

# Newsletter

## December 2023



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### LOOKING BACK... Here's Christmas in Metamora over the years.



#### Santa Visits Metamora December 22, 1910

From the Herald - "Occasion One of Most Enjoyable Holidays of the Year - Hundreds of Children Made Happy with Gifts Distributed From Stores - Santa Delighted With Reception."

In traditional garb and with a generosity and kindness that stamped him at once in the juvenile mind as a "sure enough Santa Claus", albeit riding in metropolitan style in a modern auto and being greeted in broad daylight in such enthusiastic manner as to remind him that the best days are not of the past, jolly old Santa made his appearance in Metamora Saturday afternoon exactly according to schedule.

Santa was profuse in his compliments of the enthusiastic welcome he received in Metamora on taking his departure and spoke in highest praise of the people and merchants.

The unanimous sentiment of the large gathering of people was that the day was one of the most enjoyable in Metamora has ever provided, not excepting the annual Fourth of July and Old Settlers' Day celebrations. The merchants expended considerable money to make the day a success and the band boys donated their services. All should have the heartiest of thanks and appreciation for their efforts. Everything, even the weather, which was tempered with bright sunshine was propitious and it is safe to say more hearts were gladdened and more of the spirit of "peace on earth" was manifest in the short afternoon hours than a giddy tinsel city could ever encompass.

#### December 14, 1923.

Jos. Theena advertises "Holiday Gifts that Last" including gasoline lamps, pocket knives, and air guns. Willman's Drug Store features mamma, sleeping, and rubber dolls, drums, horns, whistles, tinker toys, air guns, and electric trains.

#### December 22, 1933

Santa will be in Metamora tomorrow (Saturday) afternoon. This announcement was made by the business men of Metamora, who have made all arrangements for the occasion and who cordially invite all children in this territory to come and receive a Christmas treat. How Santa will come has not yet been definitely learned, depending on the weather.

Should the ground be covered with snow he may come in a sleigh behind two cute little ponies. Otherwise, the firemen may go out to meet him and bring him in on the fire truck. Anyway, he'll be here. Santa will meet the children at the Community Christmas tree in the band stand in the village park, where he will be assisted by local citizens in handing out packages of candies to all children who come to see him. It will be a gala day in Metamora. with the stores decorated for the occasion and displaying their arrays of beautiful and useful things for Christmas. A cordial invitation is extended by the business men to all to come and share in the Christmas spirit with them.

#### December 17, 1943

HIGH SCHOOL MUSIC GROUPS APPEAR PAGEANT THIS EVE Christmas Program to be Presented in Gym, commencing at 8 O'clock

"Here We Come a-Caroling" is the title of the Christmas pageant which will be presented by the music organizations of Metamora high school this (Friday) evening, Dec. 17 in the gymnasium. The program, which is in five beautiful scenes is as follows: Scene I—Fields Near Bethlehem. O Come All Ye Faithful. O Little Town of Bethlehem. It Came Upon a Midnight Clear. The First Noel. While Shepherds Watched Their Flocks. How Brightly Beams the Morning Star. Angels From the Realms of Glory. Angels We Have Heard on High. Scene II — Mary and Jesus in the stable. Away in a Manger. What Child is This, Thy Little Ones, Now Sing We. Scene III—King Wenceslas viewing a peasant Good King Wenceslas. Scene IV — Children decorating their tree. O Christmas Tree. Jolly Old St. Nicholas. Upon the House Top. Scene V—Carolers. Here We Come A-Caroling. Deck the Hall. Cherry Tree Carol. Scene VI—Church scene. Beautiful Savior. Adoremus, Silent Night, O Come All Ye Faithful. Characters: Wise Men—Roger Pottinger, Neil Stivers, Leslie Garber. Children: Bernice Aldridge, Anna Jean Meisner, Edith Wagner Shepherds: Bob Williams, Joe Rediger, Kenneth Ahrens. Angels: Mary Wagner, Margaret Minger, Beverly Tool. King Wenceslas: Donald Roth. Page: Russell Bachman. Poor Man: Tom Sellers. Mary: Irene Zoss. Santa Claus: Donald Ruthrauff. Male Quartet- Donald Weyeneth, James McLaughlin, Lloyd Schumacher, Eugene Glaub. Girls Sextet: Harriet Davis, Mary Wemsman, Lois Bengard, Marjorie Goetz, Vema Martin, Donna Lou Gamble. Duet- Harriet and Dorothy Schertz. Trio: James McLaughlin, Harold Schertz, Eugene Glaub. Solos; Eleanor June Arends, Lloyd Schumacher. Harriet Schertz, Harriet Davis, Wilma Goetz Readers: Edith Zimmerman, Betty Rohman. Accompanists: Phyllis Schierer, Harriet Schertz. Marilyn Weyeneth, Jean Sullivan, Marjorie Hodel. \* Music directed by Mrs. Geraldine McGinnis.

#### December 18, 1953

Santa Claus in Metamora Saturday, Dec. 19 at 2 p.m. to Give Christmas Packages

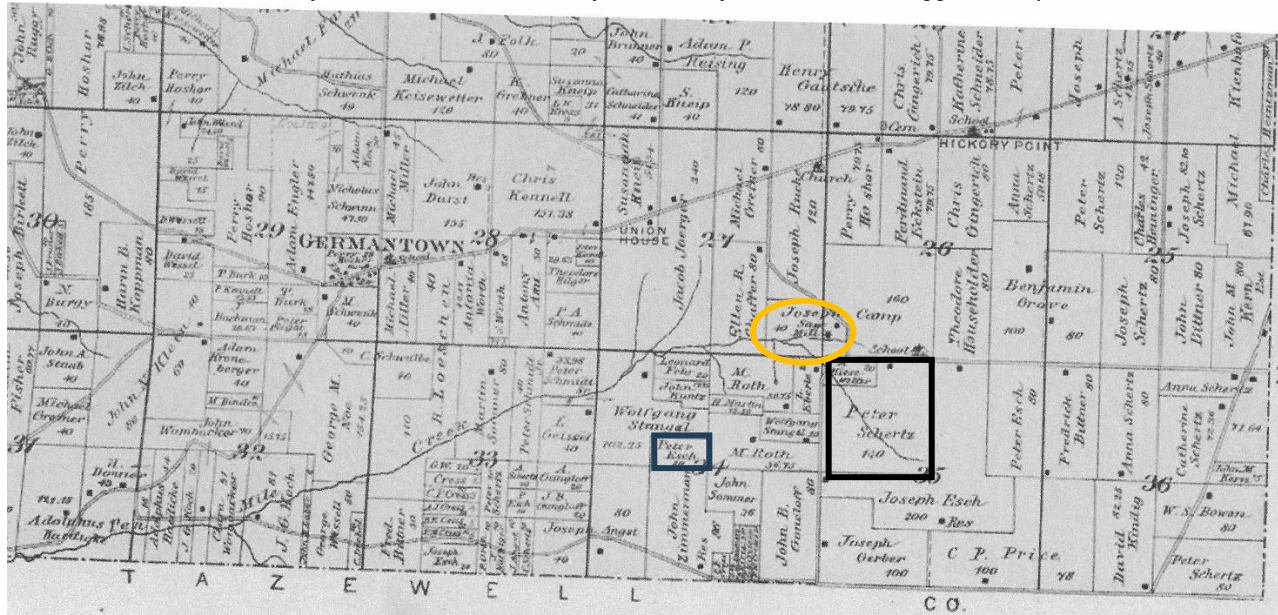
The Metamora Lions and Metamora Businessmen's clubs have made preparations for Santa Claus to distribute 950 Christmas packages to the children of this part of the county tomorrow (Saturday, Dec. 19) in the village park. Santa Claus is scheduled to arrive in Metamora promptly at 2 p.m. to greet all children who come to see him and lead in the distribution of Christmas packs, in which he will be assisted by members of the two sponsoring clubs. Santa Claus will come, snow, rain or sunshine and should the weather and ground be unfit in the park the distribution will be made at the village hall. Present prospects are for clear and perhaps cold. The children, as customary will be lined up and will pass in single file before Santa Claus and his helpers. The two sponsoring organizations cordially invite all the children of this area to meet Santa Claus in person.

**Thanks Mary!** A special thanks to Mary Curry for serving on the MAHP Board for several years! She did a great job and will be greatly missed.

Adam Bockler has replaced Mary on the board. **Welcome Adam!**

**LOOKING FOR ROSWELL** – (died 1857) one of our favorite readers asked an interesting question that really piqued our curiosity – “where is Roswell Goings buried?” Well, we don’t know. But what a great question! So we started digging (a poor choice of words!) Find A Grave said he was in St. Mary’s Metamora. But checking records, he isn’t. Maybe St. Mary’s Lourdes? Again, no dice. And to make it really challenging, right out of the blue, Roswell’s great, great grandson from California, Bob Goings, called and asked where Roswell is? What are the odds...?! Bob is very seasoned, and did provide a legal description of Roswell and Melissa’s farm. So that was a huge discovery. (He lived in Section 35 in Worth Township and also owned 20 acres in Section 34. Both are just a little north of the County Line Road. See the map below.)

The old abandoned Koch Cemetery is somewhat nearby just off Tazwood Road. And although it sits on what is now the Cat Proving Grounds, FAG says Roswell is not there. Maybe Hickory Point Cemetery... – nope! Haedicke Cemetery – old enough but no Roswell. So we’re still looking and haven’t tossed in the towel. Roswell’s descendants, who still live nearby, suspect that he was buried on the family farm. If that’s the case, we may be out of luck. BUT...if anyone has any information or suggestions, please let us know!



The black outlined areas in Sections 35 and 34 were owned by Roswell and Melissa Goings. The larger parcel cost \$150 in 1839. The smaller parcel cost one mare, valued at \$60 in 1843. The yellow oval is the Jones sawmill, where several local residents worked.

- Doing the research on Roswell has turned up several unusual facts. For instance, the 1850 census lists 2 people who died of worms, 3 of diarrhea, 6 of consumption (TB), 10 of “fever”, 2 of cholera (probably bad water), 5 “unknown”, and 2 from dropsy (could have been edema due to congestive heart failure).
- There were also three broom makers! Most area residents were farmers.
- The Tazwood Road was rerouted when Cat purchased the Mundinger farm in 1957 in order that the road would not go through the proving grounds. Larry Mundinger whose family sold the property to Cat, provided the coordinates for the Koch Cemetery.
- Larry said the old Koch Cemetery was built on the side of the hill so good farm ground would not be taken out of production.
- Larry also said his family got an outrageous price from Cat!!



Kevin Wood appeared at the Courthouse in October as Abe Lincoln.

Kevin, who went to high school in Metamora (and was an outstanding runner on an outstanding cross-country team) gave a splendid presentation about the Melissa Goings trial. He mesmerized the audience with details even the most ardent Lincoln fan had never heard.

Kevin has 8 other Lincoln presentations and offered amazing detail when answering questions from the audience.

The Courthouse organized the appearance in conjunction with “Looking for Lincoln.” MAHP provided support and some publicity. It was an outstanding day!

**Contact Us**

Questions, ideas - Love to hear from you

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