

The Museum Times

A publication of the Stephenson County Historical Society

MARK YOUR CALENDAR

All-Star Birthday Film Series Lindo Theater-

All shows play at 1PM and 7PM. Admission is \$5
More information can be found on the Lindo Theater website.

Wednesday, April 6-
To Kill a Mockingbird
Wednesday, April 27-
Bye Bye Birdie

Monday, April 11, 6:30 PM
Lindo Theater-
Fundraiser for the SCHS
Museum to benefit the
Arcade Toy Collection
Project
"Earthworm Tractors"
Admission is \$5

Thursday, April 21, 5:30PM
SCHS Annual Dinner
Elks Club, Freeport
Program will feature an
historic portrayal of
Mary Todd Lincoln
Social hour-5:30
Dinner-6:30
Tickets are \$35 per person

Friday May 13- 9-5 and
Saturday, May 14 -9-4
Oscar's Garden Fair
Museum Grounds
\$5 for adults- age 17 and
under free with adult

Thursday, June 16 5-9PM
Annual Ice Cream Social
Museum Grounds
\$5 per ticket includes Ice
Cream and Pie. Food
available for an extra cost.
Quilt raffle drawing will take
place at this event

OSCAR'S GARDEN FAIR

The SCHS is hosting a new spring event! OSCAR'S GARDEN FAIR will take place on the museum grounds Friday, May 13th from 9AM-5PM and Saturday, May 14th from 9AM-4PM. The event is named in honor of Oscar Taylor, and celebrates his family's love of gardening.

The fair will include vendors selling a variety of garden-related products and services including everything from plants to garden art. The local Master Gardeners are working with the museum and will host talks and demonstrations throughout the day. There will also be activities for kids and families.

The full schedule will be posted on our website in April. If you are interested in being a vendor, a printable registration form can be found on our website, www.stephcohs.org, on the calendar-of-events page. Admission will be \$5 for adults, ages 17 and under are free with an adult admission. We hope that you will come and join us!

FUNDRAISER TO BENEFIT THE SCHS ARCADE TOY COLLECTION- APRIL 11TH AT THE LINDO THEATER

One of the most important collections at the museum is that of Arcade Toys. Located in Freeport, the Arcade Mfg Co. produced cast iron toys from the 1890's to WWII. These toys are a favorite of toy collectors across the country. The SCHS has the largest collection of Arcade on display in the country, but the collection still lacks many important pieces. We would like to grow our collection and make it a must-visit destination for anyone who appreciates or collects these fascinating toys.

On Monday, April 11th, the Lindo Theater is sponsoring an event to help us get the word out about our collection. We will be showing the movie *Earthworm Tractors* starring Joe E. Brown. This 1930's comedy is a tale about a tractor salesman and features many action scenes of tractors (they actually used Caterpillar Tractors). The movie was a big deal when it came to Freeport, and many local businesses featured window displays of Arcade toy tractors. It helped make Arcade's toy Caterpillar Tractor one of the most popular toys of the time.

The event will begin at 6:30. We will have a reception in the party room at the theater, with Arcade toys on display. At 7PM we will have a short presentation about the museum collection and the movie will start at 7:30. The reception room will be open again after the movie. Come and enjoy this light-hearted movie, learn about the SCHS's collection of toys, and help support this project. Tickets are \$5 and can be purchased in advance at the theater or museum gift shop, or at the door. Ticket sale proceeds will go to the Arcade Toy fund. Thanks to the Lindo for giving us this opportunity!



Display at the Patio Theater in Freeport when the movie premiered in 1936

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The Stephenson County Museum's buildings and grounds are owned and maintained by Freeport Park District, while the Historical Society is responsible for day-to-day operations. The Historical Society is grateful for the Park District's support. The Historical Society is financially responsible for the Museum's operation, some of the staff payroll, exhibits, educational programs, special events and collections preservation. We receive income for our expenses through membership fees, donations, Gift Shop sales, admission fees and special events and fund raisers. Thank you for your support!

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Museum Hours

Wednesday to Sunday:
Noon to 4 PM

Closed Mondays, Tuesdays &
Holidays

Admission Fees

Members — Free

Non-Member Adults — \$8.00

Non-Member Children — \$4.00

Phone: 815-232-8419

QUILT RAFFLE TO BENEFIT THE SCHS

The SCHS is raffling off a beautiful handmade quilt that was made by Lois Leady, grandmother of the museum's Registrar, Tiffany Arnold.

The quilt pattern is the Dresden Plate, in soft colors of browns, tans, and golds. It measures 72" by 94." It is hand quilted.

Tickets are \$1 each or 6 for \$5. Tickets are available at the Museum Gift Shop, the Freeport/Stephenson County Visitor Center, or from society board members. Tickets will also be available at the Society events.

The quilt drawing will be held at the Museum during the Annual Ice Cream Social on June 16, 2016. Winner does not need to be present. The quilt can be shipped to the winner if they live outside of Stephenson County.

ANNUAL DINNER

The SCHS will host its Annual Meeting and Dinner on Thursday, April 21st. This year the dinner will take place at the Elk's Club on Stephenson Street.

This year's program will feature Laura Keyes in her portrayal as Mary Lincoln. Laura is the new Director of Adult Services at the Freeport Public Library. She has been doing historic portrayals of Mrs. Lincoln since 2008. We are excited to have her share her performance with us!

Complete information about the event will be mailed out to members soon. We hope that you will plan to attend.

MILITARY EXHIBIT UPDATE

It's been two years now since the past museum director, Dr. Ed Finch, installed the National Service Exhibit in the Taylor House Gallery. The exhibit features information about local military personnel who served in wars ranging from the Civil War to the Vietnam War.

The staff at the museum has given the exhibit an update to keep it fresh for those who visit regularly. We've added some artifacts that we think are really interesting and help to tell the story of the local men and women who faithfully served our country throughout Freeport's history. Stop in and see it!

2016-17 MEMBERSHIP DRIVE

Spring is in the air, and with that comes the time to renew your historical society membership! Please remember how important your annual membership is to us.

We need your ongoing support in order to continue our work at the museum. That work includes planning and installing new exhibits, updating existing exhibits, preserving the collections, developing new programming and events, providing assistance to local researchers, communicating with our members, and general day to day upkeep. Don't forget, you can now renew online at our website-it's easy and quick.

GENEALOGY OF THE IRISH LOG CABIN - HOGAN FAMILY

BY Grace Wagner

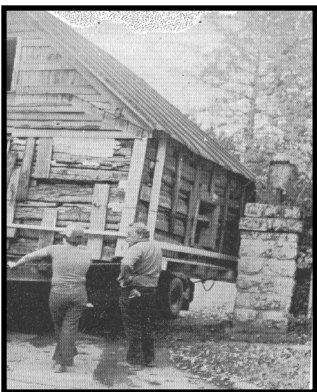
Earlier this year, I was fortunate to give tours of the Irish Cabin at the Museum after it had been refurbished. It's a 14 foot square building that was built northeast of Pearl City in 1843 in an area known as New Dublin. The New Dublin area was originally located in Erin Township until 1856 when Kent Township was formed from the western part of Erin.

The cabin was built by Irish settlers, Philip Hogan and John Barron, and first lived in by the Hogan Family. It was discovered in 1975 by Evelyn Dameier, and eventually relocated onto the grounds of the Stephenson County Historical Society in 1979.



The Cabin at the Museum today

I took it upon myself to look into the family history. All I had at the beginning of my journey was the museum plaque outside the cabin and the headstone for the family in St. Mary's Cemetery. With these facts I was able to piece together some picture of their lives.



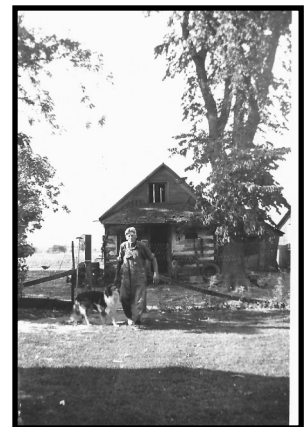
Moving the cabin to the museum grounds in 1979

Philip Hogan was born in Two-Mile-Borris, County Tipperary, Ireland in 1800. His wife, Anna, was born in County Wexford, Ireland in 1791. I was unable to find out when they were married. At this time in Ireland there was a lot of discrimination against poor Irish Catholics, and this may be the reason the Hogan's left their homeland. We believe that the Hogan's first immigrated to Quebec, then to New York State before Stephenson County. Phillip and Anna had 2 children, Mary and Michael. Mary was born January 18, 1830 in Sainte-Thomas, Quebec. Michael was born June 22, 1833 in New York State.

Many of the first settlers to Erin Township were miners. Philip came to Stephenson County in 1843, settling in the area known as "New Dublin." I found a record filed at the Dixon land office in 1845 for the property that was most likely the place where Philip and John built the cabin.

I learned that Philip Hogan was a Stephenson County Justice of the Peace around 1850. On March 19, 1852, an Irish patriot mass meeting took place in the Stephenson County courthouse "for the purpose of making a demonstration on behalf of...Irish exiles and prisoners." Philip Hogan was vice president of this meeting.

I researched the federal census records and found out that all members of the Hogan family were literate, which was not always the case during this time period. I also found that in 1860, the family real estate was valued at \$1,500 and their personal estate was valued at \$800. In 1870, the family real estate increased to \$4,800. This shows that Phillip had made a successful life for himself and his family in Stephenson County.



A newly discovered photo shows the cabin in the 1930's



Mary Hogan in 1928 when she returned to visit the cabin at age 98

Anne Hogan passed away on June 21, 1870, and Philip Hogan on January 24, 1887. Michael Hogan died October 31, 1850. Mary never married, and continued farming for much of her life. In 1920, Mary Hogan was listed as a resident of St. Francis Hospital in Freeport. She moved to Chicago in 1924. Mary came back to visit the cabin in 1928, and had her picture taken by the Journal Standard. In the picture she is smoking a pipe. She probably lived a very interesting life!

She was living in a boarding house in Chicago in the 1930 census, and died November 9, 1931. The Hogan family is buried in St Mary's Cemetery in Freeport.

TAYLOR GLASS PLATE NEGATIVE COLLECTION

The photos featured here are from the large collection of glass plate negatives that were recently digitized by the SCHS. It is believed that most of the photos were taken by Frank Bass, husband of Charissa Taylor. Frank lived at the Taylor home with Charissa from 1907 to his death in 1929. Before moving to Freeport he was a professional photographer.



Scenes from Bohemiana, Home of the Taylor Family

FROM THE COLLECTION

By Tiffany Arnold

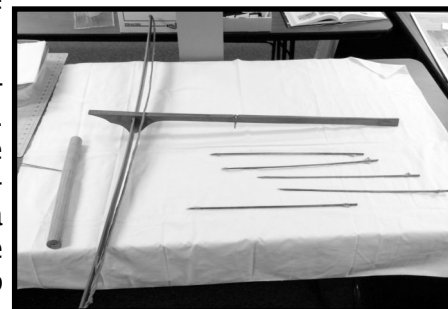
In every museum collection there are potentially dangerous objects. A good example of this very situation came a few weeks ago when I was asked by a donor to locate a particular item that he had donated some 40 years ago.

I put on my gloves before I went to retrieve the item. I wanted to protect the object from damage, but also protect myself from harm by the object. I'm very glad that I wore these protective gloves as I grabbed the wooden crossbow, quiver, and arrows and brought them down for the donor to see.

It was only as I was speaking with the donor that I found out that these arrows (and inherently the quiver that held them) were actually tipped with a deadly poison. The donor had wrapped the tips with tape when he had donated them to the museum, however, with the passage of time, the tape had come off some of the arrows. There was also no indication anywhere on this item that they were toxic. It was a lesson in the importance of maintaining good records and properly labeling potentially dangerous artifacts.

The story behind this crossbow set is very interesting and takes place in Vietnam during the war. The set came from a tribe that was from Buon Me Thuot (or Ban Me Thout) (pronounced bam-ba-two-e), which is the capital city of Dak Lak province in the central highlands of Vietnam. These indigenous peoples are known as The Degar or Montagnards, which was the French description, meaning mountain people. The Montagnards were allies to U.S. Special Forces during the Vietnam War; training and fighting alongside them during the conflict. The donor brought these items back after he returned from serving in the Vietnam War in 1976.

These items were ceremonial and not used for war purposes. The crossbow is large and measures 53 inches across by 39.5 inches in length. The quiver and crossbow are decorated with tribal designs and all of the pieces are made from material that were readily available from the jungle close to where the tribe lived. The bamboo arrows are tipped in a paralyzing poison known as curare. The poison works by affecting the skeletal muscles and weakening them so much that they eventually stop working, causing asphyxiation due to paralysis of the diaphragm.



This set of beautifully handcrafted artifacts has been rehoused and the arrows and quiver have been placed inside of special acid-free archival boxes with red tags that clearly indicate that they are toxic and should be handled very carefully. Working in a museum can bring new and exciting experiences and there's always a chance to learn about something new everyday.