

On his way home to Aberdeen, Mississippi, after the war, Alroy and some companions were at the Powhatan Hotel in Richmond when they were prevailed upon by a young lady to compose a few lines on the backs of some Confederate notes that were blank on that side. An account by Jonas in *Watson's Magazine* describes the situation: "I had some little standing among the boys as a ready scribbler, and I think I wrote all the 'sentiments' for the gang on scratch paper, each one transcribing his offering upon the note allotted him. Upon my bill I wrote the lines that unwittingly struck a patriotic cord and 'will not down.' If I had chosen from the lot I would possibly have taken one of the other poems for mine as time had not yet

given sacred tinge to things Confederate."

Following publication throughout the South, the verse became very popular; it was eventually closely connected to the "Lost Cause" mythology. Entitled "Lines on the Back of a Confederate Note," the work was printed and distributed widely for years after the war and was mentioned in the novel and film versions of *Gone With the Wind*.

Alroy's post-war career centered around *The Aberdeen Examiner*, a newspaper he established in 1866 and ran for the remainder of his life. When he died in 1915, his obituary in the *Confederate Veteran Magazine* noted that "he wrought his brain and heart and soul into the fibers of her [Mississippi's] civic life."

While the three Jonas daughters were not as well-known as several of their brothers, Anna's story is worth noting. She was born in Quincy in 1841, the seventh child. Educated privately in her hometown, she became involved in the war from its start. At the age of nineteen, she, along with her sister Rosalie, joined the Needle Pickets, a patriotic group of area ladies who organized in order to nurse the sick and wounded and to raise money for the Union war effort. Early on, Anna was elected treasurer, a job which she took seriously.

After Appomattox, Anna was employed as teacher, first in the public schools and later at the Quincy Female Seminary, as well as at a free school for poor children. Soon she began to stray from her Jewish faith and started "fraternizing with Quincy's Protestant intelligentsia" according to Gensheimer.

Eventually, she embraced Christianity and married a local Episcopal priest, Yale-educated Thomas Bucklin Wells. The couple left Illinois and dedicated the rest of their lives to church activities and social justice. She died in 1926 in Minnesota.

As the war waned in 1864, so did the life of Abraham Jonas. There seems to be no clear-cut information regarding his cause of death; there are simply references to his declining health. In Orville Hickman Browning's Diary, however, the entry for 9 August 1863 mentions that Jonas took a morning bath at the Pike County Springs near Meredosia, Illinois, where he, the Brownings, and several other friends were visiting. Browning's notes for the next day state that "Jonas had a high fever last night, and is very ill this morning. Entirely imbecile – knows nothing – is very feeble and nervous, and seems in danger of paralysis or congestion of the brain."

On the 11th of August, Jonas was returned to Quincy under the care of his wife and a Dr. Ralston. Did Jonas ever recover from this malady? Was this illness the "beginning of

the end"?

Jonas died on 8 June 1864. His obituary in *The Quincy Whig* mentioned nothing about his friendship with Lincoln, his Jewish faith, his Masonic affiliation, or his splintered family. Instead, the notice described him as "Possessing great energy of character and activity of intellect, he went at, and did everything right by a kind of intellectual intuition found in but few men ... A more kind-hearted, generous man than Abraham Jonas is seldom found in the round world."

He is buried in Quincy's Valley of Peace Cemetery near his brothers Samuel and Edward.

Beth Young is a retired Adams County educator who taught in the Quincy Public Schools, at John Wood Community College, and at Quincy University from 1969 until 2019. She enjoys researching, writing articles about the Civil War, and speaking to groups about social, cultural and biographical aspects of the conflict. She holds a B.A. in History from Quincy College and an M.A. in Library Science from Northern Illinois University.

JONAS MARKER DEDICATED

On Saturday, 29 April at 2:00 pm, the HSQAC in conjunction with the Tri-States Civil War Round Table, will dedicate an informational marker honoring Abraham



Lincoln's dear Quincy friend, Abraham Jonas. The public is invited to this event which will be held in Valley of Peace Cemetery at North 30th Street in Quincy. Round Table commander, Dr. Tim Jacobs, will make brief remarks about Jonas, as will a member of Herman Lodge #39.

Jonas, the first Jewish resident of Quincy, was a local attorney who was also a major force in the development of the Masonic Lodge in Illinois. Moreover, Jonas was a close friend and confidant of Lincoln and was instrumental in helping Lincoln receive the Republican nomination for President in 1860. The two men were Whigs who met while serving in the state legislature.



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CIVIL WAR SYMPOSIUM SCHEDULED IN APRIL

In previous issues of *The Governor's Post* we have highlighted two of our upcoming Symposium speakers, Dr. Edna Greene Medford and Dr. Curt Fields. In this issue, we want to provide information about our other speakers.

Dr. Timothy M. Roberts joined the faculty of Western Illinois University in 2008. Prior to that he earned a Doctor of Philosophy degree from England's Oxford University. His academic specialties include American military history, American legal history, and the American Civil War. Dr. Roberts has taught abroad in China and Turkey and has been the recipient of Andrew Mellon Foundation Research Fellowships; NEH grants; and a Fulbright. The author of two well-received books – *Distant Revolutions: 1848 and the Challenge to American Exceptionalism* and *The Infernal War: The Civil War Letters of William and Jane Standard*. This second volume is the basis for the Symposium program which he and his wife are offering. Emily Roberts has degrees in education, counseling, and divinity. She runs

an online business specializing in vintage items from Western Illinois.

Dr. Sam Wheeler is currently Director of History Programs for the Illinois Supreme Court Historic Preservation Commission. He is considered an expert in Lincoln studies, the Civil War Era, and Illinois history. Previously Wheeler served as the Illinois State Historian as well as the Director of Research and Collections at the Lincoln Presidential Library. In these capacities he oversaw the Papers of Abraham Lincoln Project, the Oral History Program, and the publication of the "Journal of Illinois History."

Cody Engdahl is both a historical novelist and a fiddler. He has written a Civil War trilogy called *The 2nd Michigan Cavalry Chronicles* and a prequel called *Mexico, My Love*. After graduating from Wayne State, Cody worked for more than twenty years in the broadcasting industry. His experiences in that field include commercial producer, camera man, and reporter. He currently writes and plays music.

CIVIL WAR SYMPOSIUM IV SCHEDULE

April 28-29, 2023

Kroc Center, 405 Vermont, Quincy, Illinois

Friday, April 28 FIRST SESSION

- | | |
|---------|--|
| 7:00 pm | Welcome |
| 7:05 pm | Dr. Edna Greene Medford
Dog Whistles, Red Meat, and Political Discourse in the Age of Lincoln |
| 8:10 pm | Dr. Tim & Emily Roberts
This Infernal War: The Civil War Letters of William and Jane Standard |

Saturday, April 29 EARLY BIRD VIGNETTES

- | | |
|---------|---|
| 8:00 am | Dr. Kurt Leimbach
Dr. Samuel Everett-Renaissance Man |
| 8:15 am | Troy Culbertson
The Quincy Illinois Veterans Home: A Response to the Civil War |
| 8:30 am | Jeff VanCamp
Chaddock's Roots: A College, A Commander, and the Civil War |
| 8:45 am | Arlis Dittmer
Elizabeth Leebrick:
The Soldiers' Mother |

Saturday, April 29 SECOND SESSION

- | | |
|----------|--|
| 9:10 am | Dr. Curt Fields
President Grant: My Life with Julia |
| 10:15 am | Cody Engdahl
History of the Civil War Through Fiddle Tunes |
| 11:20 am | Dr. Sam Wheeler
Abraham Lincoln's Most Controversial Legal Case: The Matson Slave Trial |



QUINCY *Civil War* SYMPOSIUM 2023

Sponsored by the Historical Society of
Quincy & Adams County and the Tri-States
Civil War Round Table

EDNA GREENE MEDFORD

"Dog Whistles, Red Meat, and Political
Discourse in the Age of Lincoln"



SAMUEL WHEELER

"Abraham Lincoln's Most
Controversial Legal Case:
The Matson Slave Trial"



TIM & EMILY ROBERTS

"This Infernal War: The Civil
War Letters of William and
Jane Standard"



CODY ENGDAHL

"History of the Civil War
through Fiddle Tunes"

APRIL 28-29 2023

CURT FIELDS

"President Grant: My Life
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American Spy During the Cold War

By: Joseph Newkirk

In a military intelligence career spanning nine years during the height of the Cold War and bringing him face-to-face with Soviet officers and spies, Lester Holtschlag carried an attaché case instead of a gun. Still, Russians followed wherever he went, interrogated, and, on occasion, tried to kill him. The American government needed the scholarly linguist and historian fluent in Russian, German, and French to monitor Soviet activity in Europe and communicate directly with his Communist counterparts in the nebulous world of international espionage.

Lester John Holtschlag was born in Quincy on February 2, 1926, to Roman Catholic parents who sent him to parochial schools and one year at Notre Dame, before he transferred and graduated from Quincy High School. Although old enough for conscription in World War II, problems with his inner ear and balance kept him out of this war, so he entered Quincy College majoring in German and graduating in the class of 1948. He began graduate school at the University of Illinois, and while working on a master's degree became an assistant instructor of German and French. Then in 1950 the Korean War began.

Instead of waiting for the draft, he enlisted envisioning a more lucrative assignment and entered the Army's Military Intelligence Division. The Pentagon first assigned him to Oberammergau, Germany, in the G-2 Program of its European Intelligence Department. This work entailed traversing West Germany contacting officers and primarily collecting photographs and Russian army maps vital to American

relations with Communist East Europe.

After reenlisting in 1953, he conducted a spy ring out of a Berlin hospital with the Corps of Engineers' Intelligence Department, a three-man espionage operation that gathered information from existing spies. He reenlisted a second time in 1956, and now the Army sent him to Language School at Monterey, California, to study Russian for one-year with native-born teachers. After mastering this language, his next tour of duty began at a reassessment camp in Germany, where he worked with the Propaganda Unit of NATO. Next the Army transferred him to the State Department's military branch, where—after exchanging his uniform for civilian clothes—he worked at Camp Zirndorf for East European refugees who had escaped to the West.

After two months on this job, the Hungarian Revolt of October 1956 jolted Eastern Europe. Militant students in Budapest staged a great procession demanding that government leaders redress grievances. When the Communist military fired into the crowd the protest turned violent, and when the Hungarian army joined the protesters, the demonstration became a revolution. After students rioted to force the nation to withdraw from the Warsaw Pact and hold free elections, Soviet tanks rolled in. The aftermath of this confrontation left 2,500 Hungarians dead and 220,000 refugees. Holtschlag stayed at Camp Zirndorf, now overflowing, for two-and-a-half years.

After a new American military commander took office in Europe, Holtschlag returned to the Propaganda Unit. Two months later, officers in Berlin



Lester John Holtschlag (1926-2013) was an American soldier, spy, and skilled linguist. After leaving the military he worked at Johns Hopkins University for 29 years. He returned to Quincy after retirement where he volunteered at the Historical Society translating documents from German to English.

asked him to join a liaison team to the Soviets. The United States, Great Britain and Russia had formed these liaison units following the Potsdam Conference to establish national demarcation lines in the aftermath of WWII and define the Soviet role in East Europe. His 15-member team had a Russian counterpart, and the Army assigned Holtschlag to the Soviet commander-in-chief for East Berlin. His team kept track of all 20 Russian military units across East Germany and reported daily on any Soviet activity they observed. In a 2013 interview with this author for the Illinois Veterans' Home magazine Bugle, he elaborated: "The Cold War began soon after World War II ended in 1945, with Communist and Capitalist ideologies vying for world domination. Our liaison's



After the failed Hungarian Revolt in 1956 thousands of Eastern Europeans flooded to the West. Holtschlag worked with Hungarian refugees at Camp Zirndorf near Nuremburg, Germany for two and a half years. (Image from Radio Free Europe.)

task was coordinating information from barracks and assigned units. We had a routine down whenever we got stopped by Soviet officials: 'We're not spies! We're observers!' Russian road guards responded, 'Oh, so that means you're spies!' They tried to shadow and catch us after we left our residences, but we had a souped-up Chevy that worked well on the first Autobahn. Then the Russians got a Mercedes-Benz, and it became more difficult."

After nine years of intense, often harrowing but always exciting work in an "absolutely unique and most unusual military life," Lester Holtschlag, with State Department recognition and several honorary certificates, became a civilian. He soon joined Johns Hopkins University in Baltimore, Maryland, as a researcher observing Soviet activity—this time, though, not in field espionage but by surveying science and technology magazines written in Russian, French and German. After his assessment, he authored reports alerting professors at the university about the state of "combustion development" in East Germany, a topic



American spy Lester Holtschlag traversed across West Germany contacting officers, collecting photographs and Russian Army maps vital to American relations with Communist Eastern Europe.

vital to the burgeoning rocket propulsion and space programs. While in the military, he had met Wernher Von Braun, leader of the rocket team that developed the V-2 ballistic missile for Nazis during WWII. Von Braun later immigrated to the United States and became father of the modern space program. Holtschlag devoted about one-half of his 29-year tenure at Johns Hopkins to space work and the other half to establishing and editing a technical journal on combustion.

After an illustrious military and academic career, he retired in 1987 and spent much of the next 10 years traveling across the United States before returning to live in Quincy. In the Gem City, he published translations from German to English for the Great River Genealogical Society and the Historical Society of Quincy and Adams County, including several books on early German citizens in Quincy. His most important book

documented Roman Catholic history during the first 50 years of Quincy's incorporation. He died in 2013 at age 87 and is buried in Calvary Cemetery. All of his military work remained classified until the end of the Cold War in 1991.

Most military history highlights battles, generals, and treaties, but behind-the-scenes spies like Lester Holtschlag, using linguistic skills rather than lethal force, engage in clandestine operations vital to national security and foreign policy. Their words bridge cultures and ideologies.

Joseph Newkirk is a local writer and photographer whose work has been widely published as a contributor to literary magazines, as a correspondent for Catholic Times, and for the past 23 years as a writer for the Library of Congress' Veterans History Project. He is a member of the reorganized Quincy Bicycle Club and has logged more than 10,000 miles on bicycles in his life.



Lester Holtschlag met rocket scientist Wernher Von Braun before he left the military. After leaving the Army Holtschlag worked at Johns Hopkins University on space technology and editing a technical journal on combustion. (Image from NASA.)



Jan Leimbach portrayed Ann Streeter Wood.



Rhonda Basinger, John Basinger, and Dave Hermann provided music for one evening of the Candlelight Tours.



Live poinsettias surrounded the bases of all of the trees in the home this year.



he re-enactors in period attire.... the festive setting of the Mansion...and the beautiful seasonal music proved to be a winning combination once again, resulting in this year's Christmas

Candlelight Tours drawing more than 400 people to the Governor John Wood Mansion in Quincy, even with the cancellation of one evening due to inclement weather. In addition to the tour of the first floor of the home, participants also enjoyed refreshments in the Visitors Center's new lounge before and after the tour.

Re-enactors portrayed two members of John Wood's family--his wife, Ann Streeter Wood, and his eldest son, Daniel Wood. Those performing the role of Ann Streeter Wood included Tamy Cassady, Bobette Cawthon, and Jan Leimbach. Dr. Tim Jacobs and Rich Keppner portrayed Daniel Wood throughout the tours. Mansion Greeters attired in period clothing welcomed each group to the home. Nancy Boone, Barb Ippensen, and Tamy Cassady were Mansion Greeters.

Musical groups included Javaux Music School Violinists; The Eventide Singers; Javaux Music School Cellists; and Quincy String Duo of John Basinger, violin. and Dave Hermann, viola. Javaux Music School offers Suzuki lessons on a variety of instruments. The Eventide Singers are coordinated by Gerry Wagner, and the group includes a number of area vocalists. The String Duo was accompanied by Rhonda Basinger on the Mansion's antique keyboards—the Magnusson organ and Melodeon. Logan Kammerer was also scheduled to appear, but his performance was cancelled due to poor weather conditions.

A Society artifact, the medical journal belonging to John Wood's father, Dr. Daniel Wood, a physician who assisted George Washington's troops during the Revolutionary War, was also on display during the tours. The tiny journal, part of the Society's Collection, is written in Latin and German, evidence of a highly educated author, and the Society has had several offers to translate it.

Many thanks to the Hal and Kathy Oakley Family who sponsored the event, allowing it to be free and open to the public.

(Photos by Dan Doane, Jil Johnson, and Beth Young.)



The trees in the Dining Room featured red and gold decorations, a rich contrast with the dark finish of the furniture.



Rich Keppner, as Daniel Wood, discussed his grandfather's medical journal.



The poinsettia theme was repeated on the mantel in the Family Parlor.



Tamy Cassady was one of the Mansion Greeters.

FROM THE COLLECTION

Vintage Photos

Several years ago the Historical Society was given a number of items concerning the Schroer and Brophy families, including these photographs of the donor's grandfather, Duke Schroer. Mr. Schroer was christened Paul August in 1864, but early in life became known as Duke. His parents were Herman Schroer and Louisa Delabar. Duke claimed that his grandmother, Louisa, was the first German child born in Quincy.



Duke's obituary in the *Quincy Herald-Whig*, July 16, 1959, told of his varied career. "He began his career as a printer, developed into a reporter and city editor, served as private secretary to a congressman, was press agent and manager of Major Thomas S. Baldwin, who became world famous as a balloonist and aeronaut, and finally was elected city clerk of Quincy in 1910, serving continuously from that year until 1945."

These photos are examples of some of the thousands of pictures in the Historical Society's Collection. When photos are donated to the Society, the donor signs a certificate of gift form and also identifies who is in the photo, the location of the photo, and the date the photo was taken. Identification of the photo is essential since the Society does not have the resources to identify family members. After staff members receive the photo, it is entered into the Acquisition Book and given an identification number. The actual photo is then catalogued. Any necessary research is also done at this time before a copy of the image and data are entered into the Society's PastPerfect Museum Software program. A copy of the photo is also filed in a binder for patrons to use while the original photo is slipped into an archival sleeve and filed in an archival box. This way only staff members handle the original photo and patrons just have access to just the photocopy.



Throughout the year the Society fields many requests for photos from researchers, genealogists, and writers. The photos can be viewed in person at the Society's Visitors Center as described or searched online at hsqac.org. Images may be purchased for publication, crediting the Historical Society of Quincy and Adams County.



SOCIETY RECEIVES \$1.5M STATE GRANT

The Historical Society of Quincy and Adams County is receiving a \$1.5M grant for an addition to the History Museum at 332 Maine from the Illinois Arts Council Agency through the Rebuild Illinois capital plan. The Society's Museum Expansion proposal, written by HSQAC Executive Director Rob Mellon, was submitted by Arts Quincy's Laura Sievert to the Arts Alliance Illinois group during its call for "shovel ready" projects during the pandemic.

The new addition would include a ground floor entrance, an elevator, and ADA compliant restrooms, bringing the facility up to current Life Safety standards.

The Society is currently considering which construction options would be best for the building and the community. The elevator is of major importance, as the Museum's largest gathering space is on the second floor. Easy access to the second floor would also allow for the more frequent use of the building as a gallery and an event venue, increasing revenue streams to the Society.

Also, Quincy has been designated as one of six Gateway Communities in the Abraham Lincoln National Heritage Area (ALNHA), and the History Museum is poised to serve as Quincy's ALNHA welcome center in the future. The ground floor entrance and handicap accessible restrooms are important in order to make the Museum a true welcome center for all.

The Society is in the process of forming committees to develop the project.

Dant Speaks on Hannibal & Quincy Connections

Faye Dant, Executive Director of Hannibal's Black History Museum, **Jim's Journey: The Huck Finn Freedom Center**, presented **Hannibal & Quincy African American History Connections** at the History Museum in February. The program focused on the shared history of the two communities, including names, places, and events exhibiting a common thread. "I will lift up the belief that Quincy has a story to tell that goes beyond Dr. Eells and the Underground Railroad," Dant says.

Dant, a fifth generation African American Hannibalian and descendent of Missouri slaves, grew up in Douglasville and attended the segregated Douglass School, Hannibal High School, and Hannibal LaGrange College. She founded **Jim's Journey** in 2013 as phase two of the Hannibal African American Life and History Project established in 2011 as northeast Missouri's first African American history museum. **Jim's Journey: The Huck Finn Freedom Center** is fast approaching its 10th anniversary. Her inspiration was her own life experiences in the era of segregation, integration, Jim Crow, and the Civil Rights Movement.

With degrees from Oakland University and University of Michigan, Dant has worked more than thirty years in Human Resources. She sits on the board of the Missouri Archives and Museums Association and is a former member of the Missouri Humanities Council, the Marion County Historical Society, and the Grants Panel for the Missouri Folk Arts Council. The event was sponsored by **O'Donnell Cookson Life Celebration Home** in Quincy.



Faye Dant discussed highlights of her African American History Connections presentation with local media.



Around 75 area residents attended Dant's presentation at the History Museum in February.

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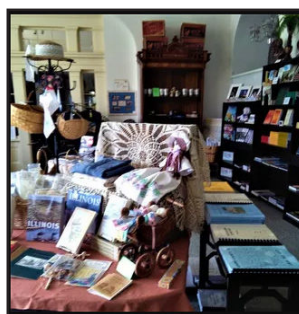
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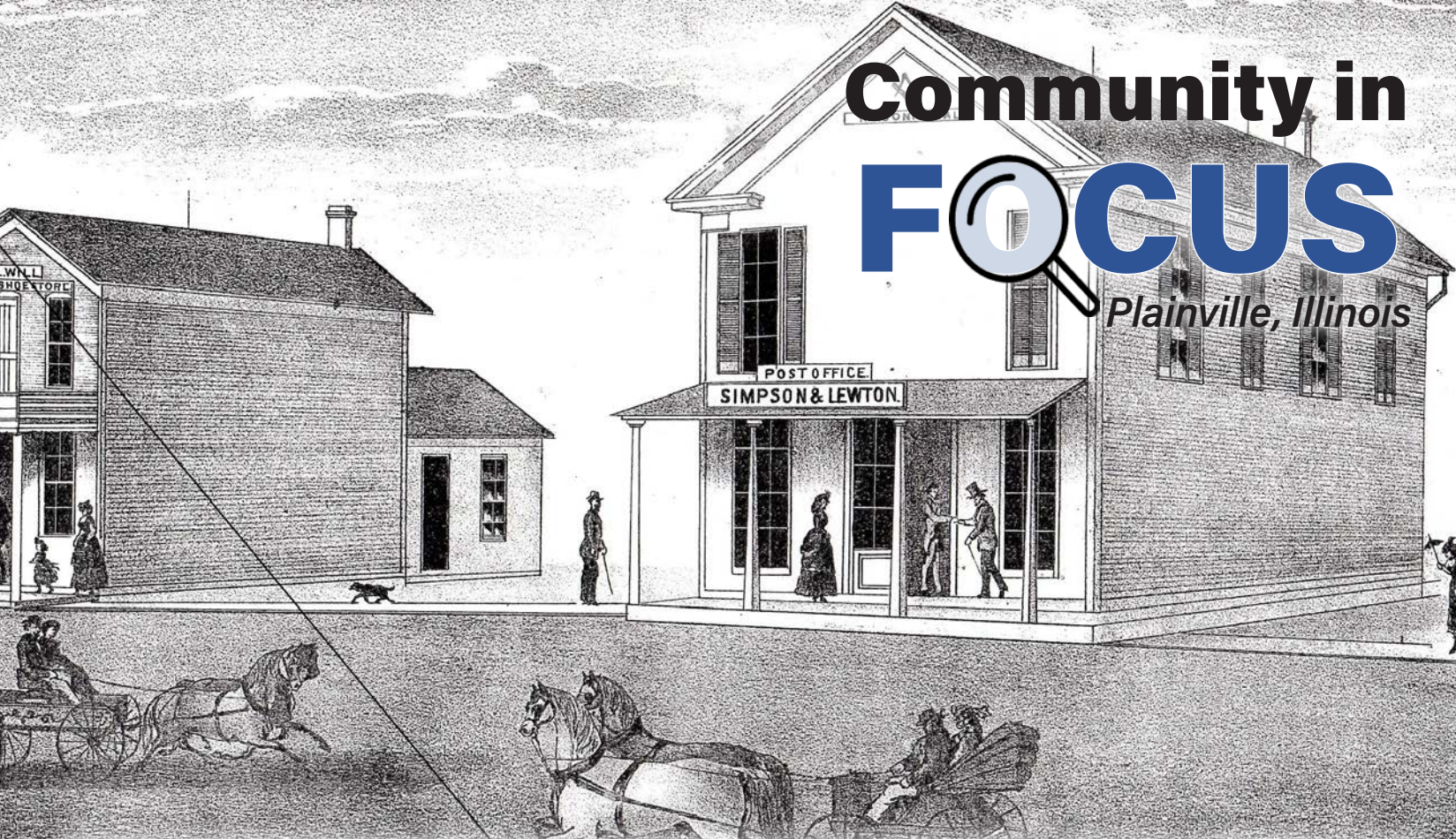


MEMORABILIA

Looking for a special gift?

Quincy's History Shop inside the History Museum on the Square is the place to find one-of-a-kind gifts including books by local authors, souvenirs featuring Quincy locations and history, and much more!





Community in FOCUS

Plainville, Illinois

The business block on Main Street in Plainville in 1872. Simpson & Lewton Dry Goods offered the best brands of sugar, coffee, and tea, as well as boots, shoes, and ready-made clothing. F. Harris Drug Store provided medicines, paint, perfume, wine, and other liquors for medicinal purposes.

A Tale of One Village: Stone's Prairie Becomes Plainville

By: Kent Hull

In Ruth Deters's book, "The Underground Railroad Ran Through My House!" she reprinted the 1910 obituary of Rev. Abraham T. Stone, age ninety-two, described by the Quincy Daily Journal as "one of the sturdy pioneers of this vicinity." He had arrived at age four in 1822 and, with his parents and three siblings, established their homestead in what became Stone's Prairie, seventeen miles southeast of Quincy. Their four-week journey from Licking County, Ohio, by wagon had been difficult, with rain every day but three.

Abraham's father, Rev. Samuel Stone, was, the Herald Whig wrote in 1929, an early Methodist circuit rider in Western Illinois who served as pastor of Akers

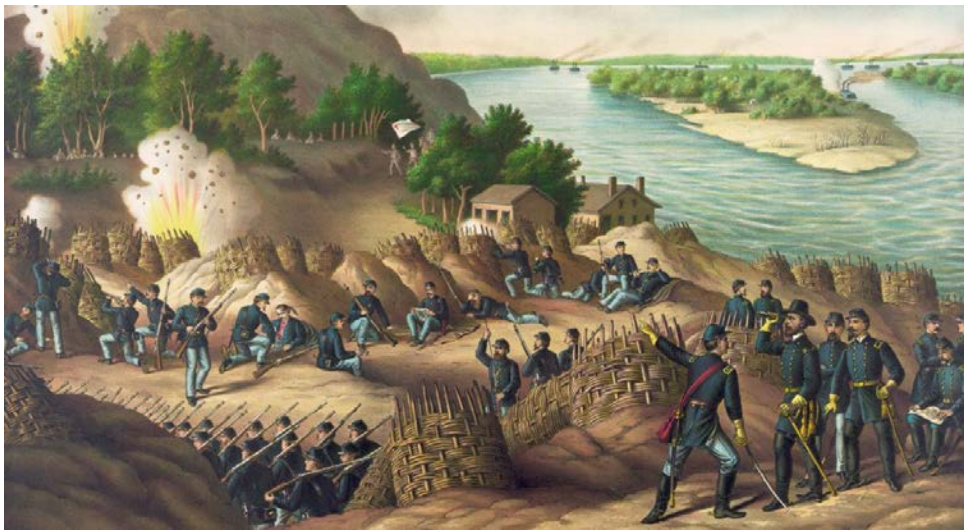
Chapel, south of Stone's Prairie. Abraham married Mary Ann Lippincott and followed his father into the ministry after studying with the abolitionist leader Rev. David Nelson of Quincy.

Abraham later recalled "the effect of solitude" on his childhood in this place with neighbors very distant. Yet little more than a century after his family arrived, Stone's Prairie had become Plainville, with a post office, school, two churches, two grocery stores, bank, hardware store, barber shop, gas station, welding shop, and softball field. On Saturday nights, well into the 1960s, farm families came into town, not to shop, but "to do their trading." Among its future residents were a blacksmith, seamstress, doctor, piano teacher, two housepainters, a family



Abolitionist David Nelson came to Quincy and helped establish the Mission Institute. Early Stone's Prairie pioneer Reverend Abraham Stone followed his father into the ministry after studying with David Nelson in Quincy.

PLAINVILLE



Several Stone's Prairie (Plainville) men served in the Union Army under General William T. Sherman during the Civil War. These brave Adams County men fought in numerous engagements in the western theater of the war including at the battles of Vicksburg, Chattanooga, and Atlanta. More than 20% of the Union fighting force under General Grant at Vicksburg was from the State of Illinois.

of carpenters, a ten-time Illinois State Fair horseshoe-pitching champion, and softball players who might have welcomed Abraham Stone to the team.

Probably the outside world first noticed the community in 1860 after the "Stone's Prairie Riot." As described by Iris Nelson and Walter Waggoner, a "Republican organized political rally [went] awry" in the "bitterly contested" presidential election between Abraham Lincoln and his Democratic party rival, Stephen A. Douglas. Their article quotes the Chicago Tribune's account of a camp-ground assembly south of town as "one of the most extraordinary gatherings of people that has ever taken place in this part of the state."

"Profound divisions" among Adams County residents, Nelson and Waggoner wrote, "existed among residents over the future course of the country" and the presence of slavery. Ruth Deters described how New England Congregational abolitionists founded Payson, Illinois, in the midst of settlers from Southern states who, while perhaps not pro-slavery, were nevertheless hostile to Adams County's Underground Railroad. Many voters in the Stone's Prairie area favored Douglas, the Democratic candidate for President, who, as a judge in Quincy, had convicted Dr. Richard Eells for harboring a runaway slave.

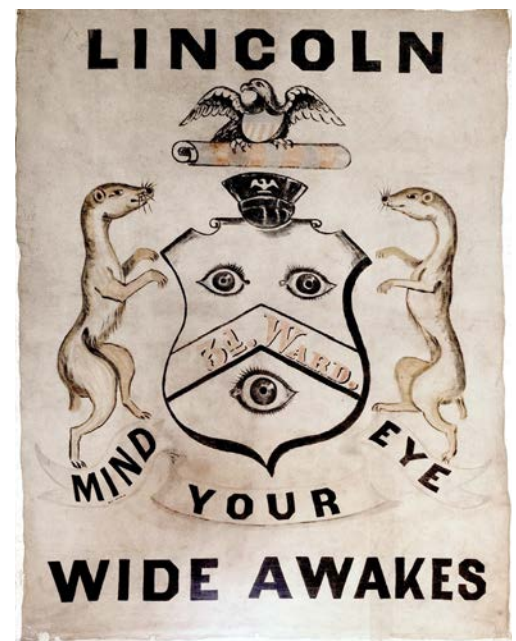
On August 25, 1860, supporters of Lincoln, called "Wide Awakes," marched three miles from Payson to the rally, where Orville H. Browning, Quincy lawyer and prominent Lincoln supporter, was among

the speakers. The Barry, Illinois, Glee Club sang, and many families brought their picnic baskets. As Nelson and Waggoner wrote: "Almost all observers commented on the large amounts of alcohol consumed. It was so bad that sobriety at Stone's Prairie may have been the exception rather than the rule."

Estimates of crowd size ranged from 7,000 to 10,000. When Douglas's supporters interrupted Browning's address because they were not allowed to present an opposing speaker, the fighting began. In the 1860 election, Douglas, who opposed Lincoln but supported the Union, carried Stone's Prairie and nearby areas.

Stone's Prairie men served in the Union Army under Gen. William T. Sherman in Western Theatre battles, eventually supporting troops under Gen. Ulysses S. Grant in the capture of the Vicksburg fortress on July 4, 1863, thereby opening the Mississippi River to Northern commerce. After a battle at Chattanooga, they marched with Sherman through Georgia to capture Atlanta on September 2, 1864. A Stone's Prairie soldier, James Buck, was killed on October 5, at Allatoona, Georgia, before Sherman's troops reached the Atlantic Ocean on December 21.

The 1879 History of Adams County commented, "There has sprung up a thrifty young village on Stone's Prairie, called Plainville, or more improperly called Shakerag, and by all appearances quite a business place." The Stone's Prairie post office was established January 29, 1856, but



An estimated 10,000 people converged on the small village of Stone's Prairie for a political rally on August 25, 1860. During a speech by Orville Hickman Browning supporting Abraham Lincoln, a rowdy group of Douglas supporters interrupted Browning. When a group of staunch Republicans called the "Wide Awakes" attempted to physically move the Douglas supporters, a massive fistfight broke out.

by July 23, 1893, residents had obtained a change of name to Plainville, honoring postmaster and merchant John Delaplain. They incorporated the town as Plainville on May 1, 1896.

The name "Stone's Prairie" endured, however. When Abraham Stone's daughter, Sarah Amanda Putman, died in 1929, the *Herald Whig* wrote that she had been born April 2, 1844 in Plainville "when that village was known as Stone's Prairie," and that "as one of the oldest native-born residents of Adams County," she "could relate stories of pioneer days in Plainville when Adams County was emerging from its wilderness stage."

In 1930 the newspaper reported probate of the "will of William H. Stone, Sr., of Plainville, for whose ancestors the country south of the village was named 'Stone's Prairie,' a name by which it is still known...." Also in 1930, the obituary of Gilbert Vance Stewart, a son of Irish immigrants who arrived in Stone's Prairie in 1837, identified his lifelong home as "half a mile south of Plainville." Those descriptions suggest a distinction between the physical legal boundaries of Plainville

Continued to next page...

Continued from previous page...

and the unofficial dimensions of the Stone's Prairie settlement.

Through the 1950's, a siren sounded, six days a week by the postmistress signaling the noon hour. Only the operators in telephone central, located in the former bank building, were allowed access to the siren at other times, and those alerts summoned the volunteer firefighters.

On one Plainville street lived three women born in the 1870's. A boy interested in history asked one if she remembered people in town talking about the Civil War as she grew up. She replied "Yes," and added that there were stories that the father of another resident still living in town had been a Confederate sympathizer, stealing horses and delivering them to rebel guerillas in Missouri. She did not explain how he got the horses across the Mississippi River. Was her story true, or was she just entertaining a neighbor's pesky child?



The Stone's Prairie Cornet Band at the Adams County Fair in Camp Point in 1888. The band was originally known as the Shakerag Band, but later changed its name. Seated from left to right: Sandford Wagy, Julius Whitcomb, David Ruby, Edward Graft, Frank Ruby, Wilbur Thompson, Gene Hoskins. Standing from left to right: John Larrimore, Band Director David Stratton, Arthur Clark, Sam Wagy, George Collins.

Kent Hull, a retired lawyer living in South Bend, Ind., is a long-distance member of the Historical Society. He grew up in Plainville and graduated from Seymour High in Payson, Illinois.

SOCIETY LAUNCHES NEW EDUCATION PROGRAMMING

The HSQAC offered a new Elementary Educational Program during Black History Month last February. The program utilized The History Museum on the Square at 332 Maine and involved over 600 fifth through eighth graders. All parochial and public elementary schools in Quincy, Teen Reach, Freedom School, and Chaddock, as well as Payson Seymour Grade School participated. Students were instructed in three basic areas: the History of Quincy, the Underground Railroad, and Artifacts of the Museum. Teachers for these units were retired educators, HSQAC Board members, and other volunteers. These included Dr. Lynn Snyder (Volunteer Museum Coordinator), Heather Bangert, Richard Keppner, Lynn Niewohner, Jack Freiburg (HSQAC President), Jan Hummel, Dr. Tim Jacobs, Susan Peters, and Arlis Dittmer. The event was organized by HSQAC Education Committee Chair Cecil Weathers and volunteer Beth Young.

The History portion of the instruction included stories of Quincy's founders, as well as information regarding settlement, early businesses, architecture, and local politics. Part of this presentation involved using our wonderful interactive video system, "Windows on the Square." Also included in the History program were tours of the Stained Glass Gallery and the Edward Everett Watercolor Gallery; the

latter features paintings of 19th century Quincy.

The Underground Railroad lesson was based on an excellent museum display showing various aspects of the Railroad including its location and some of the people whose lives were connected to it. In this portion of the program, students were also introduced to several Quincy residents who were important to local Black history, such as Annie and Aaron Malone, William Dallas, and Fr. Gus Tolton. As a student in the Peoria area in the early 20th century, Annie Malone developed a line of hair care products which she marketed very successfully. She also established Poro College in St. Louis and Quincy. Her husband Aaron was principal of Quincy's Lincoln School. Dallas was the first Black police officer in Quincy; Fr. Tolton is currently being considered for sainthood by the Catholic Church.

Among the Artifacts viewed in the third portion of the program were the weather vane from Quincy's old CB&Q train station, various maps of early Quincy, a 19th century Knapheide wagon, an early DelaBar Brewery keg stamp, and a Quincy Guard militia uniform coat from the early 1800's. Also featured was a 36 star flag that was first flown in honor of Abraham Lincoln's election as President; it was also flown on



Dr. Tim Jacobs explains how to use the unique Windows on the Square interactive display in the History Museum.

the days of his assassination and burial.

Students were asked to evaluate the experience when they returned to their schools, and some of their comments were instructive. One student enjoyed learning about John Wood and the fact that he was Governor of Illinois; another was interested to learn that both our city and county were named for President John Quincy Adams. Several youngsters wanted to know more about the Underground Railroad, while others enjoyed the stained glass and watercolor exhibits in the Museum's second floor area. One observant visitor pointed out that the 19th century militia uniform on display was very small.



**GENERAL TRIVIA, QUINCY HISTORY, GAMES,
PRIZES AND A TON OF FUN!**

BYOB AND FOOD

SECOND ANNUAL

TABLES \$100 - TEAMS UP TO 8 PLAYERS

TRIVIA NIGHT

**7:00-
10:00PM**

**HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF
QUINCY AND ADAMS COUNTY**

**ST. FRANCIS PARISH CENTER | QUINCY, IL
217.222.1835 | WWW.HSQAC.ORG**

**MARCH 18
2023**

A History of Becoming Chaddock

By: Jeff VanCamp, Chaddock,
Executive Director, Chaddock
Children's Foundation



(As Chaddock turns 170,
throughout this year we'll take
a look back at some of the
most important milestones in

Chaddock's evolution from small midwestern
college to internationally recognized center
for the treatment of trauma and attachment-
related disorders in children and families.

Unless otherwise stated, all quotes in this article
are taken from an Aug 29, 1908 publication.
Chaddock has the pages in their archives, but
none contain the actual title of the journal!!)

Quincy, IL was incorporated in 1840, a
thriving city on the banks of the mighty
Mississippi River. 13 years later, a group
of Methodists opened a small seminary in
that river town, The Methodist German and
English College. Beginning in the basement
of the Vermont Street Methodist Episcopal
Church and moving to Spring Street between
3rd and 4th Streets soon after, it would
undergo several significant changes through
the years, including being variously known as
Quincy College, The Methodist College, and
Johnson College.

The college struggled to get a foothold
in the academic milieu of the time, which
included the Civil War, financial difficulties,
and stiff competition from other schools.
However, a major turning point took place
1875, an account of which was published on
Aug 29, 1908:

"The institution struggled along for
22 years with inadequate equipment and
housing, but in 1875 a magnificent block of
land, on which sat an imposing old building,
was purchased by the munificence of Mr. and
Mrs. Charles Chaddock, whose name the
school now bears."

The Quincy Weekly Whig, January 18, 1877,
tells the story more fully:

"... the magnificent property of ex-Gov John
Wood was purchased [by Johnson College],
a little over one year ago, for the balance of
two unpaid notes... executed by the trustees,
secured by a trust deed on the premises.
Mr. Chaddock has entered into contract to
provide the necessary means to pay those
notes..."

The new campus on State Street between
11th and 12th was a step up from the College's
previous home. The "imposing old building"
on the property was Wood's famous octagonal
house, at one time the most expensive home
in Illinois. The octagon house became the
college's main education facility.

In gratitude to their generous Astoria, IL
benefactors, the College's Board of Trustees
renamed the institution Chaddock College
in 1877. A dormitory, Vickers Hall, was soon
constructed just to the west of the octagon
building.

*"I would found a College where Young
Ladies and Young Gentlemen could receive
thorough Instruction in any Study."*

Charles Chaddock was proud of his gift and
its purpose: "I would found a College where
Young Ladies and Young Gentlemen could
receive thorough Instruction in any Study."
-- Charles Chaddock, Chaddock College 1883
Annual Catalogue.

For over 20 more years the college was
generally well respected and, while enduring
financial hiccups and outright paroxysms,
drew young adults to study in fields such as
medicine, law, and philosophy.

Unfortunately, academic success would
never translate into economic success. By the
late 1890's Chaddock College was again in
dire straits:

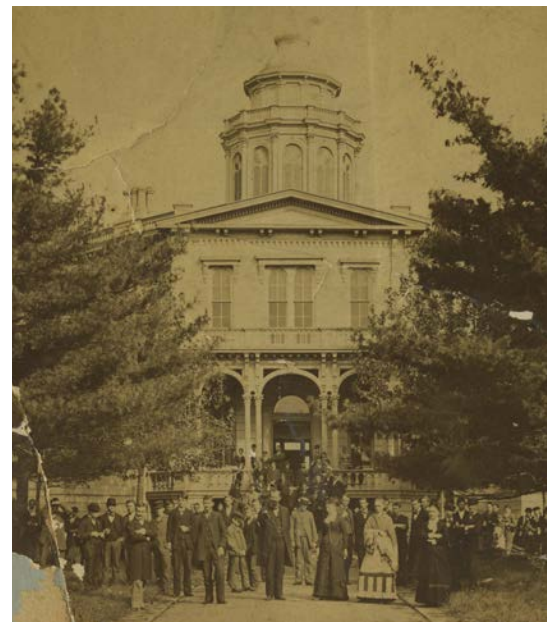
"The high schools of the state increased in
number and excellence, and Illinois Wesleyan
spread its wings more and more widely.
Students at the Quincy school became fewer
and fewer. Money embarrassments thickened;
part of the magnificent campus was sold off...
finally in desperation the whole property was
about to be sold for a mortgage and the noble
old school closed."

In September 1900 Chaddock College's
Board of Trustees met. Rev. Wm T Beadles,
President of the College's Board of Trustees,
presided. According to the handwritten
minutes of this meeting, on display in
Chaddock School's library, Board members
and other supporters, including Mrs.
Chaddock herself, were in attendance and
were recognized. Some of the institution's
debts had been forgiven by its creditors.

A separate order of business was more
upbeat. A decision was affirmed to relinquish
the College's assets to the Deaconesses of
the Methodist Church, represented by Miss
Eleanor Tobie, who planned to use them to
found a home dedicated to serving children
rather than the college crowd:

"Resolved, that the College property be
given over into the hands of the Deaconesses
or their representatives....to be used for their
work..."

"On motion Miss Eleanor Tobie was elected
President of the College and added to the
executive committee."



Governor John Wood's Octagonal Mansion was
purchased in 1875 through the generosity of Mr. and
Mrs. Charles Chaddock and became Chaddock's
main educational facility. (Courtesy of Chaddock.)

Rev. Beadles and Miss Tobie began working
to clear the college's remaining debts, traveling
the state and meeting with supporters and
donors. Chaddock Boys School was born.

Eight years after the September 1900
meeting, through the relentless efforts of
Beadles and Tobie, the picture had brightened
considerably. Not only did the college's
assets pass freely to the Deaconesses, but
improvements to the 8-sided classroom
building were also financed. Again, from the
journal in 1908:

"Noble men and women rallied to their
support....The property has been entirely
cleared of debt, the buildings have been
thoroughly modernized, and in them is being
conducted one of the finest schools for boys
in the world.

"But this is not all. The demand for more
room...has been met by the purchase of a
magnificent twenty-five acre farm about a
mile out. On this farm is the 'academy', where
the older boys are prepared for college, if they
elect this course."

The farm and the 'academy', west of
Madison Park, is the site where Chaddock
currently sits. Just four years later the entire
operation of Chaddock Boys School would be
moved to 'the farm' and a new chapter would
begin.... but that's a story for another day....

*Jeff VanCamp, a Quincy native, is the Executive
Director of the Chaddock Children's Foundation.
He and his wife Dawn have 3 children and 13
grandchildren, all of whom live in Quincy.
He has served the community in several capacities,
including sitting on the Boards of the Quincy
Public Library, GREDF, and the Quincy Park
District and being a former 6th Ward alderman.*



Cake Pan
10" x 3"

Preheat Oven
325-Degrees

Bake Time
45-60 Minutes

Ingredients

FRUIT MIXTURE

- ☐ 1/2 cup sliced almonds
- ☐ 1/4 cup shredded coconut
- ☐ 1/4 cup chopped candied orange peel
- ☐ 1/4 cup chopped candied lemon peel
- ☐ 2 tablespoons dark raisins
- ☐ 2 tablespoons white raisins
- ☐ 2 tablespoons dried cherries
- ☐ 2 tablespoons chopped crystallized ginger
- ☐ 1 cup of whiskey

The night before baking the cake, combine dried fruits and nuts with whiskey in a small bowl. Cover and refrigerate overnight.

CAKE MIXTURE

- ☐ 2 1/4 cups bread flour
- ☐ 1 tablespoon baking powder
- ☐ 2 teaspoons baking soda
- ☐ 1 teaspoon freshly grated nutmeg
- ☐ 1 teaspoon ground ginger
- ☐ 1 teaspoon ground allspice
- ☐ 1 teaspoon ground clove
- ☐ 1 teaspoon salt

Sift dry ingredients together in a large bowl

- ☐ 9 eggs
- ☐ 2 cups brown sugar
- ☐ 1/4 cup honey
- ☐ 2 cups olive oil
- ☐ 1 tablespoon vanilla extract
- ☐ 2 cups apricot preserves

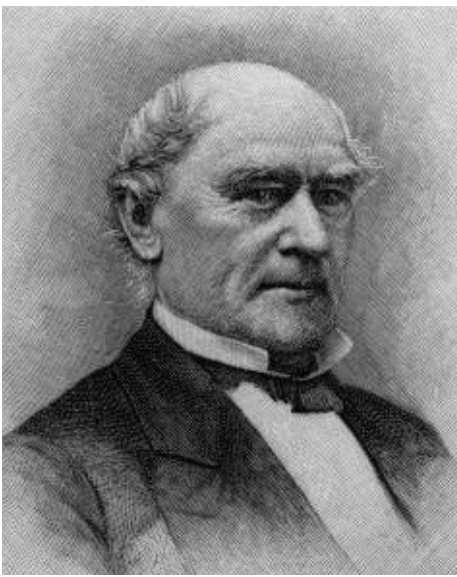
Directions

- ☐ Whisk together eggs, brown sugar, and honey until combined. Add olive oil while whisking, until combined. Stir in vanilla.
- ☐ Add wet ingredients into dry ingredients and mix until just combined. Add macerated fruit mixture and 2 cups apricot preserves; mix until fully combined.
- ☐ Pour into prepared pan and bake for 45-60 minutes or until deep golden brown and a toothpick, inserted, comes out clean.
- ☐ Cool completely on a wire rack, then run a knife around the edge of the pan and turn out onto serving platter.
- ☐ Generously soak top of cake with whiskey.

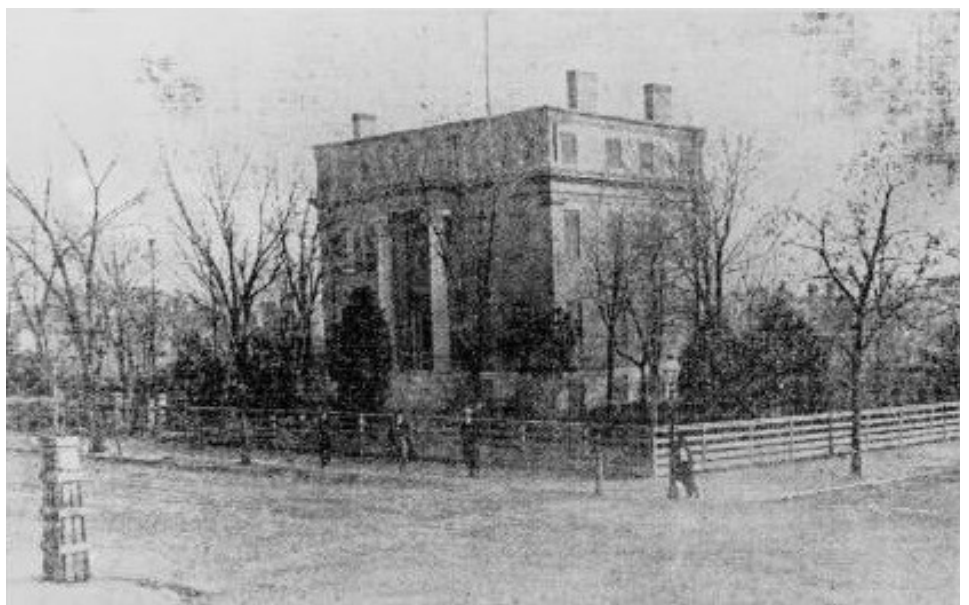
This recipe is from the Museum of the American Revolution and was featured on PBS's A Taste of History. The original recipe was modified by City Tavern's Chef Walter Staib and Chef Diana Wolkow. Courtesy of the City Tavern Restaurant. Downloadable for free at www.amrevmuseum.org.

*** MUSEUM OF THE
*** AMERICAN
*** REVOLUTION





The Honorable Orville Hickman Browning moved to Quincy from Kentucky in 1831 and established himself as a prominent lawyer, citizen, and statesman. Browning served as United States Senator and Secretary of the Interior.



Orville Browning had the grand mansion on 7th and Hampshire constructed in 1844. The building was sold several times after the Brownings moved. St. Boniface Catholic Church purchased the mansion in 1873, and it remained in their possession until it burned in 1904.

The Night Quincy Lost the Historic “Old Browning Mansion”

By: Rob Mellon

It was an extremely cold Saturday night, January 2 in 1904. Two members of the stage crew of the storied Empire Theater located at 115 N. 8th Street were moving scenery pieces at the conclusion of the production and noticed tongues of flame shooting out of the roof of the Quincy Conservatory of Music which was located on the southeast corner of 7th and Hampshire Streets. Luckily, it was 10:30 pm. The last show at the Empire had ended, and all the patrons had left -- or a major fire so close to the theater would have caused a frantic situation. The Quincy Fire Department (QFD) was soon notified, a general alarm called, and crews of 1st, 2nd, and 4th Chemical Hook & Ladder as well as the engine from station No. 7 responded.

The crews from the fire department were greeted by the janitor of the Quincy Conservatory of Music who informed them that he believed that the four students who lived there were still in the building. A search for the individuals ensued and took more than 20 minutes. It was finally determined that the students who resided on the 3rd floor of

the building had all gone home for the holidays and were still out of town, but the search delayed firefighting measures, which in effect sealed the fate of the historic structure.

To make matters worse, the arctic conditions on that January night had caused a frozen babcock on the Steinbach engine, and the equipment was not able to pump properly. Additionally, during the chaos, Fire Fighter George Marriott fell 8-feet from one of the mansion's porches. Fortunately, he was only slightly injured and was able to remain on duty fighting the blaze. After more than 30 minutes, water finally poured onto the structure from the engines the crews were operating. The fire department was able to save St. Boniface Parochial School which was located immediately to the south.

In 1904, the historic building at 7th and Hampshire housed the Quincy Conservatory of Music, but everyone in Quincy referred to it as the “Old Browning Mansion.” Orville Hickman Browning, the former U.S. Senator and Secretary of the Interior, had built the mansion for \$30,000 more than 50 years before the fateful fire. In their grand home the

Brownings held many lavish dinners, parties, and events and hosted several prominent Americans from across the country. The palatial, three-story brick mansion astonished visitors due to its architectural design, fine furnishings, and the two massive stone pillars that jutted to the sky from the impressive front steps. While the Brownings had entertained countless dignitaries and guests at their home through the years, Lincoln's visit was undoubtedly the most famous.

Famously, Abraham Lincoln spent the night of the 1858 debate at the Browning home, a few short blocks from Washington Square. An evening reception was held at the mansion lasting well into the night. Standing between the imposing pillars, Lincoln greeted hundreds of supporters, admirers, and friends. Lincoln had been very close friends with Orville and Eliza Browning since the 1830s.

The Brownings entertained countless dignitaries and guests at their home through the years, but Lincoln's visit was undoubtedly the most famous.

If the walls of the old home could have talked, a bevy of tales could certainly have been told – but sadly the fire on that cold



Firefighting crews from Quincy Fire House No. 7, located at 1100 North 6th St., (pictured above) responded to the fire at 7th and Hampshire in 1904. A general alarm was called, and crews from Quincy Fire Houses 1, 3, and 4 also fought the blaze that night preventing further damage and saving St. Boniface Parochial School.



"The Old Browning Mansion" at 7th and Hampshire covered in ice the day after the devastating fire on Saturday, January 2, 1904. The fire destroyed the roof and damaged the interior on the east side of the building.

January night in 1904 spelled doom for the historic mansion. The blaze had started as the result of an overheated furnace pipe in the cellar that caught a wooden partition on fire. The fire then followed a hot air shaft straight to the top floor and roof of the building. By the time the flames were extinguished, the roof of the mansion had been destroyed. In addition, water, smoke, and fire destroyed the Conservatory's six pianos, new sheet music, several instruments and most of the personal possessions of the teachers and headmaster H.D. Jackson. Amazingly, the resilient stone walls of the mansion were not destroyed and actually had helped limit the damage to the east side of the building.

Orville Browning had sold the mansion in the later years of his life and moved to a more rural and private setting on Spruce Street. After Browning, the mansion had been the home of Dr. E.B. Montgomery and later Dr. John Koch. Eventually it was purchased by St. Boniface Catholic Church and served as the parsonage for Father Weis and his assistant priests for a time, as well. In 1904, St. Boniface still owned the building and leased it to Professor Jackson and the Quincy Conservatory of Music.

Shortly after the incident in 1904, the St. Boniface Society met about the fate of the building, and believing that renovation costs would be too significant, decided to tear the structure down. Some community leaders thought that the site would be perfect for business investment and advocated for the construction of several

store fronts facing Hampshire Street. Eventually St. Boniface tore down not only the mansion but the old school building as well and constructed a new school.

The *Quincy Daily Herald* stated that at the time of its construction the Browning Mansion was "the most pretentious residence in the entire city." It served as the primary home of Orville and Eliza Browning for most of their time in the Gem City and was the scene of many momentous visits, fabulous parties, gatherings, and political meetings. It was

considered one of the grandest buildings ever constructed in the city. Regrettably, it was lost to a devastating winter fire coupled with a lack of imagination of city and church leaders who saw the "Old Browning Mansion" as a tired, ancient symbol of the past. At that time the 20th Century was in its nascency, and saving an historic building was not seriously considered. Some community leaders thought that the site would be perfect for business investment and advocated for the new construction.



Orville and Eliza Browning sold their 3-story mansion at 7th and Hampshire and moved to a beautiful 2-story Italianate home on North 8th Street between Spruce and Sycamore Streets. (Courtesy of Illinois Digital Archives, Quincy Public Library, Quincy Area Historic Photo Collection.)



One Hundred Years of Theatre in Quincy

By: Kelsey Pigg

On Sunday, September 9, 1923, the Whig-Journal published a rallying cry: “Little Theater Becomes Reality in Quincy: Lovers of Drama Asked to Join.”

Only one week later, over 100 members were part of the fledgling organization.

One hundred years later, thousands of locals are still answering the call.

Quincy Community Theatre (QCT) — or Quincy Community Little Theatre (QCLT), as it was originally known — was born during the Little Theatre Movement that swept the nation in the 1910s and early 1920s. At the time, melodramas ruled the stage. These highly sensationalized works were “tried and true” box office successes, dominating the seasons of the

larger profit-driven playhouses who now found themselves competing with film.

Yet, an emphasis on profits was stifling the art form’s growth.

Enter Little Theaters. With no room for experimentation on more commercialized stages, communities across the country began forming their own theatrical organizations to give a voice to new works that challenged societal standards and, as noted in the Whig-Journal, “give everyone the advantage of becoming acquainted with the best plays.” Playwrights, doctors, actors, housewives — the movement attracted an eclectic mix of people interested in pushing the boundaries of theatre.

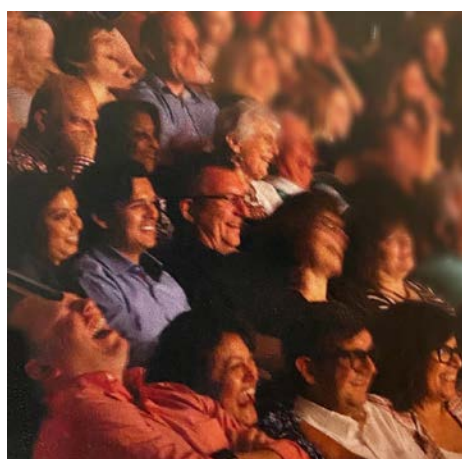
After years of following the movement, the people of Quincy were ready for a Little Theater of their own. “Realizing that Quincy is in no way inferior to other cities in its dramatic talent, the idea of joining the Little Theater movement to produce plays of the highest standard has met with much enthusiasm.” (“Little Theater Becomes Reality”) QCLT was to be an outlet for performance and education not just for a few, but for every citizen.

The passion for the stage exhibited in those early days was undeniable. That first year, QCLT named its first governing board from those spearheading the organization: Mrs. George Cottrell, Mrs. Walter Wood, Mrs. A.O. Lindsay, Reverend George Long, and Mrs. Charles T. Dazey,

wife of the famed Broadway playwright. Other pioneers of QCLT included Paul Weisenhorn, Mrs. Henry Weis, Mrs. LeRoy Wolfe, Mrs. John Coffman, Mrs. John T. Inghram, Jr., Miss Enid Ireland, and Mr. and Mrs. T.C. Oakley, among others. Initially, their meetings and rehearsals were held in members’ homes — the first meeting in the home of Mrs. A.O. Lindsay. Membership tickets, which sold for \$2.50, granted subscribers a seat for two to four productions per year in Lippincott Hall at the Soldiers & Sailors Home as well as access to talks by visiting artists.

Momentum steadily built for the next decade. By the late 1920s, QCLT was utilizing the Empire Theater, located on Eighth Street between Maine and Hampshire, for major productions. Smaller productions began to be mounted in the old First Baptist Church in addition to their Empire Theater slate in the 1930s. The organization also boasted a highly-active playwriting group, which regularly presented locally-written plays and provided educational resources for members to hone their craft.

QCLT further pushed theatrical boundaries with its most famous member: Charles T. Dazey. Well before Quincy’s Little Theatre was formed, this Lima, Ill., native had found incredible success on Broadway. His 1894 melodrama, *In Old Kentucky*, ran for an astonishing 26 years, and he had begun writing scripts for cinema. In 1932, he chose to premiere a new play, *A Three-Fold Race*, with



Photos courtesy of Quincy Community Theatre.

QCLT. However, it was the following year's production that would truly shock theatregoers.

For the first time in *In Old Kentucky's* history, QCLT produced the show "in a new and strange setting": outdoors. A 90' stage was constructed in Baldwin Park for the entirely local cast — and their real horse, Rio Rita. More than 1,000 attended the opening night, including the Dazeys who lauded the once-in-a-lifetime production.

Throughout its 100 years, the Little Theater's momentum halted only once. In 1942, World War II caused QCLT both a lack of funding and a shortage of men. The organization was left with only one option: to temporarily suspend theatrical activities. These "dark," or closed years might certainly have been the theatre's downfall. Yet, the theatre's greatest act was yet to come.

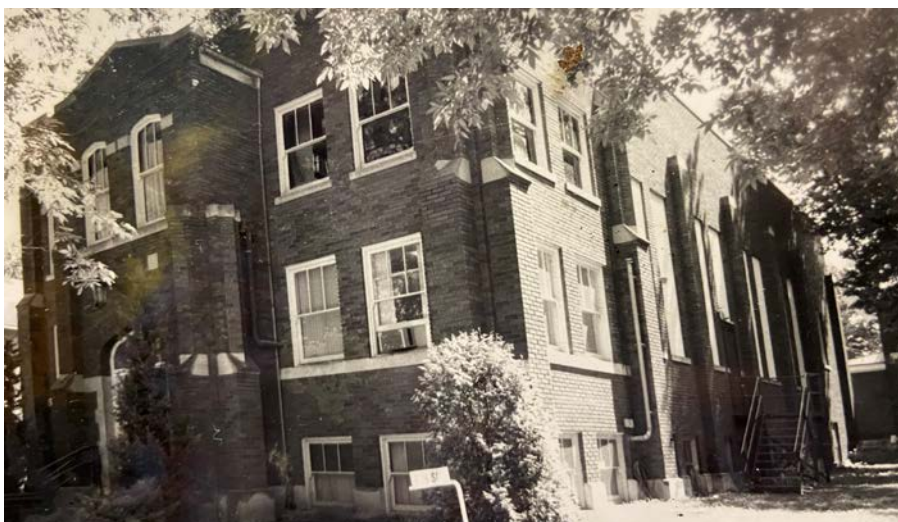
After 10 years of going "dark," the lights rose again on a new — and vibrant — chapter. Local theatre pioneers reimagined QCLT as an outdoor summer theatre. Those dedicated to the cause gathered at the home of Mr. and Mrs. John Inghram at 1617 Hampshire, armed with tools and wood. Wes Minear and his crew began work on a new outdoor stage, which was transported to the Art Barn.

The next decade saw an explosion of local enthusiasm. Five plays were produced every season on the lawn of the Art Barn, with rehearsals occurring in the Unitarian Church basement. QCLT also hired its first directors. Mr. Jim Andrews and others brought a new level of professionalism to the organization, using their directorial talents to inspire performers and keep the love of the theatre alive — even when trouble came. Whether it was rain delaying the first production of the 1953 season, *Blithe Spirit*, or a wind storm causing patrons and performers to temporarily take shelter during *Strange Bedfellows*, the show always went on.

A permanent home was found for QCLT in 1964: the former Trinity Parish Hall at Thirteenth and Payson Avenue. Stage lighting, air conditioning, dressing rooms, rehearsal spaces — the new building rapidly expanded opportunities.

By 1968, Barbara Rowell was elected the theatre's new president, becoming its first managing artistic director in the 1970s. The next year, membership was changed to include a musical production (*The Boy Friend*), a one-act play contest for the production of experimental shows was introduced, and the hiring of guest artists was established. The student theatre program was also eventually reinstated in 1987, sparking an early love of theatre in Quincy's children.

Joining forces with the Civic Center Authority and Quincy Convention and Visitors Bureau, QCLT applied for a state grant to build a new civic center and theatre complex in April of 1989. A \$5.6M grant was awarded in 1990, and thanks to QCLT's dedicated volunteers and patrons, the \$1.25M matching funds were raised by 1992. Construction of their current



Quincy Community Little Theatre at Thirteenth and Payson, Quincy.

home — a state-of-the-art, 498-seat facility equipped with professional lighting and sound, a scene shop, rehearsal hall, and more — was completed in 1995.

Just over 70 years after the organization's founding, the theatre opened the new venue and voted to remove "Little" from its name. That decision is not only reflected in QCT's facility, but in its programming. The theatre produces eight shows per year with a staff of seven full-time and two part-time employees.

"That the Little Theater movement has met approval in Quincy is shown in the fact that already 140 members are enrolled," said a Whig-Journal article on Thursday, September 29, 1923. Today, that approval is undeniable. The spirit of the Little Theater Movement lives on at QCT, season after season, in the hundreds of volunteers who pour their hearts into producing professional quality productions; the thousands of patrons who



Beauty & the Beast, 2005

discover new works on the local stage; and the generations of students who trace their love of theatre back to QCT classes and outreach.

Now, it is your turn to become part of the story. Season tickets for QCT's 100th year feature *Rent*, *The Music Man*, *Clue*, *The Hobbit*, and *Peter Pan*, and they may be purchased through April 30, 2023. To become a part of the theatre's history either as an audience member or volunteer, visit 1QCT.ORG or call

the Box Office at 217-222-3209.



The Mountaintop, 2020

Kelsey Pigg is a writer and marketing coordinator for Klingner & Associates, P.C. She is also the former production manager of Quincy Community Theatre and a current board member of the Historical Society of Quincy and Adams County.

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