

INKLINGS and IDLINGS

The Newsletter of the Carl Sandburg Historic Site Association

313 East Third Street • Galesburg, Illinois 61401 • (309) 342-2361

Summer 2004

Annual Meeting

In accordance with Article III of the By-Laws of the Carl Sandburg Historic Site Association, the annual meeting of the organization will be held at 7 p.m., Tuesday, July 13, 2004, at the Visitors' Center, 313 East Third Street, Galesburg, Illinois.

At that time, officers and directors of the Association will be elected for the coming year, and such other business as may properly come before the Association will be transacted.

Light refreshments will be served. All members are encouraged to attend.

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Outta Site

Our new seasonal worker, Bert McElroy, has been working since the first of May, and the grounds definitely reflect the care he has used in his maintenance. Mow, mulch, mow, mulch, weed, weed, weed. We've gone through at least fifteen bags of mulch each week, for three weeks, and there is still more ground to cover. If you have not met Bert, stop by and introduce yourself. He's a darn good interpreter as well as being a pretty decent guy. He has certainly helped by planting the \$200 worth of perennial plants which the Historic Site Association authorized me to purchase at the last monthly

board meeting.

The Sandburg Days Festival, May 6th-8th, was the best our Site has had. The kickoff, a chamber theater reading by Springfield area thespians under the direction of Phil Funkenbusch (of the Illinois Historic Preservation Agency) was a great success. The performance was excellent, and all in attendance were moved by the Sandburg with a SPRINGTIME SLANT. The weather was somewhat threatening, so the attendance was not as good as the production merited.

The Site attendance on Saturday, however, was quite good. This was due mainly to the scheduling of events sponsored by other organizations (Discovery Depot, Bright Futures, etc.). We were bustling around the entire day. Bert and I could have used some volunteer help, but there was no response to my request in the last newsletter.

The contractor for painting the Visitors' Center has changed. H. Nordeen of Bishop Hill, the original contractor, has retired. The new contractor is Mike Cooley of Galesburg Painting Systems. He has removed the shutters for painting off premise and has begun work on the siding. The work should be completed by the end of this month.

Railroad Days promised to be a big event for the site, not only because it celebrated the 150th anniversary of the tracks coming

through Galesburg, but also the Historic Site sponsored the World Premiere of "Galesburg: Capital of the Burlington Railroad," a DVD produced by Prairie Films (William Franckey and Gary Granberg). The video is available in the museum store for \$19.95. Besides the film, our regular tours were offered, along with free cookies and lemonade. Jeanne Strubble and Barbara and Christian Schock volunteered to help us out. Thanks to them and also to Norm Winick for the loan of his DVD player and monitor and to John Heasley for the loan of his speakers.

-- Steve Holden

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Send Her A Note

Carol Nelson, former Site Superintendent at the Carl Sandburg State Historic Site, is dealing with some health problems now. Her address is 945 Sunset View Drive, Galesburg, Illinois 61401

Her family encourages friends to send her notes, jokes, cartoons or funny stories to ease the situation. If you are one of Carol's many friends, please take a moment and send her a short message.

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Sandburg Days Festival

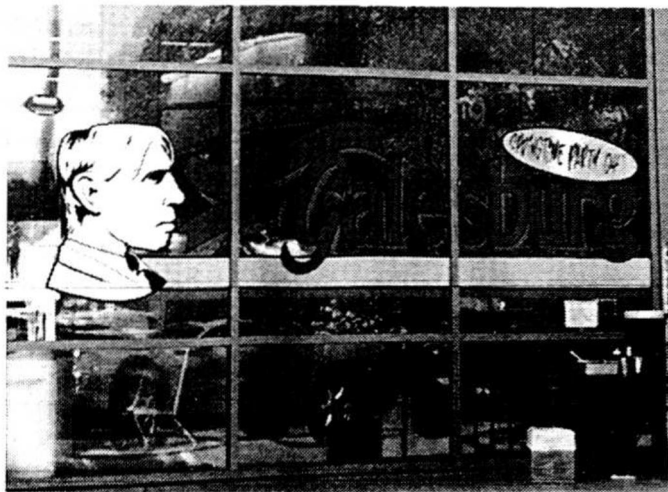
As Steve Holden noted in his report the eighth annual Sandburg Days Festival, May 6 through 8, 2004, was a success. The variety of activities appealed to all age groups. Children enjoyed the Hacky Sack Races. Families ate lunch at The Packinghouse tent on Seminary Street. Older adults viewed the antique car display

and reminisced about the "good old days."

An overwhelming response to the antique appraisals offered on the third floor of the Galesburg Antiques Mall surprised everyone. Nearly five hundred items were brought in for experts to examine and estimate what the item might bring if offered for sale. Most owners were curious about an object's value rather than being willing to sell it.

Some of the outstanding antiques were filmed by WTVP of Peoria for later airing on the public television station--just like the national "Antiques Roadshow" program.

The HyVee Supermarket on East Main Street employed an artist to paint a picture of Carl Sandburg on the front windows of the building. It included a side view of Carl Sandburg as well as a few lines from his poem "Chicago." The interior of the store was decorated with brightly colored streamers above the grocery aisles. Below is a photograph of one of the windows.



A Friend Gone

Fred Schubach, who with his wife Louise was a member of our Association, passed away June 19,

2004, in Peoria. He was born in Germany, became a master tailor and arrived in the United States in 1938. He moved to Galesburg in 1939. Even before he became a citizen of this country, he was drafted into the military during World War II. He fought with the Third Army in Germany.

Fred Schubach Clothing, one of three stores he owned, was a fixture on Galesburg's Main Street for decades. Men from as far away as Chicago came to be fitted with a first class suit. Some men in Galesburg wished they could own a suit from the Schubach store even though they knew the cost was beyond their means. To be dressed in a perfectly tailored suit of superior fabric was an ideal and Fred Schubach knew how to provide it.

Apart from his support of the Association, he was active in many cultural and civic organizations during his lifetime. Perhaps most important to him was Temple Sholom, of which he was a member. It owes much of its success to him.

Mrs. Schubach, three children and four grandchildren survive.

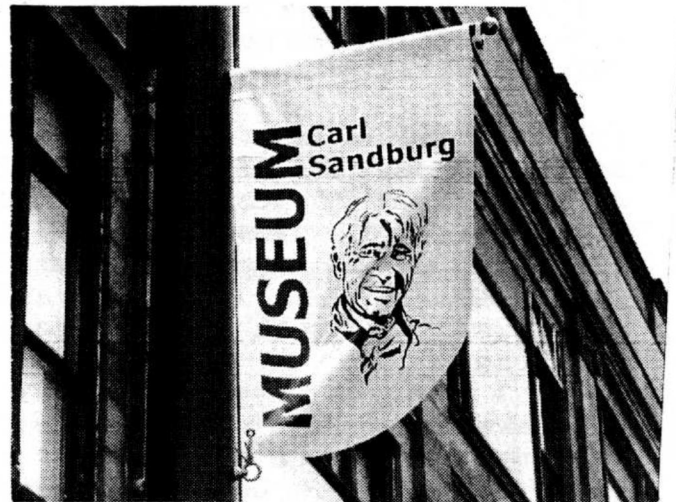
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Banners

The Carl Sandburg Historic Site Association has purchased a number of banners to be hung on light standards in downtown Galesburg. It is hoped the they will attract the attention of local residents as well as of visitors and provide a gentle reminder to visit the Carl Sandburg State Historic Site.

The photograph below shows one of the banners in front of the

former O.T. Johnson Department Store.



Compliments

The editor of *Inklings and Idlings* receives a few compliments now and then, but the last issue stimulated many to comment favorably. Residents of the area once occupied by the old racetrack were especially pleased with the map and description of the track where horseraces were held in the 1890s and later.

Most generous was Jean Clark Kaldahl who wrote a note stating that she and her husband, Charles, "devour" each issue as soon as it comes in the mail to their home in the State of Washington. We hope every issue is "delicious."

Although we are grateful for the kind words, they will compel us to work even harder to justify them. You can help in that effort. *Inklings and Idlings* welcomes articles about Carl Sandburg, Galesburg and Knox County. They may be subject to editing because of space limitations.

Please mail them to:
Inklings and Idlings
Carl Sandburg Historic Site

Association
313 East Third Street
Galesburg, Illinois 61401

Inklings and Idlings goes to many states across the nation as well as to Sweden. Copies are sent to a number of newspapers in Illinois. It is hoped they will use some of the articles and publicize the birth home of Carl Sandburg.

The newsletter may be of interest to some of your friends. You can encourage them to become members of the Carl Sandburg Historic Site Association. Then, they will receive a personal copy too.

John Heasley, coordinator of the Songbag Concerts, also received a compliment via e-mail from Bob and Kristie Black who appeared at the April concert. They rated the Barn "an absolutely perfect setting for acoustic music--with a listening audience that is just the right size for personal interaction, wonderful acoustics and excellent sound....this is among the most pleasing and satisfying venues we've run across."

The Blacks also thanked the Carl Sandburg Historic Site Association for providing a showcase for acoustic music. The Songbag Concerts will be back in the fall.

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Bread Sauce

In the last issue of **Inklings and Idlings** there was a short article about accompaniments for various meats served at family meals. One of the items was bread sauce which could be served with boiled chicken.

Out of curiosity, several old

cookbooks were consulted to find a recipe for bread sauce. It was popular in England in the middle of the nineteenth century. Mrs. Isabella Beeton, in her cookbook published in 1859, gave lengthy directions for bread sauce which was usually served with turkey, chicken or game.

An onion, peeled and quartered, was to be simmered in a pint of milk until soft. Then, a loaf of day old bread, broken into small pieces, was added. The mixture was allowed to soak for an hour. Next, the mixture was beaten with a fork to make it smooth. Seasonings of mace, cayenne and salt were added to flavor the sauce. It was reheated just before serving.

The 1896 edition of **The Boston Cooking School Cook Book** indicated the sauce should be as thick as mayonnaise. The sauce wasn't meant to be a substitute for gravy.

Cookbooks of the Civil War era also give similar recipes for bread sauce.

Now you know, but you probably won't be preparing bread sauce for your Sunday dinner. We wonder if Mrs. Clara Sandburg ever made bread sauce to go with roast chicken.

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The Racetrack

(The last issue contained a story about the Galesburg racetrack. Nowadays, regulated gambling is associated with horse racing. At the end of the nineteenth century, the pleasure of going to the track was derived from watching powerful equines, harnessed to sulkies, compete with each other. To be sure,

there may have been some informal wagering.)

In January, 1894, The Galesburg Daily Mail started a campaign to rid the city of gambling, liquor-selling on Sunday and houses of ill repute. Reporters visited several of the gambling dens and wrote that there was much activity with a good deal of money changing hands.

The newspaper said the mayor and police chief should enforce the ordinances that were already on the city's books. Grace Seaton operated a house of ill repute on West Street which was raided.

There was another such establishment on East Brooks Street run by Delia Campbell. It was just a few blocks away from the home of August Sandburg and his family. Surely they heard about it but were in no position to do anything about closing the house.

The Mail called these "businesses" a disgrace to the high moral name of Galesburg.

Almost every saloon in town had a gambling room connected to it. The Mail urged Mayor Forest F. Cooke to direct Police Chief I.N. Coakley to shut down these establishments by enforcing the existing ordinances. On January 17, 1894, Mayor Cooke issued an order for keepers of gaming rooms to close them permanently.

At the First Congregational Church on the Public Square, an indignation meeting was held and a petition drive started to clean up the city.

On February 9th, The Mail reported that the idea of having a racetrack was being revived by a group of men in Galesburg. They

had been in touch with Charles W. Williams, the famous horseman of Independence, Iowa.

Mr. Williams had built up a fine racing facility in Independence, but lost it in the Panic of 1893. He still owned a fine array of racing horses and was a close friend of Fred Seacord of Galesburg.

Local horsemen felt Mr. Williams was an expert in setting up a racetrack and attracting both horsemen and the public. He visited Galesburg and met local businessmen but was noncommittal about relocating. Other cities, Omaha and Chicago, were also pursuing Mr. Williams to relocate in their communities. Some people in Independence wanted him to remain there.

A public meeting was held at the Courthouse on February 27, 1894, to discuss Mr. Williams' proposal. It would require monetary commitments to bring a new track to Galesburg. Mayor Cooke pointed out building the track would add jobs to the local economy and visitors to the track would increase business in Galesburg.

It was explained that the purchase of the John Garwood farm would cost \$150 per acre and about \$30,000 would have to be raised from local investors. Mr. Williams would invest about \$34,000 in the project. A committee of nine men was appointed to write a contract and negotiate with Mr. Williams.

Over the next month or so, discussion centered on which of two locations was best. The Reynolds farm was in litigation so a clear title would be difficult to acquire in the amount of time available. The

sale of lots to finance the track proceeded slowly. Some people thought certain business men were trying to make money off land owned near one of the proposed sites.

A second meeting was held at the Courthouse on March 14th to create enthusiasm for the proposed track. J.H. Ellis stood up at the meeting and said he "believed a man that did not like a good horse was not a good Christian." Not every one agreed with him.

Now, harness racing was a favorite sport at the time. It wasn't included with the vices of gambling, drinking alcohol or prostitution in many minds.

Of course, the churches linked all these activities together. The Methodist Church, with 900 members, passed a resolution condemning the race track. They were of the opinion that the track would be detrimental to the moral and financial stability of the city; it would attract undesirables; and it would harm Knox and Lombard colleges. Every clergyman in the city preached on the evils of the proposed race track.

In spite of all the talk, the track was built and opened in September, 1894.

(Many thanks to Kay Stout and Rex Cherrington for bringing the racetrack history to our attention.)

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Before the Swedes Migrated

(In the Spring issue of *Inklings and Idlings* one article described the early Swedish immigrants to central Illinois. This time a

description of life in Sweden will explain some of the reasons for the movement of large numbers of Swedes to America.)

At the beginning of the nineteenth century, Sweden was a rural country with a king. The king decided where the towns and industries would be located and which ones would be improved. There was a state church, Lutheran, and few citizens had the right to vote.

The first residents to emigrate did so because of religious persecution. The state church had overseen the lives of the people for centuries and expected to continue to do so.

About the same time, the government chose to reform the layout of land ownership. There had been many small plots which had been split up over time. The purpose of the plan was to combine the small segments into more efficient units.

This meant fewer workers were needed to farm the land. The extra individuals had to hire out to someone else in order to make a living. There was less security in the new land system so individuals and families began to move to other parts of the country looking for work.

The government also opened new territory for logging. These efforts broke up the family units in the small villages which had existed for hundreds of years. The younger members of the society had to move to other areas in order to find work. All of these changes began a pattern of moving elsewhere to make a living.

In addition, there was an increase in the population. It

was common for couples to have eight to ten children. Housing was never built quickly enough to accommodate all of the people. Slums grew up around the cities. Disease was common in the crowded urban places.

Famine struck Sweden between 1867 and 1869. In America, times were booming as the country recovered from the Civil War. Between 1868 and 1873, more than one hundred thousand Swedes migrated to the United States. They were young

and accustomed to hard physical labor--just the kind of individuals needed to expand the United States.

August Johnson, later known as Sandburg, came to America in 1869. Clara Matilda Andersson arrived in 1873. Each had worked in various places in Sweden, but weren't getting ahead. Separately they chose to cross the water and try for a better life. They met and married in Illinois.

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Wrinklings & Wild Things

In honor of the 150th anniversary of the first railroad coming through Galesburg, I submit this poem.--sh

WORK GANGS

Box cars run by a mile long.
And I wonder what they say to each other
When they stop a mile long on a sidetrack.
Maybe their chatter goes:
I came from Fargo with a load of wheat up to the danger line.
I came from Omaha with a load of shorthorns and they splintered my boards.
I came from Detroit heavy with a load of flivvers.
I carried apples from the Hood River last year and this year bunches of bananas from Florida; they look for me with watermelons from Mississippi next year.

Hammers and shovels of work gangs sleep in shop corners
when the dark stars come on the sky and the night watchmen walk and look.

Then the hammer heads talk to the handles,
then the scoops of the shovels talk,
how the day's work nicked and trimmed them,
how they swung and lifted all day,
how the hands of the work gangs smelled of hope.

In the night of the dark stars
when the curve of the sky is a work gang handle,
in the night on the mile¹ long sidetracks,
in the night where the hammers and shovels sleep in corners,
the night watchmen stuff their pipes with dreams—
and sometimes they doze and don't care for nothin',
and sometimes they search their heads for meanings, stories, stars.

The stuff of it runs like this:

A long way we come; a long way to go; long rests and long deep sniffs for
our lungs on the way.

Sleep is a belonging of all; even if all songs are old songs and the singing
heart is snuffed out like a switchman's lantern with the oil gone,
even if we forget our names and houses in the finish, the secret of
sleep is left us, sleep belongs to all, sleep is the first and last and
best of all.

People singing; people with song mouths connecting with song hearts;
people who must sing or die; people whose song hearts break if there
is no song mouth; these are my people.

**From "Smoke and Steel" in Carl Sandburg's
Complete Poems, pages 156-157.**

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