

METAMORA ASSOCIATION FOR HISTORIC PRESERVATION

NEWSLETTER

June 2018

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OPEN HOUSES RESUME AT THE STEVENSON HOUSE. The next open house is June 3. Stop by and view history!

100 Years Ago This Month - Metamora Boys Off to World War I

A special thanks to Sue Mischler for sharing the attached article and pictures of her grandfather, John B. Fuchs, who was part of the largest group from Woodford County headed overseas.



John B. Fuchs

CAMP GRANT REMOUNT STATION

The Metamora boys were sent to the Camp Grant Remount Station in Rockford, apparently because it was believed the boys came from rural farming communities very likely had experience with horses.

NETAMORA, ILLINOIS, FRIDAY, JUNE 28, 1918

METAMORA IN CHARGE OF FAREWELL TO BOYS

Gives Program at County Seat Thursday Afternoon in Honor of Woodford's Largest Single Contribution of Boys, Who Leave Friday Morning for Camp Grant—Five Boys Off Last Sunday

Program

Music	Washburn Band
Songs	Metamora H. S. Girls' Quartet
Piano Solo	Miss Alvina Kuoblauch
Address	Rev. Father Donovan
Song	E. T. Holstman
Address	Rev. Eldred Cleave
Song	Gretchen Fey
Address	Hon. J. A. Ranney
Music	Band

Paddy the Piper, with his Martial Band, will also take part

Woodford county is short seven or eight men in filling its requirement of 102 draftees, scheduled to leave for Camp Grant, Rockford, at 8 o'clock this morning. There were but 97 men to draw upon in class one and several of these were called in the draft of five that left Eureka last Sunday for the Sweeney Auto School, Kansas City. The local board expected, as The Herald went to press, the number leaving today would be 93 or 94.

The boys who left Sunday are John Voelker, Metamora; Chas. Probasco, Eureka; Wm. Tucker and Lloyd Memmen, Minonk; and Nelson Kamp, Palestine. They were given a patriotic send-off by the citizens of Eureka at the courthouse in Eureka.

The boys in the big contingent leaving today, the largest single draft upon the young manhood of the county, assembled in Eureka at 2 o'clock Thursday afternoon. Since the work of arranging appropriate farewell exercises devolved

Jo. C. Altz, Metamora
 Louis J. Kolb, Benson
 Walter M. Oncken, Dana
 Benjamin Heiser, Goodfield
 George W. Moser, Canoke
 Tjork R. Harms, Minonk
 Levi O. Keidel, Ciasna Park, Ill.
 Ernest D. Schieber, Secor
 William C. Mool, Jr., Panola
 Albert Aeschleman, Roanoke
 Elmo Tibbens, Roanoke
 George C. Kamm, Roanoke
 William Blasier, Roanoke
 Frederick Herring, Metamora
 Henry Greuger, Washburn
 Benjamin Kaysen, Low Point
 William K. Dabois, Metamora
 William Williams, Metamora
 Ellis J. Chaffin, Kappa
 Arthur Ponke, El Paso
 Joseph Birkey, Carleok
 Joseph Zimmerman, Minonk
 John F. Irvin, Cantonville
 Andrew Uzarske, Metamora
 Rudolph O. Altz, Metamora
 Leo Sims, Minonk
 William Schrock, Metamora
 Paul E. Greider, Chatsworth

upon the citizens of Eureka during the last year, Chairman Ed E. Robinson has lately turned the program over to the different towns of the county and Metamora was given charge of Thursday's program, which was arranged as above. It was planned to hold the exercises on the court house lawn if the weather was favorable and in the circuit court room in case of rain.

On Tuesday the local board began sending out questionnaires to the 125 new registrants and mailing them out at the rate of 25 per cent each day. The lottery for determining the order of call of the new draftees will take place in Washington D. C. this morning.

The work of reclassification of deferred classes of men, made necessary by the exhaustion of class one, will be taken up soon by the local board. Calls for draftees for the month of July are expected now any day.

The men called to report at Eureka yesterday are here named. There are 977 in the list. Two of the number left Sunday, namely John Voelker and Chas. Probasco.

John Voelker, Metamora
 Otto Kienhafer, Metamora
 Elias Fehr, Eureka
 Charles F. Probasco, Eureka
 Willie Oltman, Benson
 Andrew Martin, Roanoke
 Ralph S. Kerker, Metamora
 John Neuenchwander, Roanoke
 Antone Birkner, Peoria R. R. 36
 Henry Schumacher, Roanoke
 Minet Saathoff, Minonk
 Herman C. Nool, Metamora
 William Engel, Metamora
 Charles H. Otto, Terzill, Iowa
 Ralph Loeger, Minonk
 Jasper Reynolds, Washington
 Frederick L. Diener, Secor
 Roscoe Newkirk, El Paso
 Jesse E. Smith, Panola
 Albert Wolzten, Roanoke rr 2
 Henry Uphoff, Benson
 Bernd J. Johnson, Eureka
 Earl M. Knoll, Secor
 Ed. J. Stuckelmaier, Metamora
 Frank Stimpert, Panola
 Joe Grual, Secor

Nelson R. Kamp, El Paso
 Will in E. Bachman, Roanoke
 Charley D. Koch, Congerville
 Charles H. Krur, Panola
 Lawrence J. Woolfe, Roanoke
 Edward J. Knoblauch, Washburn
 Theodore Graufelman, Benson
 Minnet Sister, Secor
 John H. Hammann, Washburn
 Fred P. H. Martens, Roanoke
 Gerd A. Qantamer, Washburn
 John E. Johnson, Benson
 Andy Meulton, Washburn
 Lincoln W. Brees, Panola
 Lee R. Wagner, Cantonville
 Lester Cannon, Panola
 Harvey Wilenhauser, Roanoke
 Arthur W. Laible, Washburn
 John Fuchs, Roanoke
 Erick Bueltmeier, Benson
 Lewis A. Kapsman, Benson
 Benedict W. New Boston
 George H. Miller, Secor
 Elmer E. Bayles, Carleok
 Joseph W. Davis, Roanoke
 Rex McTucker, Minonk
 Peter A. Winkler, Peoria
 Benjamin Buchman, Secor
 Henry Lehman, Minonk
 Joseph D. Kennell, Roanoke
 John R. Moser, Goodfield
 Earl Wilson, Mendota
 Frank Head, Minonk
 Edward T. Bittner, Eureka
 Joshua Kemp, Eureka
 Edward J. Jamesen, Minonk
 Leo C. Fanel, Metamora
 John G. Harms, Benson
 Wm. N. Schupp, Metamora
 Guilford D. Zook, Congerville
 Bert Warner, Washburn
 Elmer Marshall, Minonk
 Herman J. Mitter, Minonk

Work is to begin at once on the Illinois and Michigan canal, which is to be dredged out and deepened, so that navigation between river points and the Great Lakes may become a fact and practical as well as a theory. The canal from LaSalle to Joliet is to be deepened, the government having made an appropriation for the purpose. The Comanche, a government dredge, and several other craft passed up stream the first of the week to assist in the work.



Making History Everyday

It's all too easy to consider "history" as only those events and famous people who made the news a long time ago – Abe Lincoln, Adlai Stevenson, etc. But "history" is made every day – slowly, almost unperceptively, and often without a lot of fanfare – and not always by "the famous."

Such is the case with long time residents of the Stevenson House – Charles and Lillian Abel. They bought the home around 1935 – about 83 years ago.

On a trip back from the West, the Abel's grandson, Curt (and Jane) Andes, stopped by the Stevenson House. Curt's mother, Brenda, grew up in the house. As a child, Curt spent a lot of time with his grandparents and has a lot of very fond memories of his grandparents and their home.

We asked Curt if he had any stories about the home he would like to share. He responded with the note below. A special "thanks" to Curt for sharing these thoughts...

I felt kinda silly when I didn't have any particularly interesting stories for you, but as I said, there are stories important to our family but not so interesting to others. And that is true for most people's family stories, I think. My grandparents were very down to earth people who were quite content to not be famous. I perfectly understand that the house is and will pretty much forever more be the "Stevenson House", but for us it will simply be "Grandma and Grandpa's House".

But being there again did make me think about the 50 years my grandparents owned the house. They did not make history as the Stevenson's did, but they witnessed some of the most important historical events of the 20th century during the half century they lived there. I remember hearing my family talk about sitting in the front parlor and listening to the big old radio, then later watching TV there.

I started to think about all the things that they heard and saw, things that happened. Fifty years is a long time.

They bought the house during the Great Depression. They listened to news about the Hindenburg, about the Germans invading Poland, about Pearl Harbor. They heard Roosevelt's fireside chats. Defeats becoming victory in Europe and the Pacific. They watched as their only son marched off to the Pacific war and as he, mercifully, marched back home. The end of WW2. Indoor plumbing! Their children married, their parents died. Radio gave way to TV as the source for news. They were in the house when the Korean War started, then Vietnam, the invasions of Panama, Granada and other places now forgotten. So many battles they listened for news of in that house. The 1968 Convention in Chicago - "The Whole World's Watching!" Landing on the moon! Nixon resigning. Iranian hostages. Their grandchildren grew up, married, started families of their own.

They and the house got older and began to decline together. Until my grandparents were gone. But, the house is still standing and the memories of the house and my grandparents are inseparable. My mother's "magic door" still looks toward the town square. And the Metamora Association for Historic Preservation is trying to save the house. It is always good to save pieces of history, I think. In this case I appreciate all the Association is trying to do not only because of national and town history. The lives of the house and my grandparents merged for half a century, and so for those my grandparents left behind, the Association's efforts are helping keep not only national and town history alive, but also the memory of two quiet, down to earth, and very loved people.

Stevenson's Former Metamora Residence; It May Be On National Register, But It's Home To Abels

By RHONDA ROTHBALLER
METAMORA — Charles and Lillian Abel bought their house at 104 W. Walnut 45 years ago because it was within their price range.

Now it has fallen within the range of the National Register of Historic Places.

It was accepted on that list because Adlai E. Stevenson I lived in their house, a block south of the park.

BUILT OF FADED pink brick, the home was constructed in the late 1830s or early 1840s.

Little is known about the early history of the house, ex-

cept that it was built by George Lemon.

Its most famous occupants surely were the Stevensons.

Stevenson, who became vice president of the United States from 1893 to 1897 during Grover Cleveland's second term, was a circuit lawyer in Metamora from 1859 to 1869.

Metamora had been the county seat of Woodford County, before the county seat was moved to Eureka, and Stevenson served as state's attorney.

He brought his bride, Letitia Green, to the house on Walnut after their marriage in Cheona in December 1866.

ACCORDING TO an early history, Mrs. Stevenson was a beautiful and cultured Southern lady who was reportedly astounded by the streets of mud here and the unrefined manners of native citizens.

They stayed in the house for two years, and then moved to Bloomington, where Stevenson started his law practice.

He went to congress from Bloomington.

The eight-room, vine-covered house was built low on the ground with three layers of native brick.

Although the house has four chimneys, there are no fireplaces.

Franklin stoves were popular then and were probably used instead of fireplaces.

The outside facade is square, with the shape and size of the four upstairs rooms identical to the four rooms downstairs.

THE HOUSE HAS double parlors downstairs, with one having been reserved for Sunday use only.

All the windows in the house are low, extending almost from the ceiling to the floor.

They have wide window seats that children loved to sit upon through the years.

The Abels haven't changed the house structurally, but they did add a bathroom upstairs, and covered the wood floors with tile when they became too splintery.

Electricity and a large space heater was added.

With the solid brick walls, heating ducts couldn't be installed.

From the outside, though, the house looks essentially the same as it did in the 1800s.

THERE IS A triple walnut stairway that extends from the dirt-floor basement to the attic.

It isn't a winding stairway, as in many southern-style homes.

Each stairway is located directly above the one below.

The Abels have had problems with the ceiling plaster falling down.

Some ceilings were replastered or ceiling tiles were installed.

Postcards of their home used to be sold downtown.

They saved one because they are collector's items.

While the Abels were visiting relatives in Phoenix, Ariz., the woman who lived across the street sent them a postcard of their house, asking when it would be occupied again.

Gov. Adlai Stevenson II visited the house where his grandfather lived on Aug. 11, 1949.

Gov. Stevenson was speaking at the Old Settlers Day celebration and unexpectedly knocked on the Abel door.

Mrs. Abel remembers the day well because she had to hurry and change her dress because she had been canning tomatoes and her splattered dress wasn't the proper attire for a governor's visit.

Stevenson looked around



Photos by Art Land

THE ABELS RELAX in the front parlor of their home in Metamora. The parlor also houses a space heater because the building, constructed in the late 1830s or early 1840s wasn't built to accommodate heating ducts.

Article from 1980

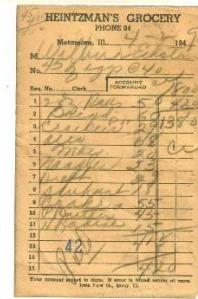
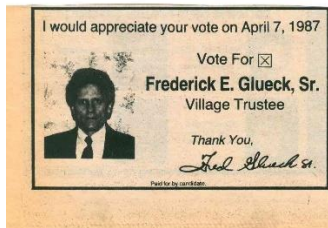
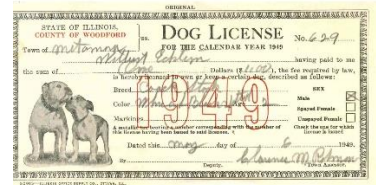
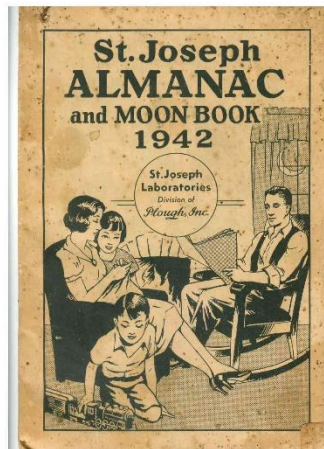
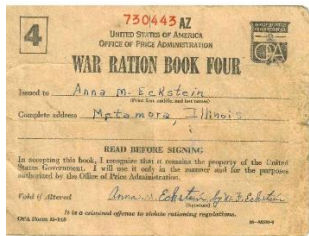


Metamora Mennonite Church (Mennonite Church USA), originally known as the Partridge Creek or Springbay Church, was organized in 1833 by Christian Engel in the home of his son John Engel one mile west of Metamora. Christian Engel, the first Amish bishop in America west of Ohio, served as bishop of this congregation until his death in 1838. The Partridge congregation at one time had 13 ordained ministers, four of whom were bishops. Services were held in the homes until 1854, when the Partridge brick church was built, which served until 1889, when a frame building was erected one mile east of Metamora. For many years services were held every other Sunday, alternating with the Roanoke Church.

The Metamora and Roanoke congregations together purchased an abandoned Baptist church building seven miles north of Eureka in 1905, rebuilt it, and called it the Harmony Church. When the Roanoke

congregation built its own meetinghouse, it left the Harmony work in charge of the Metamora congregation. Services were held regularly each alternate Sunday in the Metamora church. On intervening Sundays the congregation divided between the Union church near Washington, IL, and the Harmony church. In 1929 the Harmony and Union churches were closed. The Harmony building was moved to Pleasant Hill, near Morton, and was used by the congregation there as a house of worship.

From the Files... Special thanks to Bob R Emmert for sharing these pictures.



Withholding – 69c!! Wow!!!

Contact Us

Questions, ideas - Love to hear from you

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