

2019 Hammond Historian's Report

This year has been quite a fulfilling one for me as town historian, even though I never seem to finish the filing, transcribing, updating website, etc. The winter & early spring months were mostly spent with preparation work for the Oak Point Bicentennial & the Scottish Festival.

June was rather busy with 3 events for me. I gave a Hammond history presentation & tour to a local JRC group. The next week I enjoyed Janie Hollister's 3rd graders' visit. This year I played Lois Daniels Paddock as a one-room school-house teacher & later I played a sassy niece to our first settler, William McNeil. I love making history come alive! The last June event was a very successful tour of 2 homes and David Mitchell's beautiful furniture, cabinetry & woodworking . He shared how he learned his trade from Fred Soper of Soper Brothers' Mill. David's artisan work shall be remembered as much as, if not more than that of Mr. Soper.

On July 13th, I participated in the Oak Point Bicentennial where I was able to take video & photos of the rededication of the little cemetery, house tours, Trading Post stories & a memory session. I also presented my rather lengthy poem entitled "Historical Highlights of Oak Point" and had a pictorial display board. The 2020 calendars were ready for that day as the photos & information for each month were all on early Oak Point. On Field Day, July 21st, I gave a slideshow presentation of early Hammond and then gave a walking tour down Main St. (This was part of an SLCHA county-wide suggestion to do Village Walk & Talks.)

On August 10th we had our second Scottish Festival with about 900 attending. During the festival we dedicated the carriage shed to Stu Casanova, who had done so much for so many years for our museum. Stu's son even started up his dad's 1948 Ford motor that Stu had donated to the museum. I researched & had folks share poems & historical tidbits on the old Burns Festivals that used to be held in Rossie. We also added a few names to our Scottish immigrant list.

Fall time. At Hammond Fair I did a full display of Oak Point as well as showing some agricultural scrapbooks. In October Angela LaJoy's 8th grade Careers Class came to visit. I gave them all sorts of ideas that they could do in volunteering at the museum. Several students raised their hands and acted very enthusiastically about coming to help out. I have yet to see any in the museum since that day, but I'm hopeful that maybe the Junior High students might be more interested in being part of a history club than the busy Sr. High students. We shall see...

December 8th we celebrated Boys' Day in memory of the Soper Brothers. I gave a PowerPoint presentation & several folks shared fond memories of Fred & Norris Soper. Ann Root and I worked on obtaining a historic marker for Soper Mill but we were told we lacked some primary

sources So, we have more work to do. Ryan Demick built us a beautiful display case for Soper items, which will be placed in the barn by the Soper planer & wood lathe.

For county historian meetings, I attended one in March & one in August. I gave a short paragraph on our Scottish heritage for the group that did a county barn quilt, using the Scottish thistle for our town. I also went to a training class on making short videos on YouTube. I had one almost all together, got stuck on one aspect & have yet to return to it. I still get frustrated with modern technology. But I am finally figuring things out more with PowerPoint presentations.

We continue to receive some really nice acquisitions: rocking chair used by early Scottish McGregor immigrants, Stew Cuthbert's national livestock judging trophy, Scottish books, Willing Workers' 1936 signature quilt, 1880 Log Cabin quilt, old town records, more yearbooks, tiny metal tricycle & solid rubber wheeled bicycle, 1941 Fisher Price toy horse & wagon, fancy wooden commode & several other items. (We need to rotate some displays now.)

I enjoyed visits or emails from former residents, such as 1949 grads, Earl Eustis & Garnie Carr, whom I got to interview & record. Also, I had a most interesting visit from Lloyd Ingham, whose ancestors were in North Hammond/Brier Hill area & gave the land for the little White Church to be built. Lloyd put a new memorial stone in front of his great grandmother's grave stone to show that she was a direct descendant of William Bradford, governor of Plymouth Bay Colony.

Plans for 2020 include a Scotland slideshow & talk by Jennifer McGregor on January 15th, Burns Festival dinner on February 1st, and our big event, the Scottish Festival, on July 11th. I continue to keep office hours at the museum on Wednesdays, 10-4, & Saturdays, 9-1, as well as taking appointments & working from home.

I hope to get better with website, facebook and other technology that the world seems to demand today, but I still feel it is important to keep a scrapbook & file information in paper form. Thank you, town board members, for supporting the museum and my work as historian. Mr. Supervisor, please accept our gift of a 2020 calendar.

Respectfully submitted on December 11, 2019,

Donna Demick, Town of Hammond Historian