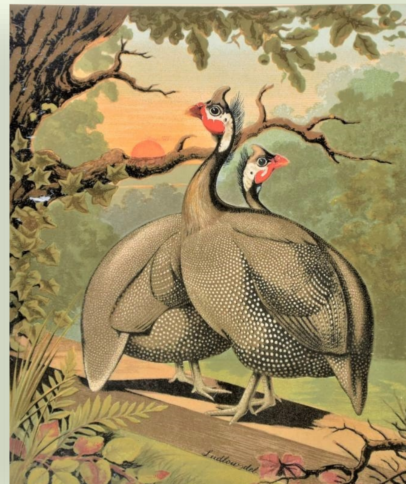
# Midwest Open Air Museums Magazine

MOMCC

Vol. XXXXI, No. 1
Spring, 2020
ISSN 1536-3279

WILD TURKEY

PEA FOWL

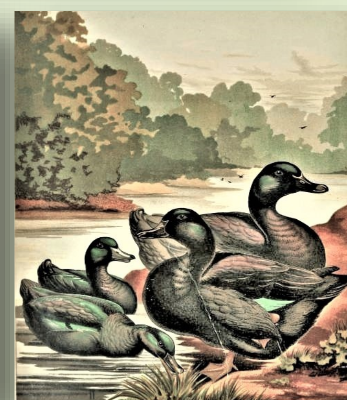


GUINEA FOWL

TOULOUSE GEESE

WHITE AYLESBURG DUCKS

ROUEN DUCKS



BLACK EAST INDIAN
BLACK CAYUGA DUCKS

In This Issue:



Midwest Open Air Museums Coordinating Council
Midwest Region of ALHFAM

MOMCC Magazine is the official publication of the Midwest Open Air Museums Coordinating Council. The magazine is published four times a year and is a benefit of membership in MOMCC. Membership information may be found at:
www.momcc.org.

Editorial offices are located in Charleston, Illinois. Publication and mailing are done under the auspices of the Five Mile House Foundation, Charleston, Illinois. Contact information is:

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# Midwest Open Air Museums Magazine

Vol. XXXXI, No. 1
Spring, 2020
ISSN 1536-3279

## FEATURE ARTICLE



## DEPARTMENTS



**Cover Photos -** The illustration of the peacock was "drawn from life" by Mr. Harrison Weir and appeared in *The Poultry Book* published in 1853 by the Rev. W. Wingfield and G.W. Johnson, Esq. The remaining six illustrations were "painted from life" by J.W. Ludlow. Three appear in the 1873 edition and the remaining three were added to the 1890 edition of *The Illustrated Book of Poultry* by Lewis Wright.

MOMCC is the Midwest Regional Affiliate of
ALHFAM
The Association for Living History, Farm and Agricultural Museums

# Editor's Notebook

By Tom Vance

I attended my first ALHFAM annual meeting and conference in 1978. It was hosted by Upper Canada Village located on the St. Lawrence River in Morrisburg, Ontario, Canada. I had only been at Lincoln Log Cabin State Historic Site south of Charleston, Illinois for four years. Coming from a biology/naturalist background, I was still pretty green in the historical site world, and we had only been experimenting with living history at Lincoln Log Cabin since the bicentennial in 1976.

At Upper Canada Village and because of ALHFAM, a whole new world opened up for me! The 1860s village consists of 40 historic structures that were saved in 1961 when the St. Lawrence Seaway was being developed. I spent the whole day at the village in wide-eyed amazement, taking pictures of every little detail (which I still do).

I missed the 1979 ALHFAM meeting in New Mexico, but attended the 10th anniversary meeting in 1980. That meeting was hosted by Old Sturbridge Village where ALHFAM was founded 10 years earlier. If Upper Canada Village didn't put me over the top for living history, then Old Sturbridge certainly did. ALHFAM was only 10 years old, and some of the founders like John Schlebecker were still active members of the organization. I remember Ron Kley, who still attends every conference, writing and performing the song, *You Picked a Fine Time for a Meeting ALHFAM*, sung to tune of the Kenny Rogers song, *You Picked a Fine Time to Leave me Lucille*, in the Bullard Tavern at OSV in 1980.

*We have an ALHFAM songbook that I update each year for the evening sing-alongs, shown here in 2017. A favorite song is "*Beer Run,*" and we usually sing "*You Picked a Fine time for a Meeting ALHFAM*" along with many other old time favorites.*


*Here I am riding in the stage coach at Old Sturbridge Village at the 40th anniversary ALHFAM annual meeting in 2010.*

After the conference, I spent several days antiquing in Vermont, New Hampshire, and up the Maine coast. Those were the days when 19th-century antiques were abundant and reasonably priced. I came home with a van-load of items for the Lincoln Log collection including the beginning of an 1840s-1860s period clothing collection. For example, I bought an 1850s M-cut collar, blue wool tail-coat that had been worn by a congressman from Maine for $15 at a shop in Vermont. It even had a period handkerchief in the pocket.

The 20th anniversary meeting in 1990 was hosted by Plimoth Plantation, but still included a one-day visit to Old Sturbridge Village. We had been doing first-person interpretation at Lincoln Log since 1981, but Plimoth took first-person to a whole new level. We had researched the Southern Upland dialect and taught it to our interpreters, but Plimoth had researched 17 dialects from 17th-century England based on where original village residents came from.

The ALHFAM 30th anniversary annual meeting in 2000 was hosted by Mystic Seaport in Connecticut, but still included a day at Old Sturbridge Village. Mystic Seaport was particularly interesting as I got to explore maritime history for the first time.

After I retired at the end of 2002, I took a few years off, but returned to the fold in 2010 for the 40th anniversary meeting based in Worcester, Mass. (but still spending a day at OSV). It was good to see many old friends again including my long-time ALHFAM buddy, Tom Shaw. Having retired, I thought I would feel out-of-place, but soon found out that many of them had also retired and were doing consulting work like I was.

So now, on to the 50th anniversary annual meeting in Boston – with a visit to Old Sturbridge Village of course. ❑

# The Candace Tangorra Matelic Awards

The Midwest Open Air Museums Coordinating Council (MOMCC) established this award in honor of MOMCC's first president, Candace Tangorra Matelic. It recognizes the best article published in the *Midwest Open Air Museum Magazine* each year.

## 2018

**Article:** "When it Comes to Our Collection, the 'D' Word is Something We Embrace," Vol. XXXVIX, No. 2, Summer, 2018

**Andrew Kercher** is currently the Manager of Community Engagement at Port Huron Museums in Port Huron, Michigan. When he wrote the article in 2018, he was assistant chief curator at the Dearborn Historical Museum. He worked for Mackinac State Historic Parks for seven years prior to coming to Dearborn. A summer job as an interpreter at Colonial Michilimackinac got him hooked on museums for life.

## 2017

**Article:** "Telling a Story Through a Lens - The J.C. Allen Photo Collection," Vol. XXXVIII, No. 2, Summer, 2017

**Todd Price** grew up on his family's farm in Clarinda, Iowa. He attended Simpson College and North Park University. Todd started his museum career at Living History Farms in Iowa followed by the Museums at Prophetstown, Indiana. In 2001 he took the position of founding Director at Historic Wagner Farm in Glenview, Illinois, and in 2018 became Superintendent of Leisure Services for the Glenview, Illinois Park District

| | |
|---|---|
| 2016—Stephanie Buchanan<br>"Learning and Leading: Incorporating Youth Volunteers Into an Agriculture Program" | 2009—Kim Caudell<br>"Murder Ballads in a Nutshell: Britain vs. America" |
| 2015—Alex Stromberg<br>"Being Disney" | 2008—John C. Bielik<br>"Paper Marbling as a Hands-On Activity" |
| 2014—Kyle Bagnall<br>"Project Passenger Pigeon" | 2007—Barbara Ceiga<br>"Putting Visitors First: Journey from the Practical to the Profound" |
| 2012—Gordon Bond<br>"The Downside of Family-Friendly" | 2006—Laura E. Daughterty<br>"Pictures of the Past: Conserving and Preserving 19th Century Photographs" |
| 2011—Daniel E. Jones<br>"Broom Corn: An Introduction to the Plant that Swept America" | 2005—Merrilee Garner<br>"Community Collaboration: Schools, Museums, Historical Societies and You" |
| 2010—Susan Odom<br>"Practical Perspective: Turning History into a Business" | 2004—Debra A. Reid<br>"Living History's Long Row to Hoe" |

## President's Perspective

### By Mike Follin

I hope this issue finds everyone preparing for the opening of their sites and enjoying the warmth of an early spring! The MOMCC board met during January for two days in Merriville, Indiana. When we adjourned at noon on Sunday the windchill factor outside was minus 16! At least Winter Storm Jacob didn't leave a huge accumulation of ice and snow for us to deal with, just "brisk" temperatures and wind.

The board meets quarterly to manage the business of the organization. Let me remind the membership once again that we are elected by and serve you. Your communication with the board on any issue is essential to help us direct the future path of the organization. The board is listed in the magazine, and we encourage the membership to contact any of us via email or phone with your thoughts and ideas.

**Google –** Ann Cejka, member at large, has been working to get the Google Classroom in order. As you may know, we want to start using this as a method of making conference session material available to the members who attend the conferences. Once you have registered, you should receive a code which allows you to access the site. One benefit is, if you have two sessions occurring simultaneously and can't decide which one to attend, you can use the Google Classroom to download the other session's handouts and information. Additionally, it will contain Conference at a Glance, a map of the hosting hotel, workshop information, and local museum locations, so that attendees can pull that information up on their phones. We are hoping that the Peoria Conference will serve as a trial run, as long as handouts are sent in early enough to get posted. As I stated in the last President's Perspective and as Ann Cejka writes in this issue, we are slowly but surely dipping our toes into the 21st century in order to become a better organizational resource for our members.

**Surveys –** In order to serve our members better we, as an organization, need to know exactly who it is we are serving and what their expectations and needs are. The survey following the last conference asked the membership how you thought the board and organization were doing in meeting your expectations and needs. The results were very positive. The board is currently working on the areas identified as concerns, such as the MOMCC website, social media, and the engagement and retention of younger members of the organization. However, this left the board with an "inquiring mind" to know just exactly who our membership is. We know most of you who attend conferences repeatedly. However, that does not constitute the whole membership of the organization; we only see and know a fraction of who we are trying to serve. To that end, we will be sending out a demographic survey via Survey Monkey and encouraging the membership to please respond. The answers to the survey questions will enable us to better focus our resources and services for the membership. Survey Monkey is completely anonymous, so we have no way of knowing who the respondents are other than they are from the membership.

**Website** – The board spent a lot of time revising the position of webmaster, starting with a title change to *Digital Media Coordinator.* With the ever-changing nature of technology the board felt it necessary to revise and update the position. An updated version of this position will be listed under the job descriptions of the board. The board also voted to do away with the MOMCC Twitter account and utilize Instagram and Facebook as our primary means of social media. We would encourage all members to utilize and post on these accounts. There will be more to come, but this is a beginning of our next forty years! Thanks to all of you for helping to make us a great organizational and member resource! ❑


# Midwest Open Air Museums Coordinating Council

## MOMCC Officers and Board of Directors

Mike Follin, *President*
Gail Richardson, *Vice President*
Debra Reid, *Treasurer*
Dawn Bondhus Mueller, *Secretary*
Betsy Urven, *Past President*

**Board Members-at-Large**

Ann Cejka
Jim Patton
Kate Garrett

**Conference Coordinators**

Becky Crabb, Spring
Monique Inglot, Fall

**Website, Social Media**

Ed Crabb
Andi Aerbskorn

**Magazine Editor**

Tom Vance

MOMCC was established in 1978 with the goal of furthering the interchange of materials, information, and ideas within the history museum field.

## Membership

We welcome membership and participation from administrators, volunteers, interpreters, curators, historians, educators, maintenance/facilities staff, gift shop workers, facilitators, docents, and anyone else with an interest in history and public education. Membership is $30 per year for individuals, $35 for families, and $50 for institutions. Membership application can be found at www.momcc.org.

## Our Purpose

The purpose of MOMCC is to further promote excellence and to provide a forum for the interchange of materials, information, ideas, and consideration of issues within the open air, interactive, and historical museum profession.

MIDWEST REGION: The Midwest is defined as the eight states of Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Ohio, and Wisconsin.

OPEN-AIR MUSEUM: Interpreting life as material culture in the context of buildings, objects, and open space. A site or facility that interprets history through exhibits, living history interpretation, and/or educational programs.

## Resource Committees

Interpretation, Music, Art, and Material Culture
Leadership and Supervision
Agriculture, Gardens, and Foodways


WE invite historical interpreters, farmers, scholars, craftspeople, curators, educators, administrators and everyone interested in Living History to Boston, Massachusetts for ALHFAM's annual conference and 50th anniversary celebration. The conference program and registration information are available on the ALHFAM website at www.alhfam.org. Following is a summary:

- **When?** June 21-25, 2020.
- **Where?** Our primary venue will be the Massachusetts College of Art and Design in historic Boston Massachusetts, https://massart.edu/visit, a conveniently compact one-block campus. We will spend one day exploring Boston and another at Old Sturbridge Village living history museum.
- **How do I get there?** The Massachusetts College of Art and Design is just a few miles via public transportation (MBTA is referred to as the "T") from either Logan Airport or South Station train terminal. Uber/Lyft and taxis are available from both locations. There is an MBTA "T" stop right in the heart of the college. Those driving should consider car-pooling as parking is limited and will be about $150 for the week.

***The Paul Revere House** is located on the Freedom Trail in Boston. One day of the conference will include a day-long trolley tour of this historic town. **Top** - The stagecoach gives rides on the village green at Old Sturbridge Village, the site of the founding of ALHFAM in 1970. The conference includes a day at OSV. (Photos by Tom Vance)*

### What's happening?

- Sunday, June 21 there will be optional hands-on workshops offered, as well as tours of Plymouth, MA, Newport, RI, and the world-class Boston Museum of Fine Arts, a short walk from campus. Workshops include a farm workshop focusing on cattle; several hands-on foodways and textiles offerings; a chance to try coopering; and the annual "Helping Hands" service program, which will be held at Historic Newton. The conference itself officially kicks off the evening of June 21 with the "Salted, Smoked and Pickled" reception and 50th anniversary celebration.
- Monday, June 22 will begin with a keynote address by Suffolk University professor and Boston historian Rob-

ALHFAM 50th ANNIVERSARY 1970 2020
The Association for Living History, Farm and Agricultural Museums

ert Allison. http://www.robertallisonhistory.com/. The rest of the day will be filled with concurrent sessions and presentations on a range of topics, as well as meetings of Professional Interest Groups htps://alhfam.org/PIG-Pen. Monday evening will be our always-entertaining annual auction.

● Tuesday, June 23 members will enjoy a day-long narrated trolley tour of history-rich Boston, getting on and off as they wish to explore sites of interest. Be sure to stop in the North End for a cannoli, follow the Freedom Trail and explore Quincy Market! The day will conclude with a Spirit of Boston dinner cruise of Boston harbor. https://www.spiritcruises.com/boston

● Wednesday, June 24 will be another day of concurrent sessions and presentations, the annual business meeting and luncheon, and regional meetings, capped off in the evening with our Presidential Banquet. Many attendees like to wear historic costume to the banquet, but modern business casual dress is fine, too.

● Thursday, June 25 conferees will spend the day at Old Sturbridge Village www.osv.org where ALHFAM was conceived in 1970. Conferees can tour the 200+ acres Living History site, take a variety of special behind-the-scenes tours, and participate in our annual plowing match. The conference will conclude with dinner, music and dancing.

● Friday, June 26 departure after breakfast.

**How Much?** We expect the "early-bird" member's rate for the conference will be $475 US, which will include most meals and all activities and transportation from the opening reception on June 21 through the concluding breakfast on June 26th. Optional workshops and tours will be extra.

ALHFAM 2020
The Association for Living History, Farm and Agricultural Museums
*50 YEARS OF LIVING HISTORY*

VISION

**Lodging?** Conferees will stay on the MCA&D campus in the modern "Treehouse" all-suites dormitory. Single bedrooms in a shared suite will be about $60US a night + a $30US one-time linens fee. Shared bedrooms will be about $50US a night + a $30US per person one-time linens fee. Each two-bedroom suite has bath. The college has offered extended stay for those who are interested. https://massart.edu/tree-house

MOMCC is the Midwest Region of ALHFAM , so members of MOMCC are also ALHFAM members and therefore qualify for the member registration rate. ❑


***The Bullard Tavern** was built at Old Sturbridge Village in 1947 to replicate a mid-19th century tavern and provide a period food service for village visitors. **Right,** ALHFAM participants enjoyed a noon meal in the tavern during the 40th anniversary meeting in 2010.*

# Dipping Our Toes in the 21st Century

## MOMCC Takes Conferences Online with Google Classroom

By Ann Cejka, Usher's Ferry Historic Village

WE'VE all been there - torn between two sessions in the same time slot. You need to go to one, but you *want* to go to the other. You beg a colleague or a co-worker who is going to the session you can't make to grab you a handout. Of course, they forget, or you never catch up with them again to actually get the extra copy, or the presenter runs out of handouts – or doesn't bring any handouts at all, and your friend just isn't much of a note taker. There has got to be a better way.

Anyone whose site is willing to fork over the money to send you to one of those big, sexy, national conferences like AASLH or AAM or the like, has seen the better way - a fully functional online conference hosting platform that integrates seamlessly with the organization website, provides all conference attendees with a log-in and allows - no, requires - conference presenters to upload both their presentations and their associated handouts before the session. This allows attendees to scroll through those documents and helps them decide which sessions will be worth their time to attend and to simply download handouts of the ones they don't attend. But of course, a sleek, fancy online conference hosting platform like that is probably way beyond the means of a humble living history organization like MOMCC, right?

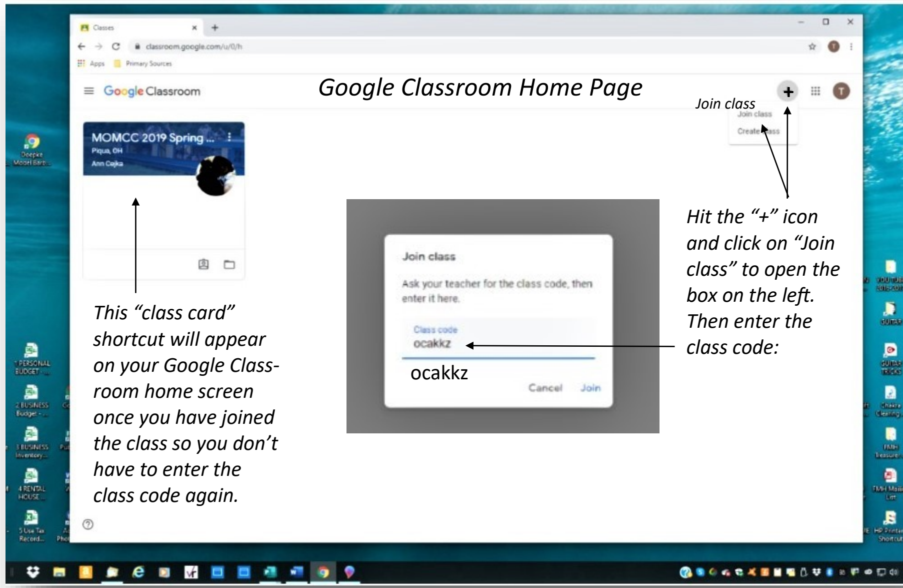



***Figure 1 - www.classroom.google.com** home page. Follow along on-line with these examples to find out how Google Classroom works. Go to Figure 3 next.*

Well, yes, but that doesn't mean there isn't a better way. Enter one of my favorite electronic hacks for sharing, training, and tracking information - Google Classroom.

At its heart, Google Classroom is a very simple, basic online class management system, allowing instructors to create a class and post class materials including handouts, documents, presentations, embedded YouTube video links, links to maps, and even e-books, websites, and other online materials. It allows students and instructors to post comments for online discussion and provides a classroom stream of comments and latest materials posted to bring participants up to speed. When used for online class instruction, it also allows students the option to submit homework materials to the site for the instructor's review, and allows the instructor to comment and post grades electronically. Don't worry, we're not grading you on this one!

Aside from being free and fairly simple to use, it also seems to meet all the basic requirements we need to provide conference handouts, schedules, and other materials online throughout the conference for attendees to access. We gave Google Classroom a test run at the most recent annual meeting at Kline Creek Farm, and many of our attendees were able to pull it up and access it within minutes. Given that success, we are pleased to announce we will be offering Google Classroom access to conference materials for our 2020 Spring Conference in Peoria, so here's what you need to know to get started:

1. **Internet connected device**

If logging in from a laptop computer, you can access Google Classroom at www.classroom.google.com. If logging in from an Android tablet or phone, you will want to download the Google Classroom app by visiting the Google Play Store. If logging in from an Apple device, you can download the Google Classroom app from the Apple Play store.

**2. A Gmail account?**

A Gmail account is not necessarily required, but certainly improves your ability to access and use Google Classroom, especially when logging in from a computer. I have had mixed reviews from non-Gmail account holders who use Google Classroom. Some have had no issues, while others have had more success by signing up for a free Gmail account. However, if you are already an android or Gmail user, logging in is very straightforward.

## 3. Class Code

To either join or create a class, you will need to select the “+” icon at the upper right hand side of your Google Classroom screen. It will then ask if you want to join a class or create one. Select “Join class” and type in the classroom code we will provide for the conference. Google class codes will be provided to attendees at the registration table. Once you have joined the class, it will appear as a “Class Card” on your Google Classroom Home Screen.

## 4. Using Google Classroom

To enter your class, select the class card on the Google Classroom home screen. It will open to the “Stream” view for the Class, showing you the latest materials and comments that have posted at the top. To navigate the Class structure, you will want to select the “Classwork” tab, found at the top of the screen when logging in from a computer and at the bottom of the screen when logging in from a phone or tablet.

From the “Classroom” page, you should be able to access materials posted for sessions by day, with more general information such as schedules posted at the top. You may also notice when you open posted materials to view them, that Google Classroom allows you to add comments. This is a great way to ask and respond to questions. Comments attached to specific materials will appear not only with the materials, but at the top of the overall class stream so people can find the latest information.

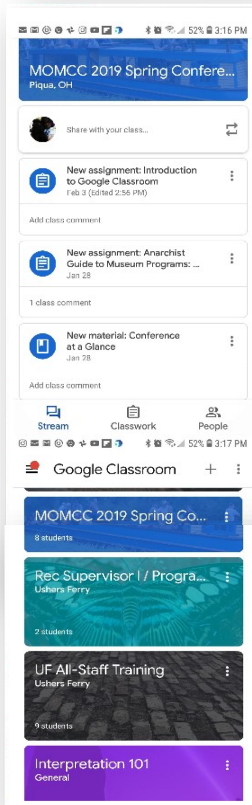



*Figure 2 - Google Classroom on a mobile phone app.*

When new information is posted or new questions and comments are added, a notification will be sent to your email so that you can keep up with the latest updates.

## 5. Where Can I learn more?

These two YouTube videos have more information:

Google Classroom: Getting started (3:28) https://bit.ly/2Lgy6y8

Google Classroom: The Full Tutorial (16:21) https://bit.ly/2DBkCsE

## 6. Try It For yourself!

If you would like to explore Google Classroom for yourself, try logging in to this sample class I made.

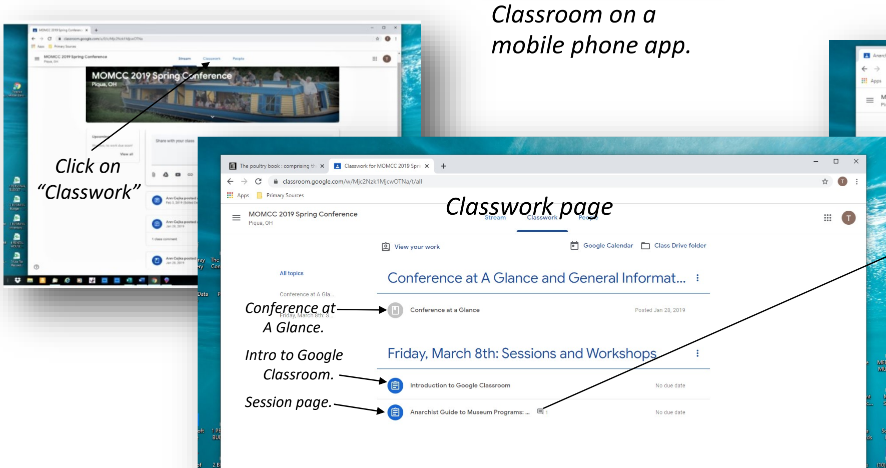
Download the app to your phone or tablet, or visit www.classroom.google.com and log in with your Gmail account.

Select the “+” button and “Join class.”

Type in the following class code: ocakkz

That’s basically it. Once you try it a time or two, it will become second nature, and you’ll wonder how you ever attended conferences in the past without it. ❑

**About the Author** - Ann Cejka is the Program Coordinator for Ushers Ferry Historic Village in Cedar Rapids, Iowa, where she also serves as curator of collections, manages social media, and produces various forms of electronic media. She holds a bachelor’s degree in history and public relations from Mount Mercy College.



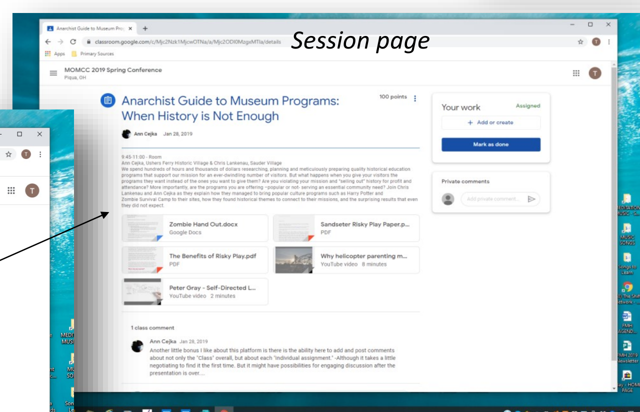




*Figure 3-4 - On the 2019 Spring Conference page (above left), click on the “Classwork” tab at the top. On the classwork page (above), information and sessions are posted. Session leaders should send their information to Ann at ann.cejka@gmail.com.*

*Figure 5 - Each session page can include a summary and information about the session, session outline, hand-outs in PDF format, YouTube videos, and an area for the session presenter and attendees to post comments or ask questions.*

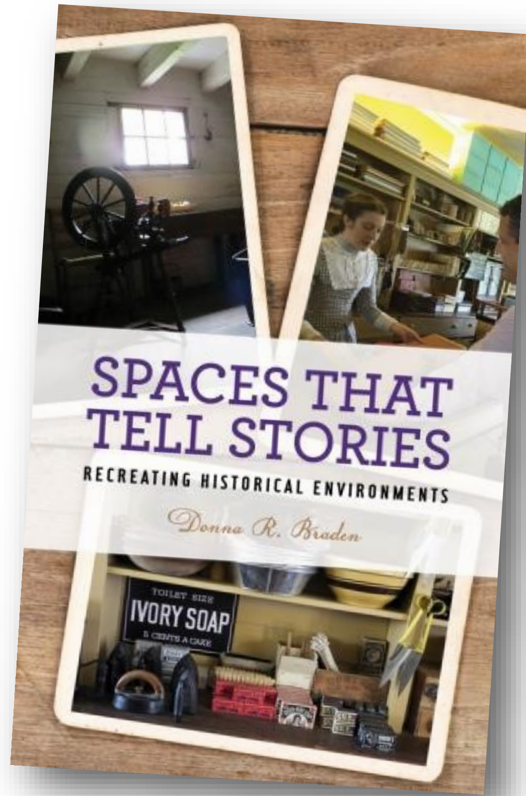
Donna R. Braden.

***SPACES THAT TELL STORIES - RECREATING HISTORICAL ENVIRONMENTS.***

(Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers/ AASLH. 2019).

Hardcover, $85.00. 208 pages. Size 7x 9.4. ISBN - 9781538111024

Reviewed by Lesley Barker, PhD




*SPACES THAT TELL STORIES: RECREATING HISTORICAL ENVIRONMENTS*, by Donna R. Braden, argues, using research from several disciplines, that when museums expose visitors to recreated historical environments, there are significant benefits for learning and enjoyment. She demonstrates that this type of exhibit enhances the authenticity of the visitor experience. Using spaces to tell stories grabs and retains the visitor's attention. It triggers multisensory responses, touching both emotions and memory. It provides tools to help visitors make mental images of the past. It allows the visitors to figuratively enter the past through a "willing suspension of disbelief."

In a chapter on the early history of using spaces to tell stories, Braden provides details of how architect Mary Colter, Walt Disney, and innovators in living history such as Plimoth Plantation, Old World Wisconsin, and others contributed perspectives that frame her approach to recreating historical environments in museums today. Braden credits Mary Colter with being a pioneer in telling stories in three-dimensions that align with historic details so as to appear authentic although they are fictive. She explains how Walt Disney developed techniques, assisted by storyboarding, that move a visiting audience through a story that unfolds in space as if they were sequentially walking through the scenes in a movie. She shows how early living history sites made the ideas of social history accessible to the public through the strategic use of artifacts, architecture, and costumed narrators.

From these theoretical and historical introductions to how museums can use spaces to tell stories, Braden moves to the practical considerations of creating them. The first step, once a museum embraces the interpretive strategy to use recreated historical environments, is to identify an essential question for each exhibit, which Braden terms "the Big Idea." Braden carefully lists the considerations that the museum must address while "framing the project" during the initial planning stage. She illustrates an approach to researching the recreated historical environment that depends on asking core questions prior to exploring relevant primary, secondary, visual, oral history, and artifactual sources. Without starting with questions, Braden warns, the research risks being under-focused. This can lead to the accumulation of many interesting but irrelevant facts. When informed by specific questions, on the other hand, the researcher is alert to the clues needed to accomplish the project.

The next step Braden identifies is to use the research to create the story that the environment will tell. This involves inventing a backstory; setting the exhibit's interpretive strategy: will there be labels, tours, costumed interpreters?; and developing a furnishing plan for the space. Braden advises that outsiders should be invited to evaluate the exhibit while it is being created with a mid-point evaluation.

The final step is to articulate the exhibit in the space where visitors will experience it. Other tasks to be done at this stage are the creation of an interpretive manual, preparing to make adjustments to the exhibit based on improvements identified after it opens, setting a calendar for ongoing evaluations and determining plans for continuing maintenance.

The final chapter comprises 10 case studies that illustrate a spectrum of approaches to recreating historical environments in museums. Braden carefully connects these examples to the ideas she presented about how to create these spaces. In addition, the book provides a detailed bibliography and notes that enhance the material in the main text.

Because Braden has been involved in the creation of immersive historical environments since 1977 at the Henry Ford and as a museum consultant, she brings tremendous expertise to the subject. Yet while showing her process in creating a space that will tell a story, she did not disclose many details or illustrations derived from her own practice which, in my opinion, would have strengthened the book. She began the book as a theoretical discussion of the ongoing value of recreated historical spaces in response to an unsubstantiated statement that many museum scholars and professionals consider them to be obsolete. I expected to find a more nuanced theoretical discussion that included the reasons behind the argument that they are no longer relevant. I was disappointed in the chapter called “Your Methodology,” not because of the useful treatment of how to select and search for the answers to important research questions. The chapter is useful as an introduction to how to evaluate and use different types of primary and secondary sources, but it does not promote a methodology in the academic sense of that word. Apart from the fascinating treatment of three early “pioneers” who used three-dimensional participatory visitor experiences to convey a story, whether fictional or historical, Braden’s book is essentially a how-to manual. The case studies augment the explanation of how to create three-dimensional immersive historical environments by demonstrating how any type of museum can begin to explore the benefits of this type of visitor experience.

An important thread runs like an underground stream throughout the book, starting with the title: the importance of the story. It is how the imaginative requirements of a story can, at times, fight against the factual aspects of doing history. It is the importance of using the elements of a story in the development of a space that will be layered to convey multiple stories as the artifacts trigger connections and new questions in the visitors. It is the value of establishing the backstory of the exhibit space that tells the featured story, letting the past inhabit and clash with the present. It is the justification for the willing suspension of disbelief that causes a visitor to both enter the room and the story and then to step out of the space again back into the present ,where reflection on the experience shifts prior knowledge into new ideas. This thread, in my opinion, is the most valuable takeaway from *Spaces That Tell Stories* for those of us whose professional practice has been to create, facilitate, and inhabit these spaces. In my opinion, we experts in historical re-enactment need to reflect together on the storying process to enhance the corporate metacognition of the living history profession. Braden obviously understands these and many more ways that story works to share history. I think they have been so woven into the fabric of her practice that she is not aware of how uniquely she can present those perspectives. I wish she had brought them even more into the foreground of her book, but they are visible enough to open a more intentionally nuanced conversation among us; for that I thank her.❑

**About the author** - Lesley Barker is the former executive director of the Bolduc House Museum (now renamed the Centre For French Colonial Life) in Ste. Genevieve, Missouri. Her doctorate in Museum Studies is from the British University of Leicester. Currently she lives in Paris, Kentucky, and is working on a project that connects faith and public history.

# For the Love of Flax

By Cathy Grafton, Prairie Quilts and More


*Note: This article is based on a session given at the 2019 MOMCC Fall Conference in West Chicago.*

I know exactly where I began my love affair with flax and linen. It was in Pennsylvania at the Somerset County Rural Life Center many years ago. My family was on a visit to friends near there and we stopped in to see the exhibits. Then in my early teens, I was especially taken with the flax/linen display. I had been doing needlework on linen since I was six and so took an interest when I saw a display of tools showing how linen came from flax fibers. The display showed an array of strangely named tools – scutching knives, hackles, a flax break, and a lovely distaff and spinning wheel. There were bundles of flax straw waiting to be processed. The images of the tools stayed with me for many years and in time became a part of my reenacting life.

***The author** did a presentation on flax processing at the 2019 fall conference in West Chicago. (Photos by Tom Vance)*

I began demonstrating quilting and needlework in the early 1970's and soon the Bicentennial helped create an interest and need for people who could demonstrate historic crafts. Over the years I began to look for flax processing tools so I could add this demonstration to my events. I found items at antique stores in Iowa, Wisconsin, Missouri, Illinois, and Indiana and began to order flax straw from The Landis Valley Farm Museum near Harrisburg, PA. Some of the tools I found were Scandinavian and along the way I was able to meet and talk with several others who had an interest in flax and how to prepare it for spinning. Besides reading what I could find about flax, I visited several historic sites to try to learn more. Old World Wisconsin had tools and people I could talk to about flax. I visited Landis Valley where there was an active flax program and the staff there was very helpful. I also visited the Shelburne Museum in Vermont where I saw flax growing surrounded by a twig fence to help keep it upright while it grew. This was important to see because flax fibers extend into the root and harvesting means pulling up the plant root and all. I even tried growing some flax myself but did not have ground enough to grow a useful amount. Though I read all I could find in those days before the internet, it was mainly a learning process of doing the work to get a feel for the process. I found right away that people were quite fascinated to watch the steps. Flax has been cultivated and used to make linen for about 6,000 years making it our oldest known fiber. Though commercially processed today it was a labor intensive process for much of our history and the steps to take it to linen were practiced by many people all over the world.

Here is how I demonstrated using my tools and following the steps for processing flax to get it ready to spin:

I would begin with a *rippling comb*, a slotted tool that was run through the bundles of flax before retting to remove the small seed balls. I always kept a small zinc lidded jar to show the seeds which had many uses as well as being saved for next year's planting. Today of course we also use ground flax seeds for health benefits.


***The rippling comb** is used to remove the seed pods from the flax plants before processing.*

The next step is *retting*. Although I did not take my tin retting tub to events, I did rett the flax that I bought at home. Retting was done historically several says – retting in dew, in swampy area ponds, and in tubs such as mine were all ways that flax could be retted. Retting was a very important part of the process because it dissolved some of the gummy cellular residue that connected the flax fibers to the straw encasing it. Too much retting could make the flax fibers fall apart, too little could make it difficult to remove the straw. I found little written information to give me guidance. One source stated – rett in water until it smells really bad, which it often did. I would change the water periodically and weigh down the bundles with large stones for about two weeks in hot summer weather. I found if I did not change the water, my flax fibers would come out a little darker as the water became discolored.


***The flax break** breaks down the flax plant stems and begins the process of separating the chaff and other stem material from the flax fibers.*

The *flax break* is used to begin the straw removal process. I had a small break so could only do a handful of flax at a time. The chopping of the flax as it you move it through the blunt blades of the break easily begins to remove the straw. The entire bundle must be run through the break down to the crunchy root ends.

Then I would use a *scutching knife* to further remove and break up the straw. A German term for this was swingling. This is done against a scutching board or other flat surface. I had an antique scutching knife but chose to use newer tools for this because the lovely antique one I had was fragile.


***The scutching knife,** used with a scutching board, removes the larger chaff and plant materials from the flax fibers.*

The final process to remove straw is using the *hackle, hatchel, or hetchel,* with it's various spellings. This removes small bits of straw and also collects the shorter or broken bits of flax fiber – well known as *tow*. Tow had several valuable uses – making a rough or tow cloth, used as a fire starter, cleaning the barrel of guns, or stuffing cushions, bedding and pillows. Tow head is a popular name for blond haired boys while the long fibers now ready to spin have given girls with blond hair the nickname flaxen haired. I had three main hackles, a small round one, a double one and my main one with a dovetailed cover and dated 1836. My hackles had holes on each side of the base so they could be secured during use. These were the most fun to demonstrate for children, because when I drew off the cover children always reacted as they saw the fierce looking rows of nails.


***Hackles, hatchels, or hetchels*** *consist of a series of metal spikes. After the flax plants are "broken," they are combed through the hackle which removes the chaff and tow.*

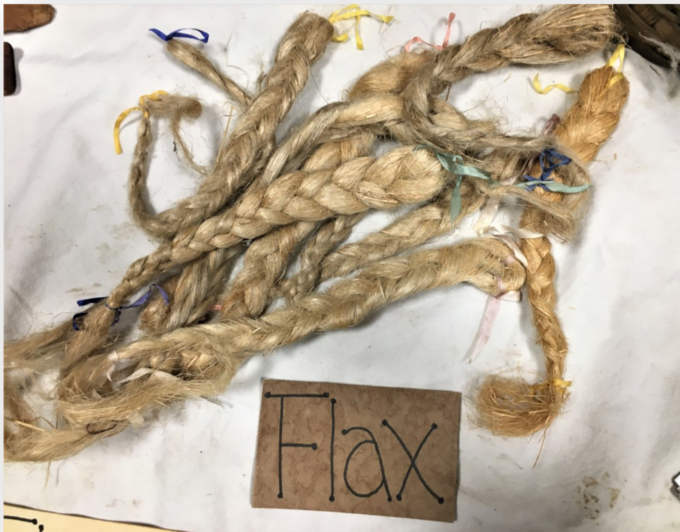
Once the straw was removed from the fiber, I could show my *distaff* and talk about how the flax would be prepared for spinning. A distaff is usually part of a flax spinning wheel and the fibers were draped onto the distaff and secured to be ready for spinning. Flax is spun by wetting it as you spin, as it does not have the same structure as wool. Alternatively, flax fibers could be stored in some way to be spun later. I would show this by making small pigtails to keep the flax from becoming tangled, these could later be opened up and put onto a distaff.

Though I learned to spin wool, I never took up spinning flax. I had several good friends at festivals who loved to spin flax. A good friend from Missouri, Carol, showed me how to create a Lin Krona or linen crown that she explained was a creative way that Swedish women kept flax that had been processed and was ready for spinning into linen thread. It made a decorative "crown" that would be on display in the cabin until needed. Carol loved to spin flax and spun a small skein of my flax into linen thread which I added to my collection. St. Charles, Missouri had a street demo program and for several years I was able to spend three weekends a summer showing visitors how flax was dressed and prepared for spinning. Doing demonstrations with flax has taken me to Indiana, Illinois, and Missouri for historic fairs and festivals for many years.

Over the past few years I have downsized my reenacting set up and so have recently decided to stop doing demonstrations with my flax tool collection. Just recently Blackberry Farm in Aurora, Illinois has acquired my flax tools and will be using and displaying them at their weaving cabin. I hope to visit them next summer and see how others continue to show this amazing process to create linen.❑


***Tow*** *is left over from the hackling process. The shorter and broken strands of flax form tow that can be spun and woven into a course cloth called tow-cloth.*

***The steps in flax processing*** *(from the left) After retting the flax plants, they are "broken" on a flax break which breaks up the stem materials surrounding the fibers; then some of this material is removed with a scutching knife; and the rest is removed by combing the flax through a hackle resulting in a fine linen fiber ready to be spun.*




***Storing flax -*** *Flax could be braided into "pigtails" (left) which could later be opened up and put on a distaff for spinning. On the right is a "Lin Korona" or linen crown. These provided a way for Swedish ladies to store their flax and at the same time proved some decoration for their house.*

**About the Author** - Cathy Grafton lives in Pontiac, Illinois and has had an interest in history all her life. Her college major was American Studies with a special interest in the Old Northwest Territory. She has demonstrated quilting, silk ribbon embroidery, flax dressing, and fashion at events and historic sites throughout the states that essentially make up the Old Northwest Territory and she continues to portray a sempstress making her way on the frontier at events from early 1700's to 1820's. Her special interest in needlework dates from the Middle Ages through modern day. Cathy is proprietor of Prairie Quilts and More (www.prairiequiltsandmore.com).

***Left above -*** *A distaff is used for holding the flax fiber so it can be fed to the spinning process. The pole distaff can be set in a stand, hand held, or tucked into a waistband.*

***Right above*** - *This Saxony flax spinning wheel was made in 1790 by S. Humes. The distaff is attached to the spinning wheel. The flax fiber is "dressed" on the distaff in a particular way so that it feeds continuously to the spinner. The flax must be moistened as it is spun, either by saliva or by water from a small container. One spinner indicated that she spins wool clock-wise but spins flax counter-clockwise. (photo from www.invaluable.com)*


# How to Present a Successful Performance

## Part 2 - The Nitty Gritty Details

By Chris Vallillo, Roots Musician & Folklorist

IN the last issue, I began the conversation about using performance in a historical context. Now let's get down to the nitty gritty details of creating a performance.

If this is all new to you and your staff, start with something small and build on your success. Look for an event or exhibit you have scheduled that you can expand on with a performance, then think about the best way to incorporate the performance into your event. Use a performance for an opening event, as an outreach program to publicize the program and connect with new audiences, or as an educational component for school groups. These are all good ways to use performance to enhance the experience of your site or exhibit.

Plan early! The best acts will book up quickly. I book at least six months to a year out and frequently have bookings farther out than that. Many historic sites make a classic mistake and wait until the last minute. Don't do that! It will make your job much more difficult. Start basic brainstorming and planning one year out, and be ready to book your acts no later than six months out. This gives you plenty of time to build any partnerships you might need, seek funding, network with other sites, and research and book acts.

As you consider your event date, be sure to look for other events in the area in that same time frame and avoid choosing a date where there is something else in the area. The Lincoln interpreter George Buss and I recently gave a performance in Paris, Illinois. The local historical society did excellent promo on the show and took out a full-page color ad promoting the event. Unfortunately, the Air Force Band was in town that night and had passed out 450 free tickets. Needless to say, our attendance was less than we had hoped! These things will happen. Avoid them as best you can.

**Hey Kids, Let's put on a show!**

Most sites will be working with less-than-ideal performance spaces, but being aware of several factors will help sites make the most of what they have. After all, music has been performed in casual situations like these for generations, in all likelihood, music from the periods you are presenting.

This is a great opportunity to build partnerships. It may be possible to partner (or co-produce) with small venues, theaters, opera houses, and other historical meeting houses (very exciting and authentic places to present historical music) to act as performance venues. You may also be able to trade out use of the facility or get a reduced rate for a sponsor credit. This can be a very successful way to go, though it can be fairly complicated for a newcomer.

Many museums or events will want or need to stay on site and will end up using non-traditional performance spaces for their events. This is the most common situation that I work in. A lot of subtle things either add to or detract from a presentation; here are some simple things you can do to make the best of any space you use.

**1. Put performers in an appropriate space**

Give performers room to work. When I perform as a soloist, I ask for a minimum "stage" area of 8 ft by 10 ft. A band will need significantly more depending on instrumentation, but figure at least 10 by 20, and that's probably underestimating. This is information you'll want

***Figure 1 -*** *The set up for the 2012 Midwest Folklife Festival. Note that the act is on a riser and covered by a tent and there is a portable dance floor in front. (All photos courtesy of the author)*

to know about an artist well before the performance. You'll do that with a stage plot, which I'll address later. Acts don't need to perform on a fixed stage, but risers make things look more professional and enhance visibility for your audience. They will need electricity if a sound system is involved. Be aware of safety issues around outdoor performances and electricity. You need to provide a safe, dry performance space wherever it is. I am a big believer in "The show must go on!" but the one thing I won't do is perform in an unsafe situation.

***Figure 2** - Reverend Robert Jones and Matt Wautroba performing in a concert-style seating, outdoor setting at the Lincoln Home National Historic Site in Springfield, Illinois.*

**2. Make the act the featured attraction**.

Even if you don't have a stage, you can create a very effective performance space with a few simple staging tricks. A good performance space has elements working for it that make the act the focal point of the space even before the show starts. Use what you have to its best advantage. Have a clear line of sight from the audience to the stage. Add some simple touches to make the stage visually interesting such as a small rug where the performer stands and a few simple props, say a small table or an appropriate era chair. Hanging a banner with your logo or even a historical flag behind the act is an effective way to spice up the area and catch the eye.

If you are planning an outdoor event, performers need to be sheltered. Many may be using expensive instruments, and you can make their job easier by thinking ahead. A tent for performers or performers and audience can be an effective option and also keep you viable in case of moderate rain. Even a pop-up tent can provide shade for a performer and be a lifesaver on a rainy day. Tents, risers, and even dance flooring can all be rented from a tent supplier or party rental company. Figure 1 shows the set up for the 2012 Midwest Folklife Festival. Note that the act is on a riser and covered by a tent, and there is a portable dance floor in front. Also, have a plan B in place for rain or inclement weather, such as an inside location or a previously selected rain date. A rain date or location should all be a part of your early planning.

**3. Bathrooms:**

Have access to clean bathrooms! It seems like a no-brainier, but you'd be surprised.

**4. Seating:**

Plenty of comfortable seating is very important. Arrange the chairs or benches to focus on the stage. This pattern will draw the eye toward the stage and create a point of focus. This is especially true for outdoor music that is part of a larger event.

For indoor shows, there are two basic set-up styles: Concert Seating where the chairs are set up in rows as you would see at a concert event, and Cabaret Seating where chairs or stools are set up around small tables (good if you are serving food or drinks). Choose your set-up to suit your needs.

Outdoors, of course, folding chairs work but hay bales also make excellent seating, can keep things looking time appropriate, and help keep you on budget. The Lincoln Civil War Days, in Pittsfield, IL, partners with a local lumber company to provide concrete blocks and 2 by 12s to make temporary benches, then returns them to the lumber yard after the event. You can also announce in press releases that audience members can bring folding chairs.

Set up the area and seating so that folks can easily get in and out. If outdoors, be aware that shade is important both for the performer *and* the audience! Audiences will not stay for a performance in the sun on a hot day, and no performer will be happy bringing thousands of dollars worth of instruments to a hot, sunny stage without shade!

**5. Lighting**

If indoors, lighting can help draw attention to the stage. This doesn't need to be stage lighting. Something as simple as a couple of funky old floor lamps at either end of the stage can provide extra light, set the mood, and draw the eye toward the stage. Regardless of how fancy or simple you make it, be sure to have general lighting on the stage area in such a way that the performer is easily and clearly seen. If you are planning an outdoor event, be aware of the sunset and make sure you are prepared to light an area if you go past it!

**6. Sound**

It's critical that music and narration be heard clearly and comfortably in a performance, especially in a museum context where content is important. In rare cases, you will be able to present artists without sound re-enforcement (no PA) but more often than not you'll need a PA in order to get the most out of a performance, particularly with audience members who have hearing issues.

Don't scrimp here! Your event will be more successful, your audience response will be stronger, and your artists will give you a better performance when the sound is right. Here's a good analogy: If you have a boat and have limited funds, you need to put your money into the hull, not in the motor. It won't matter how fast the boat can go if it sinks! Also, do not try to present a musical act with a wireless clip-on mic or podium-style mic and speaker.

***Figure 3 -*** *George Buss and Gary DeClue presenting Lincoln and Douglas onstage. (included to demonstrate a non- musical performance).*

The easiest way to deal with sound is to have the act provide the system as part of their agreement. Most pro artists can provide sound as part of the package. I always travel with my own Bose sound system and almost always use it. Be sure to document any sound arrangement you make with the act in a contract or letter of agreement. More on that later.

If you are using an act that doesn't have sound but needs it, there are several ways to go. It's possible to hire a sound company to run sound for your event. Prices and quality vary. Expect to pay at least $150 and up. For simple setups, you may be able to rent a small system from a local music store. For many folks, this will be the most cost-effective way to go. Again, rates vary ($75 to $200 and up is common) but this might be an opportunity for a promotional trade-out with the music store. Be sure to send them posters for the event!

More and more I am seeing museums with their own sound systems. Good systems are available for between $1,000 and $2,500. One choice is to talk to a local music store (again, ask for a sponsorship/discount or use this as a chance to build an ongoing relationship with the store), but in most cases, selection and tech support will be limited. Being a rural artist myself, I prefer to work with one of the many mail order/internet stores that can offer wider choices and lower prices. There are many to choose from, and most give you 15-20% discount off list price.

Two of the larger ones, Sweetwater (Sweetwater Music, 1-800-222-4700, sweetwater.com) or Full Compass (Full Compass, 800-356-5844, fullcompass.com) have excellent service and great prices. I primarily use Sweetwater because they have great technical support people that can help you get things set up and running easily (a big plus if you are new to any of this) and being in Indiana, shipping to Illinois is very quick.

A quick word about equipment – buy good quality! It will last and will make your events much better! Use Shure SM-58s for vocals, and SM-57's for instrument mics. They are industry standards that will last forever unless they are radically abused. Yamaha, JBL, and Mackie are all solid brands with good quality entry-level products. Get a couple extra mic cables and good-quality boom mic stands.

**7. Promotion**

It is critical to effectively promote an event in order for it to be a success. Promote the event with well-written press releases to newspapers, radio, and TV, timed so they arrive at the media source 10 days to two weeks ahead of the event. If you don't know how to write a press release, Google it and learn how! When you book the act, ask if they have a standard press release and modify it for your event. Always attach a high resolution color jpeg photo!

Don't forget social media. This is more important than ever. Create an event on Facebook and have the performer share it on his page and email list. Professional performers have web sites that have downloadable jpegs and press information. They almost all now have Youtube videos. Copy the link and add it to email blast and social media. *Get copies of all the PR materials you need when you book the act and keep it on file rather than wait until the last* *minute!* Here's a tip – the quality of an artists PR materials is usually a good indicator of quality of their performance.

Another important element that is frequently overlooked: promote the act onsite as well. This is often omitted when the performance is an addition to a larger festival or event such as a fall festival or fair. I frequently play at events where my performance is not in the event brochure or there is no signage indicating when or where I'm playing. This always costs you attendance! Put up a sign or banner near the stage with performance times with your logo. If you have a flyer for the event, be sure the performance is listed with times and, room permitting, include a picture and short description of the performer.

**8. Booking the acts**

**What to pay?** – That's a tough one! First of all, if you want a professional, historically accurate performance, you'll need to hire professionals. Treat your performances with the same consideration you give your exhibits and be prepared to invest accordingly. $350 to $600 for a professional soloist is quite reasonable, depending on their expertise but expect to pay more for very recognizable acts or for multiple sets or shows.

For bands, budget at least $400 to $800 as a low end and on up from there. Soloists will make more per person than band members, and that's appropriate. As mentioned before, funding support is available through a number of sources including the IHC Road Scholars and IAC Artstour and Live music. I've worked extensively with both of these programs and am more than willing to talk you through the process. With Artstour, I'll actually send a presenter an extensive email with detailed instructions. I refer to it as the "gateway grant." It's not hard to do and it's a great way to wet your feet in grant writing.

**Negotiating –** Negotiating with an artist can be confusing. *Know your budget ahead of time* but be realistic! Get a clear idea of an appropriate budget by talking with other presenters first. Begin the booking conversation by giving the potential artist a rundown of the event (date and time, location, length of the set or sets, and target audience) and what it is you'd like them to do, then inquire about their asking price.

Remember "asking price" is just that. We all negotiate. If an artists' asking price is "outside of your budget," politely say so. Use those exact words. This is business, it's not personal, so be sure to treat it that way. There's no shame in asking if they will consider performing for less than their asking price, just don't be offended if they don't take it.

Have a ceiling price in hand when you talk so you don't have to go back and seek committee approval. Then, if you think it's appropriate, offer the best price you reasonably can and see what happens.

When you are booking an act, don't be afraid to say "thanks but we'll pass" if that's what you really mean. I'd much rather hear a "no" than waste countless calls and emails chasing a potential gig that isn't going to happen! Also, *don't forget to tell the artist if your plans fall through!* There is nothing worse than holding a weekend for an event only to find out at the last minute, they decided to "go a different direction." You've cost that artist the opportunity to book another event for that date!

PERFORMANCE AGREEMENT SAMPLE

This agreement is made between:
(YOUR site)______________________________ and

(Artist)______________________________

for a musical performance on (date)______________ at (time) __________.

Performance location and address: ______________________________
______________________________

Set up time: ____________________

Beginning time: ____________________

Ending Time: ____________________

Number of performers: ______________

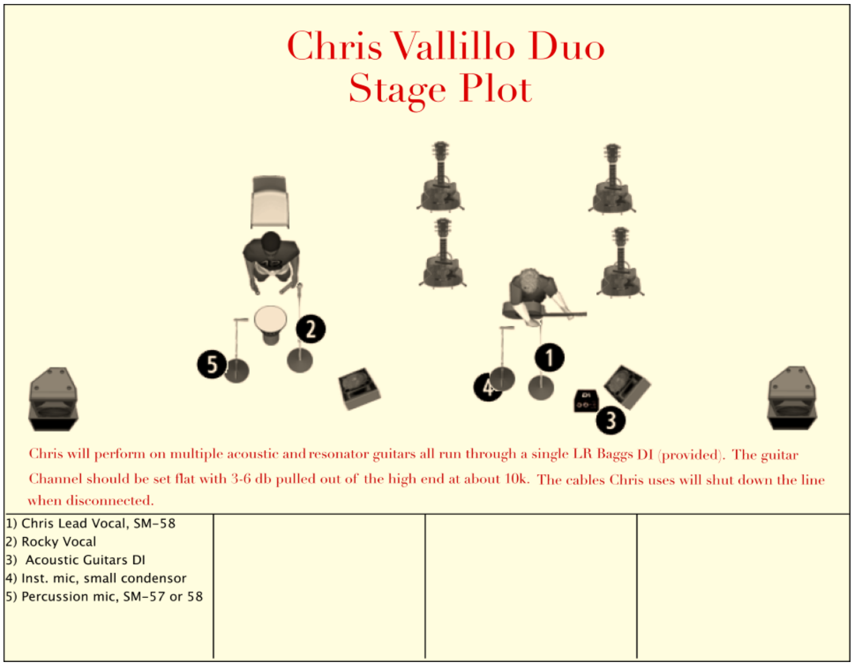
Performance Fee: ____________________

Program description: (Number and lengths of sets. Details such as who is providing sound, any special requirements etc. For example: Show will consist of two 45 minute sets with a 20 minute break. Artist will provide the sound.)
______________________________
______________________________
______________________________
______________________________
______________________________
______________________________

Please attach stage plot with basic set up details and any technical requirements.

CONTACT INFO:

| YOUR Representative: | Artist Representative: |
|---|---|
| Name: ____________________ | Name: ____________________ |
| Address ____________________ | Address:____________________ |
| Phone ____________________ | Phone: ____________________ |
| Cell phone: ____________________ | Cell Phone: ____________________ |
| Fax: ____________________ | Fax: ____________________ |
| Email: ____________________ | Email: ____________________ |
| Web site: ____________________ | Web site: ____________________ |
| Signature: ____________________ | Signature: ____________________ |




These days, professional artists usually have a stage plot they can send you that will show the layout of performers on stage and list the various instruments and microphones needed. If not, send them a simple blank stage plot and have them fill it out and return it with the contract.

To download PDFs of a contract, stage plot, and blank stage plot go to chris-vallillo.com and click on the Midwest Open Air Museum Files link

Be aware of electrical needs. Sound equipment isn't too extreme on electrical use, but lighting is! If an act is bringing lights, be sure you have enough power and have extra fuses on hand if your facility still uses them. Make sure you have GROUNDED electricity.

**11. Set-up time**

It's a safe bet that an act will need at least 30 to 45 minutes to set up. As a soloist, I ask for at least a one-hour set-up, two if I'm providing sound. Have the performers set up and do a sound check before the audience arrives. A sound check simply means they will run through a couple numbers and set the sound levels. This is much better than winging it and trying to get things right during the show. If you are going to put on a more complicated act, plan on extra set-up and sound check time! A full-blown band with PA could easily take one and a half to two hours. Again, professionals will do this better than amateurs.

**9. Details**

Get them in writing and be explicit! This will save you many headaches down the road. Use a simple contract or letter of agreement that lists all contact information: time, date, location of performance, length of performance, who, if anyone, is providing sound, and any special requirements or unusual details. I've included a sample contract on the previous page and in the document download. Feel free to use, modify, or ignore as you see fit.

Be sure to include your full contact information and leave a space for them to fill in their contact information (cell phone, email). On the day of the event, having everything on one piece of paper will be a godsend. Spell everything out clearly and simply. Send copies to your performers with a simple cover letter or email asking that they sign and return one of them (otherwise they may end up in a drawer unopened and unread). I do this all via email with all documents sent as PDFs. In some cases, sites may be presenting folks that are not full-time professional performers, so it will pay to be clear.

**10. Tech**

You'll need to know technical information about the artists to make things go smoothly. For example, how many performers will be on stage and what kind and number of instruments will they be playing? How much space will they need to set up and what will they need for sound (microphones, stage monitors, speakers, mixing boards, how many outlets)? If they are providing the sound, your work will be easier. Regardless, knowing this in advance will save you tremendous headaches the day of the show!

**12. Running the show**

Always start things off with a short prepared introduction from an appropriate staff member. Include just a sentence or two of background about the artists and appropriate credits for sponsors. Don't give an extended intro about the performer and don't rattle off a bunch of announcements here; keep it short and to the point – a maximum of three minutes. Write it out if need be. Save your extended "Thank yous" for intermission if there is one or after the show.

Some common performance lengths are a single set of 45 minutes to an hour (generally the longest you'll want to go without a break) or two 45-minute sets with a break in-between.

**13. Performer amenities**

You'll want to have a secure place for the musicians to put cases, coats, and other personal items, and if at all possible, the space should be able to serve as a dressing room or green room where they can warm up before the show.

It doesn't have to be special – a spare room or office is fine. You shouldn't need to provide food for performers, although I would suggest having bottled water and if possible, herbal tea (singers will love you!). Finally, provide a desk or table in the performance area where the performers can sell CDs and swag after the show. You'll find that most acts will bring their recordings, etc., and these sales not only provide additional income for them, they will give your audience an opportunity to take something home to remember your show! Be sure to take advantage of this space to put out brochures, flyers, etc. about your site and other activities. Have your museum mailing list sign-up sheet here too.

**14. Audience amenities**

It helps to offer free or paid refreshments during a break or after the performance as a mini "meet and greet" with the artist (think fund raising *and* friend raising). This will help create an atmosphere where audience members stay and visit with the artists, view the exhibit, and get to know your staff and site. Use this to your advantage to snare new volunteers and to increase the overall awareness of your facility. This is where new partnerships begin.

I know this seems like a lot to take in if you are new to this, but you can use this article as a punch list for creating your first event. More and more, performance is being effectively used to reap big rewards for historic sites and museums and add an exciting and accessible dimension to their public offerings. Performance can also be a powerful tool for audience development and a positive way to keep your organization's name in print and on people's lips. ❑

**About the Author** - Chris Vallillo is an award-winning roots-based singer/songwriter and folklorist from Macomb, IL. His 2009 project, *Abraham Lincoln in Song* was endorsed by the Abraham Lincoln Bicentennial Commission and performed across the country. He twice served as the Illinois State Scholar for the Smithsonian Institution's traveling exhibit on roots music, *New Harmonies*. His most recent show, *Oh Freedom!,* was performed at the Lincoln Presidential Museum last Juneteenth.

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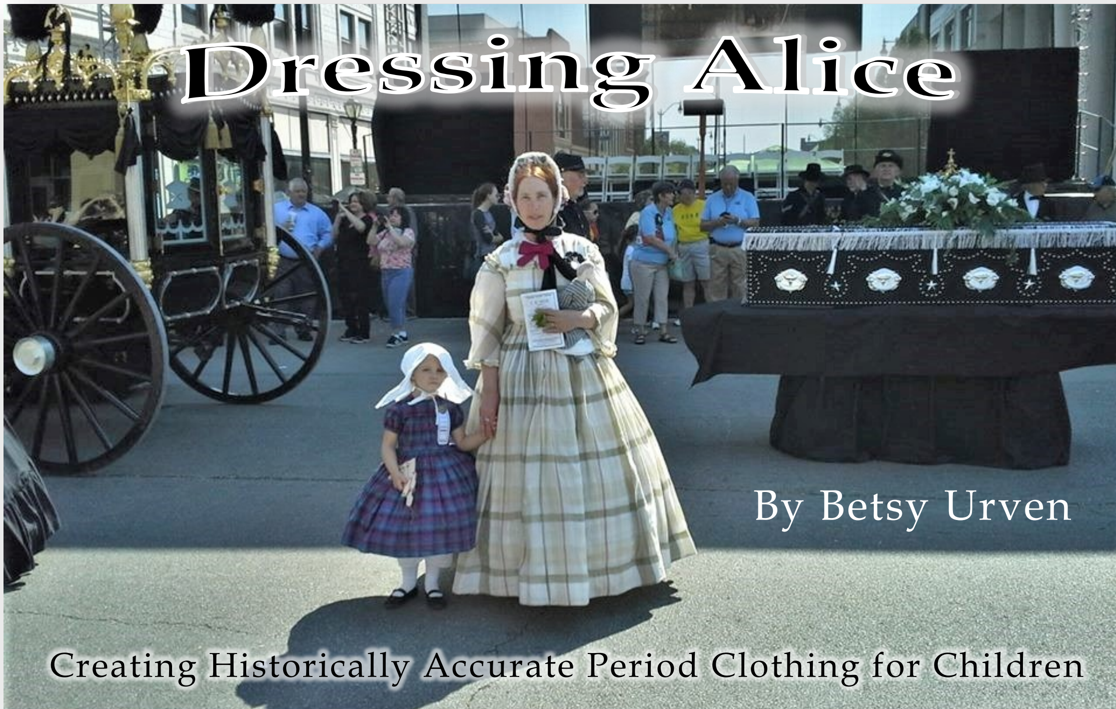


***Note:*** *This article is based on a presentation given at the 2019 MOMCC Fall Conference in West Chicago.*

THERE are two things everyone loves at historical sites and events: children in period clothing and animals. My family participated in Civil War reenacting when I was young, sharing the love my dad had for history. My sons and I continued that love when they were young as well. I have worked and volunteered at historical sites for more than 30 years. I am now sharing that love with Alice, my eight-year-old granddaughter. She has been attending historical events and volunteering at historical sites since she was five weeks old. I researched and made appropriate clothing for her through out that time. In this article, I have laid out the process I used in an attempt to help others dress children appropriately for historical programing.

***1860s*** *– Alice at age three (left) and at age seven (right) in 1860s dresses and wearing hoop skirts and other period under garments. Patterns came from Elizabeth Stewart Clark's Sewing Academy. (Photos by the author)*

Appropriately clothing children at historical sites and events offers a more complete look into the past. While many sites rely on adult staff and volunteers, we miss the sights and sounds of children. Let them do what they do naturally. Let them kick off their shoes, run around barefooted, and get dirty. They offer visiting families a way of connecting to the stories we tell.

Including them in telling those stories means dressing them correctly. Dressing adult staff and volunteers can be a chore in and of itself, but dressing children can be even more challenging. Depending on the time period, patterns can be hard to come by. Pattern companies that make period adult patterns shy away from children's patterns because there just is not enough call for them. When deciding how to dress children, you want to look at available images, fashion plates, existing garments, household publications, Godey's Lady's Books, Petersons, Sears catalogs, and other period source material. For the mid-19th century, there are plenty of photographic images and genre paintings.

Elizabeth Stewart Clark's Sewing Academy, an online site, offers children's patterns for 1850-1865. Girls' patterns are sized infant to 12 years, and include undergarments, dresses, and outerwear. Boys' patterns are available through size 6. For this time period, it is important for children to wear all the proper undergarments, just as it is for adults. Undergarments consist of chemise, stay (corset),


***Regency Period, 1790-1820*** *(Left) – Alice, age one, is wearing a child's gown or frock as they were called at the time, undergarments, and cap all from Kannik's Korner patterns.*

***1830s*** *(right) – Alice's 1830s clothing came from patterns drafted from* The Workwoman's Guide*, published in 1838, including her dress, pantalettes, and undergarments.*

drawers, and petticoats. The stay is corded and not used for reducing the waist, but for buttoning all the other garments to. Little girls (and boys) have no waist! Keeping drawers and petticoats in place is very hard to do without being able to button them to a stay.

Clark's Sewing Academy also has a pattern for a 15" cloth lady doll and her entire mid-19th century wardrobe, including under garments, that makes a perfect accessory for a little girl. And they have a compendium of detailed and useful articles on dressing children and other topics relevant to the mid-19th century.

Alice started wearing a hoop at age three. Hoops for little girls are shorter, with skirts ending mid-calf. I made a hoop using twill tape and buckram-covered hoop wire. The hoop should end several inches short of the length of the skirts.

When Alice was one, we gave the Regency era a try. Kannik's Corner has patterns for a child's gown, or frock as they were called at the time, age 2-14. They also have a book and patterns for constructing undergarments. Again, undergarments consist of chemise, stay, and drawers. The drawers button to the stay keeping everything in place. For small children, a cap is appropriate, and a cap pattern is available from Kannik's Korner.

At the tail end of the Regency era is the 1830's. The Workwoman's Guide, published in 1838, is a great resource for the 30s, 40s, and early 50s. Patterns have to be drafted, but there are plenty of instructions and engravings. Stays, chemise, drawers, as well as petticoats and frocks are addressed. The *Guide* has patterns for infants through adults, men, and women, as well as household items. It also provides knitting patterns for socks, mittens, gloves, hats, scarves, etc.

Our next foray was into the 1880s. Unfortunately, there are not many children's patterns for this period. There are, however, 1880s pattern catalogues that I used for ideas. I started with a modern A-line dress as a base and incorporated ideas from the above catalogs. The waist is dropped to the hips. Embellishments are applied to the basic dress: ruffles, ruching, lace, and buttons. Gathering at the back mimics the bustle popular at the time. Those same catalogues also have patterns for underthings, so you can start with those. There are a few places online that have reproductions of original patterns that can be useful. Ageless Patterns, for example, has a number of reproduced patterns for girls from 1885 and 1889.

As we move into the 1920s, it can be a little easier. There are many more vintage patterns available. I used a booklet published in 1925 called "The One Hour Dress." It offers instruction on measurements to take, cutting, and assembling a day frock for women and girls. The booklet offers several variations on the basic dress. I used this for dresses for Alice and myself and was very pleased with the results. Originally published in 1924, a 2017 reprint is available on Amazon.

For other ideas, a simple search online should also turn up many images, catalogues, ads, pattern books, and illus-


***1880s*** *– Alice at age five (left) and at age six (right) in 1880s dresses that were made from a modern A-line pattern and finished based on images from 1880s pattern catalogs.*

trations giving a good picture of children's fashion in this more recent period.

It may take a little bit of effort but dressing children period-appropriately is quite doable. Children will be delighted to participate in programming and everyday interpretation. Visitors will gravitate to these young interpreters, giving them an avenue for asking questions about their roles and activities. ❑

***1920s** – At age eight, Alice is wearing a dress made from* The One Hour Dress *by Mary Brooks Picken, originally published in 1924. A 2017 reprint is available on Amazon for $9.95.*


**Resources**

A Lady. *The Workwoman's Guide. A Guide to the 19th Century Decorative Arts, Fashion, and Practical Crafts.* 1838. Reprint, Guilford, CT: Opus, 1986.

Ageless Patterns. *"SEW AUTHENTIC" Victorian Reproduction Patterns 1867-1917*. https://www.agelesspatterns.com (accessed December 28, 2019)

Altman, Saundra Ros. *Past Patterns. The Historical Pattern Company Dedicated to Accuracy Since 1979.* http://pastpatterns.com (accessed December 28, 2019)

ESC Publishing. *The Sewing Academy. Elizabeth Stewart Clark & Company*. https://www.thesewingacademy.com (accessed December 28, 2019).

Kannik's Corner. *Historic Costume Patterns, Books and Cross Stitch Kits*. http://www.kannikskorner.com/home.htm (accessed December 28, 2019).

Original- Pre 1929 Historical Pattern Collection. "Homepage." https://realhistoricalpatterns.tumblr.com/directory (accessed December 28, 2019).

Picken, Mary Brooks. *The One Hour Dress. The Fast and Easy Way to Create Vintage Dresses.* Brattleboro, VT: Echo Point Books & Media, 2017.


**Betsy Urven** worked for 10 years as lead interpreter and program assistant at Wade House State Historic Site in Greenbush, Wisconsin. She has also produced period clothing for a number of historical sites and has been involved with MOMCC since 2002.


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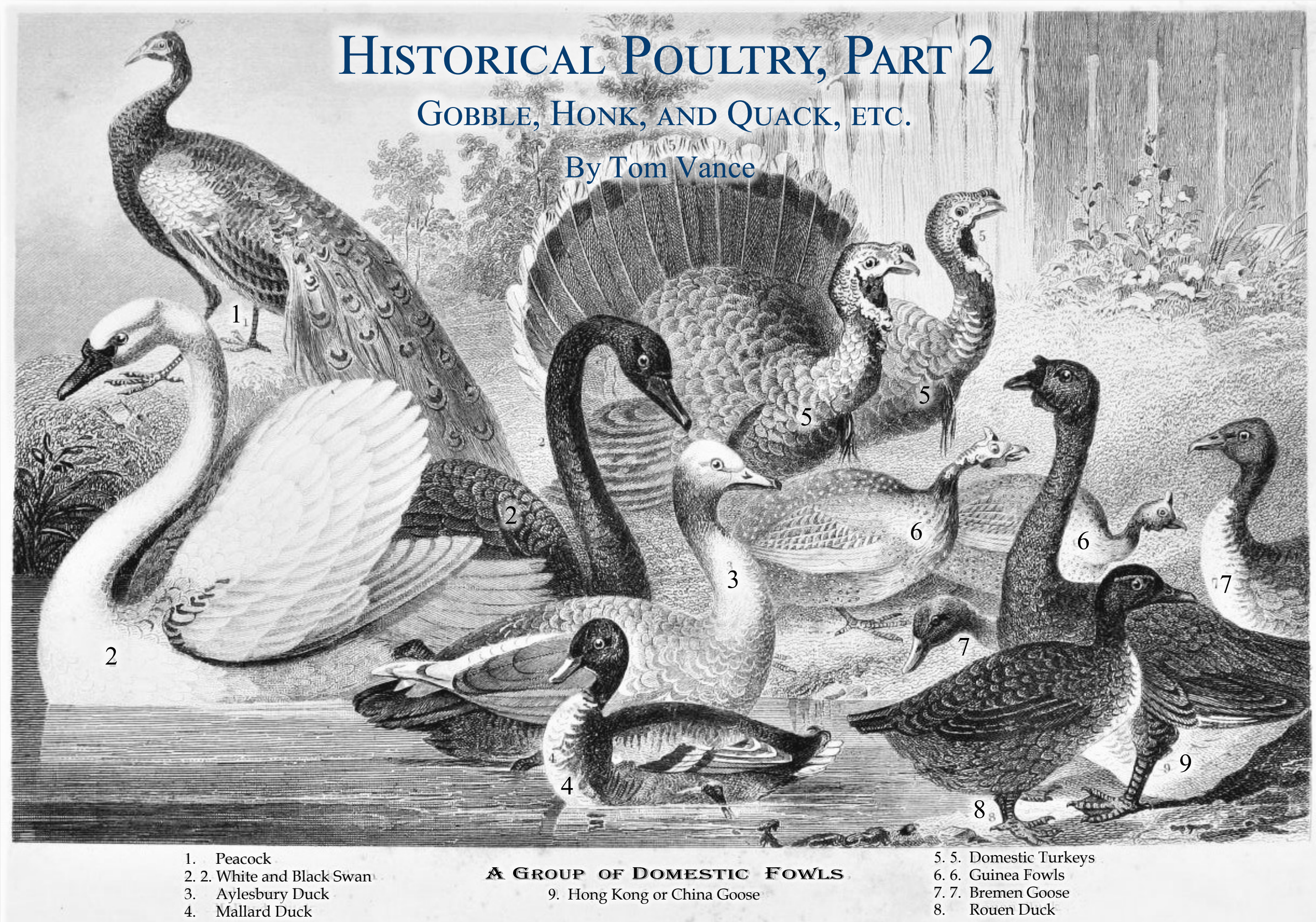
# Historical Poultry, Part 2

## Gobble, Honk, and Quack, etc.

By Tom Vance




IN the Spring 2018 issue of *Midwest Open Air Museums Magazine*, I published an article on the historic breeds of chickens in the 19th and early 20th centuries. This is a follow-up article on other breeds of poultry found during that time period in the United States. These include turkeys, geese, ducks, pea fowl, guinea fowl, and swans. As with chickens, "a goose is a goose," or "a duck is a duck," is not a sound approach to a poultry program. In any and every aspect of a historic site and its programs, sound research and historical accuracy are not only important, but can also add a great deal to the story being told and to the daily interpretation, i.e. regional variation in poultry breeds, and multiple uses of poultry for meat, eggs, security, and market production at historic sites.

This article, through examining 20 primary source books and other relevant information, will attempt to sort out what varieties of turkeys, geese, and ducks were available and commonly used during the 19th and early 20th centuries and determine, where possible, their appearance. All the listed primary sources can be found on Internet Archives in digitized form. The easiest way to find a book on Internet Archives is to type the book name and year published followed by "Internet Archive" in Google search and it will come right up in the listing. Other good primary and secondary sources are also available with some searching.

***Above Illustration*** - *Solon Robinson* Facts for Farmers *(N.Y.: A. J. Johnson, 1867), 141.*

Another good source of information on historical and heritage breeds of poultry is The Livestock Conservancy. This organization, based in North Carolina, provides information on heritage breeds including cattle, horses, sheep, goats, pigs, and donkeys, as well as poultry. Information includes a definition of heritage breeds, a listing and status of heritage breeds, breed comparison chart, listings of breeders and hatcheries, and a "Heritage Poultry Manual" that gives detailed information on keeping and raising heritage poultry.

Two more sources include the Heritage Poultry Conservancy, with breed profiles and other information, and the American Poultry Association, which sets and maintains the standards for heritage poultry breeds.

Additional research should focus on the particular state and area where your historical site is located. While some varieties were more universally available, others were popular only in certain areas of the country. Networking with other historical sites and farms that already have poultry programs can also give good insights as well as possible sources for historical breeds.

As mentioned above, the Livestock Conservancy provides listings of certified heritage breeders as well as a listing of hatcheries that carry heritage breeds. The hatchery we ordered from when I was at Lincoln Log Cabin was Murray McMurray Hatchery in Webster City, Iowa. Every spring the mailman would drive up with a box full of cheeping chicks. They also have a wide selection of heritage turkeys, geese, ducks, pea fowl and guineas. There are many other hatcheries that also provide a selection of heritage poultry, but I will refer to Murry McMurry in this current article. If a particular heritage breed is not available from a hatchery, you can go to the Livestock Conservancy's list of heritage breeders.

Another way to obtain more period-correct varieties of the historical breeds, many of which have changed over the years, is to do selective back-breeding. Based on period illustrations and descriptions, different breeds, each with some desired characteristics, can be bred, and the offspring with the closest correct appearance selected.

The specific primary source publications that were utilized are listed below and were accessed on Internet Archives. Some of them have multiple editions. The first printing, if it was not available, is indicated in parenthesis. The assumption is made, however, that the second edition is identical or similar to the first. Full listings are in the bibliography. Primary source books include:

(1844), 1847, 1852, 1856, 1867, 1878 - C. N. Bement, *The American Poulterer's Companion.*

(1850), 1856 - John C. Bennett, *The Poultry Book.*

1850 - Browne, D. J. *The American Poultry Yard.*

1853 - T.B. Miner, *Miner's Domestic Poultry Book.*

1853 - The Rev. W. Wingfield & C.W. Johnson, Illustr. by Benjamin Weir, *The Poultry Book.*

1854 - Martin Doyle, *The Illustrated Book of Domestic Poultry.*

1858 - D.H. Jacques, *Domestic Animals*.

1864 - Jennings, Robert, *Sheep, Swine, and Poultry*

1867, 1877 - Simon M. Saunders, *Domestic Poultry*

1867 - W.B. Tegetmeir, *The Poultry Book.*

1867 - Solon Robinson, *Facts for Farmers.*

1873, 1890 - Lewis Wright, *The Illustrated Book of Poultry.*

1882 - C.E. Thorne, *The Complete Poultry Book.*

1884 - John E. Diehl, *The Practical Poultry Book.*

1885, 1904 - L. Wright, *The Practical Poultry Keeper.*

1892 - Martin Doyle, *The Illustrated Book of Domestic. Poultry.*

1908 - Frank Sewell & Ida Tillson, *The Poultry Manual.*

1914 - A. H. Baker, *Livestock, A Cyclopedia for the Farmer.*

1918 - Prairie Farmer, *Reliable Directory of Farmers and Breeders; Coles & Douglas Counties, IL.*

The information presented in this article is only a sampling of the volumes of available information on poultry. However, we hope it will be an inspiration to the reader to follow up with additional research. More information on all the breeds is available in the cited sources.

A chart of all breeds and the years they are cited in the sources can be found on page 34. Some of the breeds and varieties found in the historical sources do not show up in contemporary sources. Other currently documented heritage breeds do not show up in the historical literature. These will be denoted as such in the discussion.

## THE TURKEY

Concerning the American wild turkey (see the color illustration on the front cover), Bement in 1844 states:

> "Next to the common fowl, Turkeys form the most numerous tribe, and for the table one of the most important and useful birds of the farm-yard. It is a native of this country; and we can boast of the Wild Turkey, a bird so truly valuable, that Dr. Franklin observes, 'It would have been a much fitter emblem of the country than the white-headed Eagle, a lazy, cowardly, tyrannical bird, living on the labors of others, and more suited to represent an imperial, despotic government, than the republic of America.' However true this may be, the Turkey is entitled to the nobility of the barnyard.
>
> "In this country we have three varieties, the black, the copper-color, and white. The first is considered the most hardy and generally preferred; the second is held by some in great esteem; the latter, with their red head and caruncles, contrasted with their snowy whiteness, make a pretty appearance and add much to embellish the grounds of the house, and their feathers are valuable, and they have much down on the thighs…"[1]

J.D. Browne in *The American Poultry Yard*, in 1850 says concerning turkey varieties:

> "The domestic turkey can scarcely be said to be divided, like the common fowl, into distinct breeds; although there is considerable variation in color, as well as in size…The finest and strongest birds are those of a bronzed black...Some turkeys are of a coppery tint, some of a delicate fawn-color, while others are parti-colored, grey, and white, and some few of a pure snow white. All of the latter are regarded as inferior to the black..."[2]

In 1867, Solon Robinson in *Facts for Farmers,* states the following concerning turkeys:

> "Every farmer can and should keep turkeys, and as there are several varieties, he should get the best and keep no other. Turkeys are less mischievous than most other poultry, and in some cases they are of great assistance to the farmer in destroying insects."[4]

1. C.N. Bement, *The American Poulterer's Companion* (New York: Harper & Bros., 1844, 1847), 209-210.

2. J. D. Browne. *The American Poultry Yard* (NY: C.M. Saxton, Publishers), 152.

3. Solon Robinson. *Facts for Farmers* (NY: A.J. Johnson, 1867), 135.

Thorne in *The Complete Poultry Book*, published in 1882, lists the following breeds and varieties; Black or Norfolk, Narragansett, White and White Holland, Buff, Slate, Bronze, and Variegated or Cambridge.[4] These breeds are variously listed in the rest of the publications through 1914.

**Black or Norfolk**

According to the Livestock Conservancy, the Black turkey originated in Europe, where it was a descendent of the wild turkeys brought back from Mexico by early explorers in the 1500s. They became popular in Spain where they were known as the "Black Spanish" and in the Norfolk region in England, where they were known as "Norfolk Blacks."

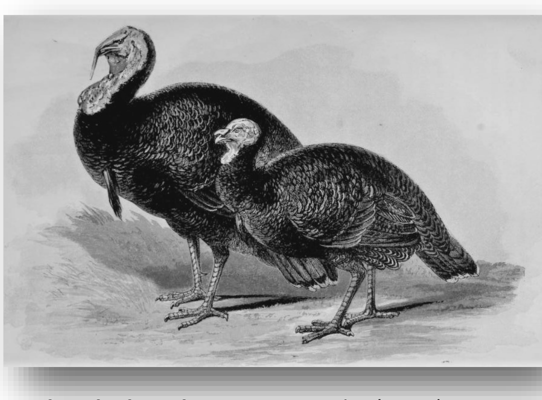
The Black turkey came to America with the early European colonists. They were subsequently crossed with the Eastern wild turkey resulting in the Black turkey variety in America.

Bement in 1844 says the Black turkey is considered the most hardy and generally preferred of the three varieties he lists, and goes on to say, "The black turkey…is always most marketable, from its being said their skin is white, and their flesh finer and sweeter…There can be little doubt that black turkeys are produced in greater number than any other color."[5]

**Bronze or Copper**

The Bronze turkey, according to the Livestock Conservancy, originated from crosses between the domestic turkeys brought by European colonists to the Americas and the eastern wild turkey. This cross resulted in turkey stocks that were larger and more vigorous than the European birds, and also much tamer than wild turkeys. The Bronze turkey inherited its coppery-bronze colored metallic sheen, which gives the variety its name, from its wild ancestors.

Bronze-type turkeys were known by the late 1700s, but the name "Bronze" did not formally appear until the 1830s. Throughout the 1800s, breeders standardized the Bronze, and occasional crosses were made back to the wild turkey. In the early 20th century the bronze turkey was crossed with broad breasted stock from England; the resulting Broad-breasted Bronze became the commercial variety of choice.



***The Black Turkey** - From Doyle, (1854).*

**White and Holland White**

Varieties of white turkeys are hard to document and authenticate. White turkeys were bred by the Aztecs and others in the New World and were certainly among the turkeys that were sent to Europe. It is probable (but not documented) that white turkeys came to America with Dutch and other European colonists. By the 1800s, a variety known as White Holland was widely known in the United States. While the name would imply a Dutch origin, the White Holland is actually an American breed developed from the white sports of the Bronze turkey variety.

The White Holland became a popular variety in the 1800s, and although smaller than the Bronze, its lack of dark pin feathers often gave it a market advantage. The White Holland turkey is listed as "threatened" by the Livestock Conservancy.

**Narragansett**

This breed was developed near Narragansett Bay in Rhode Island from turkeys, including the Norfolk Black, brought to America by the early European colonists beginning in the 1600s. It was widely distributed in New England, the Mid-Atlantic states and the Midwest by the latter half of the 19th century. According to an 1872 account, it was common to find flocks of one to two hundred birds. This breed became the foundation of the turkey industry in New England. Interest in the Narragansett began to decline in the early 20th century as interest in the Standard Bronze grew.

**Slate and Blue Slate**

The Slate turkey first appears in literature cited in 1882. It is not derived from a cross of other breeds, but is in fact a legitimate genetic mutation that arose. A second, recessive mutation produces the Blue Slate. The Slate is less documented and more variable in color than any other variety, making it more challenging to breed consistently.

The Slate, or Blue Slate, is named for its color which is solid to ashy blue over its entire body. The wing and tail feathers are lighter in color.

**Fawn and Buff**

Fawn and Buff turkeys are mentioned throughout from 1850 through 1914. Browne, in 1850, calls it a "delicate fawn," and Saunders lists the Fawn in 1867. Wright in 1885, lists the Fawn as a type of Cambridge turkey. Most other authors list them as Buff.

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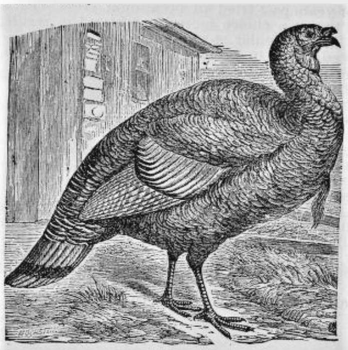
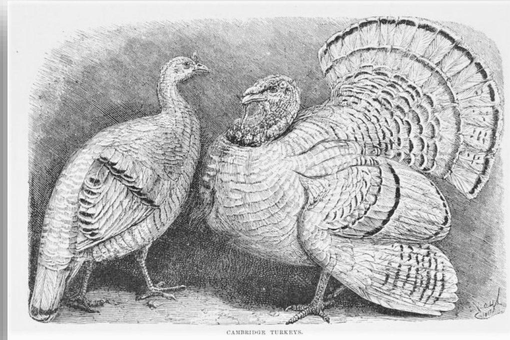
4. C.E. Thorne. The Complete Poultry Book (Springfield, Ohio: Mast Crowell & Kirkpatrick, 1882), 167.

5. Bement, 220.



*The Narragansett Turkey* - From Diehl, 1854.



*The Cambridge Turkey* - Probably the buff variety. From: L. Wright, 1885.

Today, the Buff turkey is listed as the Jersey Buff. The Livestock Conservancy lists it as critically endangered and lists only one breeder of heritage Jersey Buff turkeys.

### Cambridge - Variegated

Cambridge turkeys are cited six times in the literature from 1867 to 1892. The term variegated is associated with the Cambridge and means a variety of colors. Wright in 1885 describes Cambridge Turkeys in England as follows:

> "The ordinary English turkey is of two kinds – The Norfolk (black all over) and the Cambridge. The latter is of all colours – the best...being a dark copper bronze; but fawn colour and pure white are often seen, as are also variegated birds which occasionally present a very magnificent appearance."[6]

Another early variety of interest is the "parti-colored" which is described as gray and white by Browne in 1850 and Saunders in 1867. Robinson also mentions "party-colored" in 1867.

## Pea Fowl

The Pea Fowl or Peacock (see the color illustration on the front cover) appears consistently though out the historic sources. Bement in 1844 said of Pea Fowl:

> "This most magnificent and beautiful of all the feathered race is supposed to have been originally a native of India; but they have been long introduced into Europe and this country, as ornaments to the mansions of gentlemen farmers."[7]
>
> Robinson, in 1867, added:
>
> "Of all the ornamental poultry ever kept on a place, the pea-fowls take the lead, and well they might, for they are the most useless and a very expensive luxury. They will not bear confinement; will not even roost in a house but occupy the tops of the highest building or tall trees. And for mischief, from which they can not be restrained, they excel all the feathered tribe."[8]

## Guinea Fowl

The Guinea Fowl (see front cover) likewise appears in all of the literature. Robinson had this to say about them:

> "The greatest objection to the Guinea-fowl is the almost continual noise they make, which to some is intolerable. It is about as musical as the sharp squeak of a grind-stone or old cart. The noise is, however, tolerated for their good qualities which are not a few. Their noise tends to keep off hawks and other pests of the poultry-yard. They are very ornamental and give a place a lively pleasant appearance. Their flesh is pretty good for the table; they are good layers, and their eggs are large, and rich, and good for cookery, but not so good as common hens' eggs for the table."[9]

## Swans

Swans are listed in most of the literature, including both black and white swans. Bement, in 1856, said:

> "At the head of this class of birds may justly be placed the stately and majestic Swan. Next to the peacock on the land, the swan is the most noble and elegant fowl on the water. Though they are seldom found on any farms in this country, and are not on request as food, they are well worth the notice of every one having a pond...to enliven and beautify the scenery by a small family of swans."[10]

## Geese

The domestication of geese dates to antiquity. They were kept in domestication by Homer in 388 B.C. Rome. Most sources and the Livestock Conservancy indicate that the wild Graylag goose in Europe is the ancestor of all the European varieties. Robinson in 1867 said the following about geese in general:

> "As geese are generally kept by farmers, they are neither profitable nor ornamental, but on the contrary, an unmitigated nuisance, befouling grass and water, door-yards and roadsides, and always poking their heads through holes into mischief.
>
> "If geese are kept on a large scale, where water is good, and pastured like any other stock, and finally fatted for the market,...we will insure the largest profit from the geese particularly if the best breeds are selected."[11]

Geese don't always mix well with visitors. When I was at Lincoln Log Cabin, someone donated six gray geese. They stayed in the farmyard for a short while, but soon were patrolling the parking lot and attacking visitors as they got out of their cars. Needless to say, the geese found a new home in a nearby farmer's pond.

### The Common Goose

Like the dunghill fowl of chickens, the common goose seems to be a mixture of many breeds brought to America

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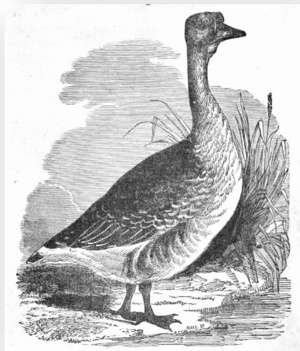
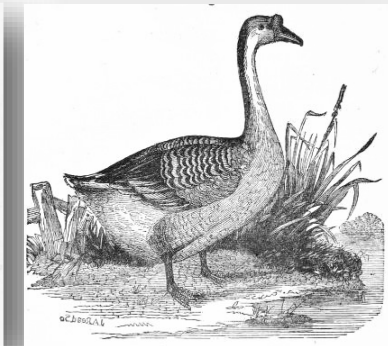
6. L. Wright. The Practical Poultry Keeper (London & NY: Cassell & Co. LTD, 1885), 220.
7. Bement, 204, 206.
8. Robinson, 135.
9. Ibid, 139.
10. Bement, 1856, 230.
11. Robinson, 140.

over three centuries and was probably in general use in the United States during most of the 19th century. It is referred to as a familiar comparison to other breeds in most of the sources. Bement, in 1847, provides the below illustration .



***African or Guinea Goose***
*Bement, 1847.*

***Chinese Goose***
*Bement, 1847.*




***The Poland Goose***
*Bement, 1847.*

### African Goose

The African or Guinea goose arrived in North America on ships that had traveled around the world, so its exact origin is ambiguous despite its name. It has gone by different names but is listed as African throughout the historical sources beginning with Bement in 1847.

The African is related to the Chinese goose. They come in gray and white varieties and grow a knot on the head, but the African is much larger than the Chinese. It’s large size and jaunty posture give it the impression of strength and vitality.

### Bremen or Embden Goose

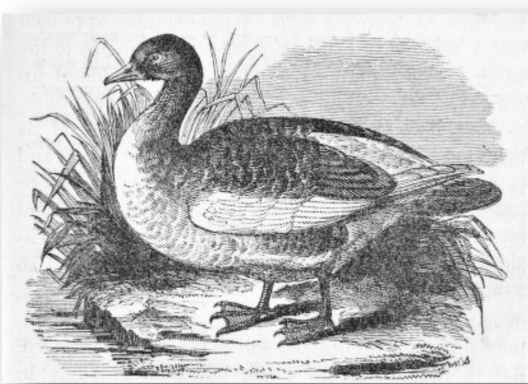
The Bremen is a large white goose that was first introduced into this country in 1826 from Bremen (north of Germany) by a breeder in Rhode Island. Bement, in 1847, says:

> “This is a large and beautiful bird, perfectly white, both male and female, with orange-colored legs and bill, and makes a beautiful appearance on a sheet of water…Their properties are peculiar; they lay in February; sit and hatch with more certainty than common barn-yard geese; will weigh nearly...twice the weight, and have double the quantity of feathers; never fly, and are all of a beautiful snowy whiteness…They may now be found in almost any part of the country.”[12]

The Bremen is also referred to as the Embden in most of the literature.

### Chinese Geese

The Chinese goose, also called the Hong Kong, is found in both brown and white. It is considered the most graceful and beautiful member of the goose family. It is elegant on both land and water and is sometimes referred to as a "Swan Goose,” because of its long graceful neck. It descends from the wild Asian swan goose.



***The Common Goose*** *- From Bement, 1847.*

Chinese geese are the best layers of all the breeds, are active foragers, produce less greasy meat, and are easier to sex at maturity. Their active foraging makes them good “weeders.” Bement in 1847, describes them as “smaller than the common goose and plentiful in this country.”[13]

### Poland Goose

The Poland goose is mentioned by Bement in 1856 and in four subsequent publications through 1873. Bement says:

> “This is a goose not uncommon in this country much resembling the Guinea [African] goose, but not as large, known as the Poland goose; probably a cross of the Guinea goose and the Chinese goose.”[14]

This is not a breed that is recognized today. Since it is a cross of two breeds that are available, the Poland goose should be easy to re-create as part of a heritage breeding program.

### Toulouse Goose

The Toulouse goose (see the color illustration on the front cover) is originally from the Toulouse area in southwestern France. The original grey-colored breed is very old, and the name has been recorded back as far as 1555. It was introduced into England by 1840 and into the United States by 1850, when it was recorded in The Poultry Book, published in Boston. It became popular in the upper Midwest due to its ability to withstand cold winters.

The Toulouse is a very large goose with a placid disposition. It is kept for its meat, large eggs, and its over-sized liver which is a source of foie gras. There are two varieties – the smaller production Toulouse and the larger Dewlap variety.

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12. Bement, 1847, 269-270.

13. Ibid,

14. Bement, 1856, 247.

Bement in 1856 compares the Toulouse to the common goose as follows:

> "The Toulouse goose...is distinguished from the dark-gray variety of the common goose, which it much resembles, not only by its greater size, but also by its colors being darker and more intense."[15]

## Ducks

Bement, in 1847, gives a good introduction to ducks:

> "The Duck possesses many excellent qualities. They were great favorites with the ancients, from the mildness and simplicity of their character, from their great fecundity, laying a great number of eggs, from the cheapness and ease with which they are provided for. The feathers of the white sort are nearly as good as those of the goose…They are the most industrious of all the fowl tribe…The social and conversational qualities of ducks, render them not only pleasant but profitable animals to keep."[16]

In looking at the literature cited, three breeds show the most consistency over the span of the years' studies. Those are the White Aylesbury, the Muscovy, and the Rouen. We will start however, with probably the most widely used duck of all, the Common or Farm-Yard duck.

### Common, Farm-Yard Duck

As with the Dunghill Fowl and Common goose, the Farm-yard duck exhibited a wide variety of colors and characteristics. Bement has the following to say:

> "The common duck is so well known that it hardly needs a description. It is generally dark brown or grey, and the wings and throat sometimes ornamented with changeable purple...They are good layers, good nurses and hardy."[17]

Thorne in 1882 says of the Farm-Yard duck, "This, among ducks, is what the ordinary dunghill, or barn-door fowl, is among chickens, and is far inferior to the Rouen, Aylesbury, Cayuga or Pekin breeds."[18]

### White Aylesbury

The Aylesbury duck (see the color illustration on the front cover) became well-known in Aylesbury, England by 1800 as England's finest white-skinned market duck. It was one of the first ducks to arrive in the United States and was exhibited in 1849 at the inaugural poultry show in Boston. It is known as a superior meat breed, but also for its ability to lay eggs in the winter.

Miner in 1853 says of the Aylesbury:

> "I have made considerable inquiry in regard to the best breed of ducks among us, and I am fully satisfied that this is the breed, above all others to be kept. They are much larger than our common breeds, their flesh is a better flavor, and their feathers are nearly equal to those of geese."[19]

The Aylesbury is on the Livestock Conservancy's critical list.

### Muscovy

The Muscovy duck is native to Central and South America. It was domesticated by native cultures before the arrival of the Europeans. It is a large, black and white duck with red wattles around the bill and eyes. It is also called the Musk duck due to the scent put off by its skin.

### Rouen Duck

The Rouen duck (see the color illustration on the front cover) originated in France where it was variously called "Rhone" for an area in southwest France and "Rouen" for a town in northern France. It arrived in England around 1800 and came to the United States by 1850. The Rouen, which resembles a large mallard duck, soon became popular as a colorful, general-purpose farm duck.

Browne in 1850 said, "The variety, at present, most in request, is the 'dark-colored Rouen, or Rhone duck,' originally from France, but common both in England and in this country."[20] Doyle in 1854 said, "The Rouen duck is one of the most useful and hardy varieties."[21] Wright in 1873 says, "For farmers, and perhaps in the average of circumstances, we believe the Rouen is the most profitable breed."[22]

### Black Cayuga

The Black Cayuga duck (see the color illustration on the front cover) is an American breed but its origin is unclear. It was supposedly introduced into the Cayuga Lake area of New York around 1840 resulting in its name. Wright in 1873 said of the breed:

> "In colour they are nearly similar to the East Indians, their plumage being of a bright metallic black, with lustrous green reflections on head, neck, and wings…Their shape is different from the East Indians, and more like the Aylesbury; their size is quite equal to the Rouen or Aylesbury. For the farm they will be a very useful as well as ornamental breed, being hardy and maturing at an early age."[23]

### Black East-Indian or Buenos Ayres

Black East Indian ducks (see the color illustration on the front cover) were imported into England around 1831 supposedly from Buenos Aires. They were at first called Buenos Aireans and are referred to as "Black Indies" today. They are a Bantam breed that has very dark, lustrous green-black plumage and a black bill. They often grow some white feathers after the first molt and sometimes will turn completely white.

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15. Ibid, 261.

16., 17. Bement, 1847, 287.

18. Thorne, 199.

19. T.B. Miner. Miner's Domestic Poultry Book (Rochester NY: Teo. W. Fisher, 1853), 247.

20. Browne, 197.

21. Martin Doyle. The Illustrated Book of Domestic Poultry (London: George Routledge & Co., 1854), 248.

22. Wright, 539.

23. Ibid, 543.

# Historical Poultry & Years Mentioned

| POULTRY Database | Avail Today | 1847 | 1850 | 1853 1854 | 1856 | 1858 | 1864 | 1867 | 1873 | 1882 | 1884 1885 | 1890 | 1892 | 1908 | 1914 | 1918 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| TURKEYS | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Black or Norfolk | yes | X | XX | XX | XX | X | X | XXX | X | X | XX | X | X | X | X | |
| Bronze, Copper | yes | X | XX | | XX | X | X | X | X | X | XX | X | X | X | X | X |
| Brown - Ashy Grey | | | X | | XX | | X | | | | | | | | | |
| Buff or Fawn | | | X | | | X | | X | | X | XX | | | X | X | |
| Cambridge, Variegated | | | | X | | | | X | X | X | X | X | X | | | |
| Narragansett | yes | | | | | | | | | X | X | | | X | | |
| Slate, Blue Slate | yes | | | | | | | | | X | X | | | X | X | |
| Parti-colored | | | X | | | | | XX | | | | | | | | |
| White, White Holland | yes | X | | XX | XX | X | X | XXX | | X | XX | | X | X | X | X |
| Wild Turkey | yes | X | X | XX | XX | X | X | X | | X | XX | X | X | X | | |
| GEESE | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| African or Guinea | yes | X | X | X | XX | | | | | | X | | | X | X | |
| Barnacle | yes | X | X | | XX | | X | | | | | | | | | |
| Brant | yes | X | | | XX | | X | X | | | | | | | | |
| Bremen or Embden | yes | X | X | X | XX | X | X | X | X | X | XX | | X | X | X | X |
| Common | | | X | X | XX | | | X | | X | | | X | | | X |
| China, Brown & White | yes | X | X | XX | XX | X | X | XXX | X | X | XX | | X | X | X | X |
| Egyptian | yes | | X | XX | XX | | X | | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | |
| Poland | | X | X | X | X | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Sebastopol | yes | | | XX | | | | X | X | X | | X | | | | |
| Toulouse | yes | | X | XX | XX | X | X | X | X | X | XX | X | X | X | X | X |
| White, White Holland | yes | | | XX | | | | | | | | | | | | X |
| Wild Canada | yes | X | X | XX | X | | X | X | X | X | XX | X | X | X | | |
| DUCKS | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Aylesbury, White | yes | X | X | XX | XX | X | X | XXX | X | X | XX | X | X | X | X | |
| Black Cayuga | yes | | | X | | | | | X | X | XX | X | | X | X | |
| Black East Indian | yes | | | X | XX | | X | X | X | X | XX | X | | X | X | |
| Call Ducks | | | | X | | | | | X | X | XX | X | | X | X | |
| Common, Farm Yard | | X | X | X | | | | X | | X | X | | | | X | |
| Crested or Top knot | yes | X | | X | XX | | X | X | | X | X | | | | X | |
| Hooked-Bill | | | | X | XX | | X | X | | X | | | | | | |
| Muscovy or Musk | yes | X | X | XX | XX | X | X | X | X | X | XX | X | X | X | X | X |
| Pekin | yes | | | | | | | | | X | XX | X | | X | X | X |
| Penguin (Runner?) | | | | X | XX | | | X | | | | | | | | X |
| Poland (white) | | | X | | X | | X | | | | | | | | | |
| Rouen | yes | | X | XX | XX | X | X | X | X | X | XX | X | | X | X | X |
| Wild or Mallard | yes | | | | XX | X | | X | | X | | X | X | | | X |
| Wood Duck, Mandarin | | | | X | | X | | | X | X | X | X | | | | |
| Guinea Fowl | yes | X | XX | XX | XXX | | X | XX | X | X | XX | X | X | | | |
| Pea Fowl | yes | X | XX | XX | XXX | | X | XX | X | X | XX | X | X | | | |
| Swans | yes | X | XX | XX | XXX | | | X | X | X | X | X | | | | |

### Call Ducks

Call ducks are the Bantams of ducks. They were first bred in Holland in the 1600s. There are two varieties of Call ducks termed White and Grey which resemble, respectively the Aylesbury and Rouen ducks. Wright in 1873 has this to say about them:

> "At one time they were the principal "fancy" ducks shown; but of late the Mandarin, Carolina, and other more striking varieties have pretty much superseded them as exhibition birds, though they still retain their popularity for lakes and other ornamental waters, and are occasionally used as decoys on account of their constant utterance of the shrill "call" from which they take their name."[24]

### Dutch Hookbill

The HookBill duck was described in Holland as early as 17th century and was frequently delineated by the old Dutch masters. It is characterized by the bill being turned downward. In color and size there is a lot of variation. The Hookbill is known for its excellent egg laying and its foraging capacity. It declined in the 20th century due to a declining market for duck eggs. By 1980 it was almost extinct when a Dutch effort saved it. The Livestock Conservancy lists its status as "Critical."

### Indian Runner

The Indian Runner is an old breed that was introduced into England around 1850. They do not appear in any of the literature cited, but their short legs, long neck, and upright posture sound somewhat like the Penguin duck that was cited in 1854, 1856, and 1867. The Runner duck has more color variations that all other breeds.

### Pekin

The Pekin or White Pekin was imported to the United States from Peking, China in 1872. The Pekin was the largest of all ducks according to Thorne in 1882, and Diehl in 1884 said, "Pekin ducks are probably the most valuable breed of ducks known today."[25] They are prolific layers and were also raised primarily for meat. Because of the Pekin's white feathers, it edged the Black feathered Cayuga out of the meat market.

### Other Breeds and Varieties

There are a number of additional breeds and varieties that we did not have room for. The Bourbon Red and Chocolate turkeys, for example, are 19th century varieties that appear on the Livestock Conservancy site but not in the historical literature. The Egyptian goose and White Crested duck appear in the literature and the chart, but did not make the editor's cut. There are other breeds and varieties and a vast amount of information and resources that are waiting to be further explored. ❑

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24. Wright, 548.

25. Diehl, 88.

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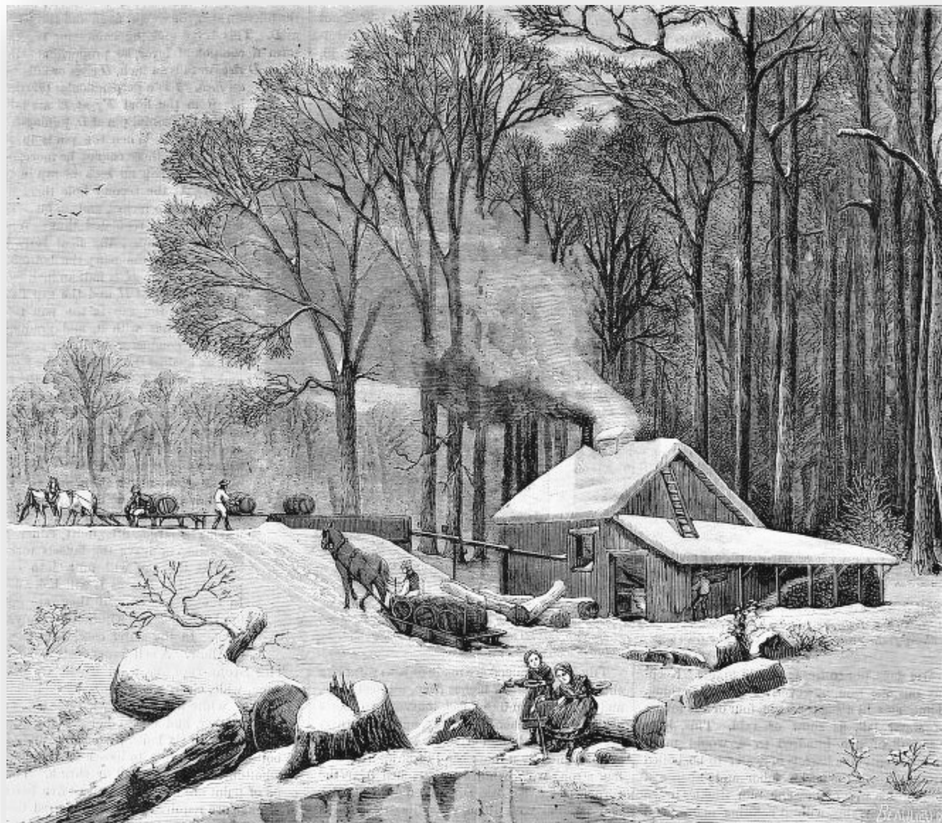
# Maple Sugar Making in Ohio

By W.T. Chamberlain, Hudson, O.

From the *American Agriculturist*, February, 1870

***Editor's Note:*** *This is the first part of a two-part article. The second part ran in the March 1870, issue of the* American Agriculturist. *Space does not allow for publication of all of part one or the second part here, so the reader will be directed at the end of this article on how to access the original articles through Internet Archive.*



A MAPLE SUGAR CAMP.—*Drawn and Engraved for the American Agriculturist..*

During the last twenty-five years many improvements have been made in the apparatus for, and methods of, making maple sugar. I give those now in use by the best sugar-makers of Northern Ohio.

The Buckets are made of the best "IX" tin. They are straight, (not flaring) and are of three sizes—three buckets fitting together and forming a "nest." The nest occupies only the space of the largest bucket, thus securing convenience in handling, and economy in storing. The three sizes, too, permit the size of the bucket to be adapted to the flowing capacity of the tree. The dimensions are—Largest, circumference 34 inches; depth, 9 in.; capacity, 15 quarts. Medium, circumference 32½ ins.; depth, 9 in.; capacity, 13½ quarts. Smallest, circumference 30 in.; depth, 9 inches, capacity, 11 quarts…Figure 1 shows the smallest of the three buckets…

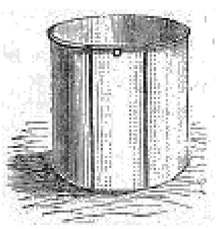


Fig. 1.—SAP BUCKET.

Just below the wire rim an inch hole is punched, so as to hang the bucket on the "spile." The hole is in the middle of the piece above mentioned, as in Fig. 1, as the seams strengthen the bucket, and prevent its bending when it hangs full of sap. Such buckets cost now about $40 per hundred. The buckets should be painted outside with yellow ochre, or other durable paint, to protect them from rust. The sap does not rust the inside. The buckets will last thirty years or more. Tin is better than wood, as it is more easily kept clean, does not sour the sap so much, and does not shrink, get leaky, and require hoop-driving every spring, when one is in hast to be tapping. It is also more easily handled, and stored. It is better than earthen-ware, which is heavy to handle, and cracks when the sap freezes.

Hanging the bucket on the tree is preferable to setting it on the ground. It saves hunting for a block or stone; the bucket is more conveniently emptied, the wind cannot blow the sap away as it drops, nor blow the bucket away; and what is of most importance, *the bucket can be covered.*

The Spiles, Fig. 2, are made of beech or maple, turned and bored by machinery. They are better than elder with the pith punched out, because they are not so liable to sour, and stronger and more durable. They should be 7/8 of an inch in diameter, 3 or 4 inches long, tapering for an inch of the length, and only 3/8 of an inch where they enter the tree. Each should have three notches turned around it, about an inch apart, to keep the bucket from sliding off…[and] so that the bucket may be hung in one or the other of them and be level, whatever way the tree may lean. The spiles cost about $1.25 per hundred.

Fig. 2.—SPILE.

The Covers.—The buckets should always be covered. This is the greatest single improvement yet made. It keeps out rain, snow, dirt, insects, and prevents the effects of heat and cold. The sap is not so liable to sour during the warm days, nor to freeze in cold nights. Keeping out the rain, however, is the chief thing. Sometimes in a sugar season, four or five inches of water fall, as snow or rain. This, in a "camp" of five hundred trees, would make

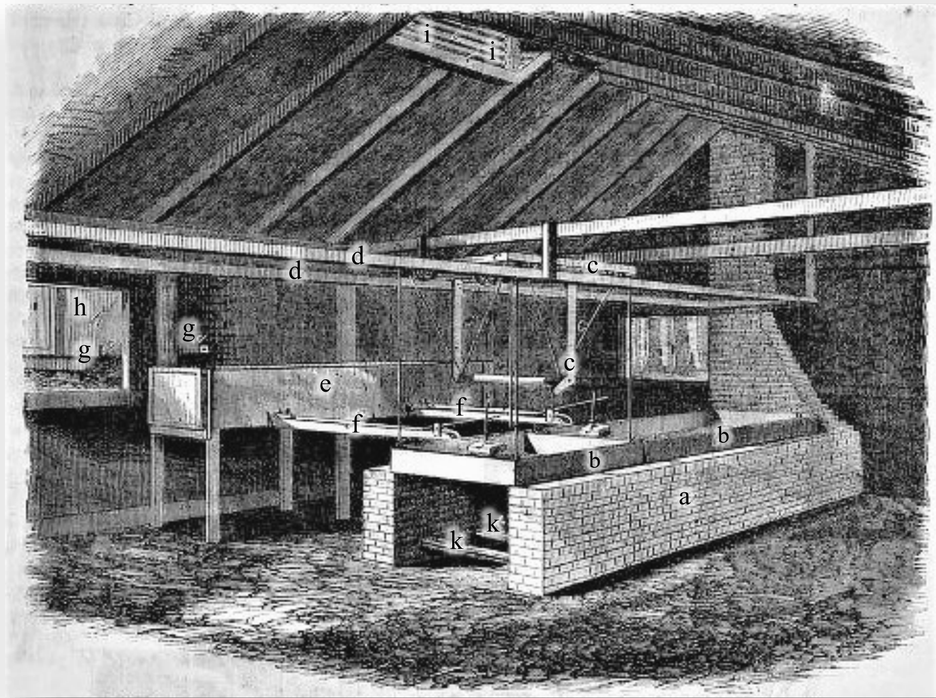



Fig. 3.—Interior of the sugar house, with arch and boilers.
*a, Arch; b, b, Boilers or Pans; c, c, Car, hooked to front pan, ready to lift it; d, d, Track; e, Store-trough; f, f, Conductors with Self-feeding Attachment; g, g, Conductor from outer Store-trough; h, Outside Store-trough; i, i, Ventilator; k, k, Iron Supports for the wood, best made of rail-road iron, set three feet apart.*

about twenty-five barrels of water to be boiled away. Nor is the useless labor and expense of boiling this water all. The rain trickles down the trees, carrying with it coloring matter and dirt. Syrup or sugar of the first quality can never be made from sap and rain-water. The covers are made of 3/4-inch lumber, 1 foot wide, and planed on one side.

The Arch and the Boilers (fig. 3).—Select a dry, level spot, near the center of the sugar orchard or "camp," and if possible, just at the foot of a small hill, that slopes at least three feet in twenty. Dig below the frost, and lay a good foundation of stone. On this build an "arch" of hard burnt brick, laid in lime-mortar. The wall should be 12 or 16 inches thick as far back as the wood reaches, beyond this then 4 inches less will do...The wall should be 2 feet high, and for five hundred trees, 15 feet long…

The Pans (boilers) are made of heavy Juniata sheet-iron, and are 7 inches deep, 3 1/2 feet wide, and usually from 6 to 8 feet long…These broad, shallow pans evaporate the sap fully twice as fast as the old kettles used to do, even when they were set in an arch. Kettles belong to the days of wooden plows.

The Floats and Faucets.—Quite a convenience is the "self-feeder"…It consists of an ordinary wooden conduction trough attached to the store-trough by a hinge…

The Store-Troughs (e. in fig. 3), are made of long, wide, clear, well-seasoned 2-inch plank—pine or white wood (poplar),...Three coats of paint are needed. At least five barrels of storage are needed for each hundred trees. The larger trough or troughs should be outside...the sap flows through a wooden or tin conductor to the inner trough. The sap is gathered in barrels, rolled up nearly horizontal skis from the stone-boat sled, and emptied through the bung-hole into the outer trough. The arrangement of skids, troughs, conductors, etc., is best seen in the picture engraving of the camp on the previous page.

The Wood-shed and Wood.—It saves half the time of boiling to have the wood prepared and housed during the dry weather of the previous September or October…

It is best to have three forty gallon casks for syrup. It is also best have a stone-boat for drawing the casks in gathering sap. It is shown in fig. 5, and is made much like an ordinary wood-shod farm sled, on the runners and shoes are eight inches wide. It has two boards running parallel with the raves, fitted for holding casks…

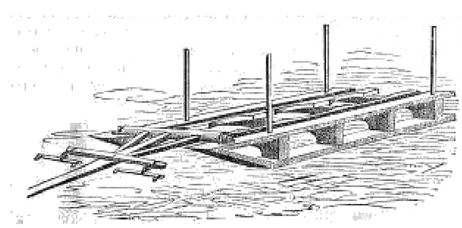


Fig. 5.—sled for hauling sap.

Tapping.—When a decided sugar-day comes, which is indicated by the appearance of a general thaw, late in February, or any time in March, it is time to be busy…

Take your half inch bit...select a sound side of the tree,...and bore about two feet from the ground…Bore about two inches deep, drive you spile firmly, hang your bucket so that the top of the outer edge shall be on a level with the bottom of the spile hole...If the tree stands plumb, use the middle notch (see fig. 2); if it leans towards you, use the inside notch; if from you, use the outside one. Figure 6 shows both buckets hung right, and fig. 7 shows both buckets hung in the wrong notch…

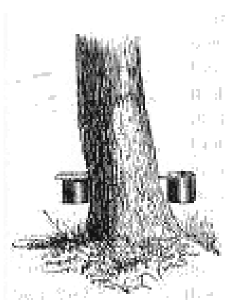


Fig. 6.—hung right.

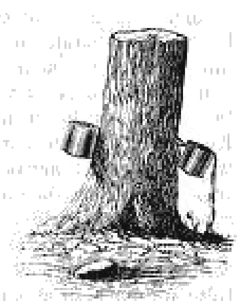


Fig. 7.—hung wrong

See that the spile is driven firmly, put the cover on, and go to the next tree. Tapping requires judgement and care…A good hand will tap thirty trees to the hour where the trees stand thick…If it is a good day, the trees first tapped will need gathering by the time you have tapped five hundred trees. ❑

*To read the sections edited from this article and to read the second article, do a Google search for "American Agriculturist 1870 Internet Archive." The articles are on pages 58-60 for the first one and on pages 97-99 for the second.*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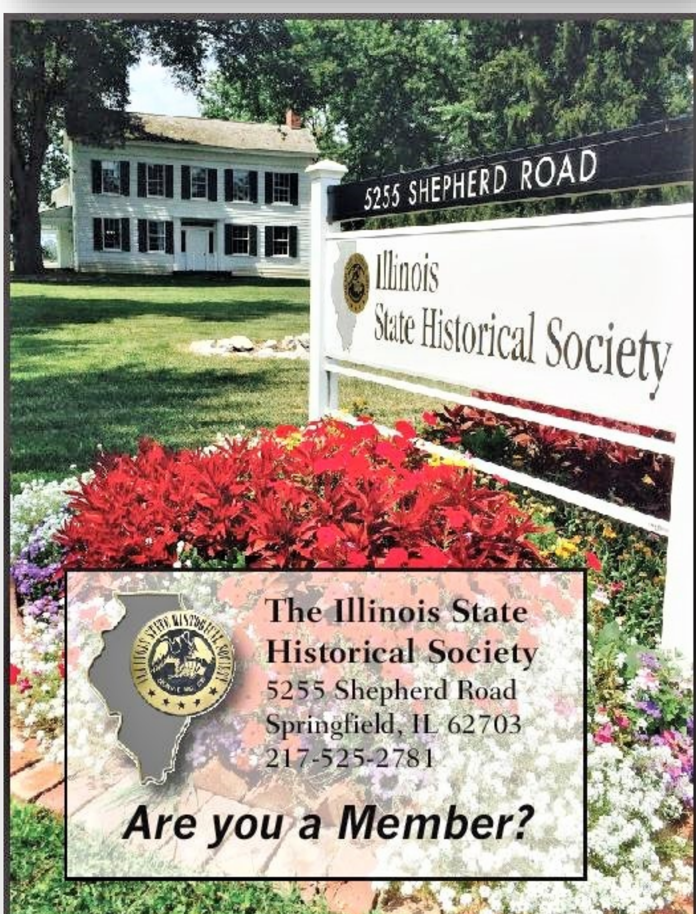
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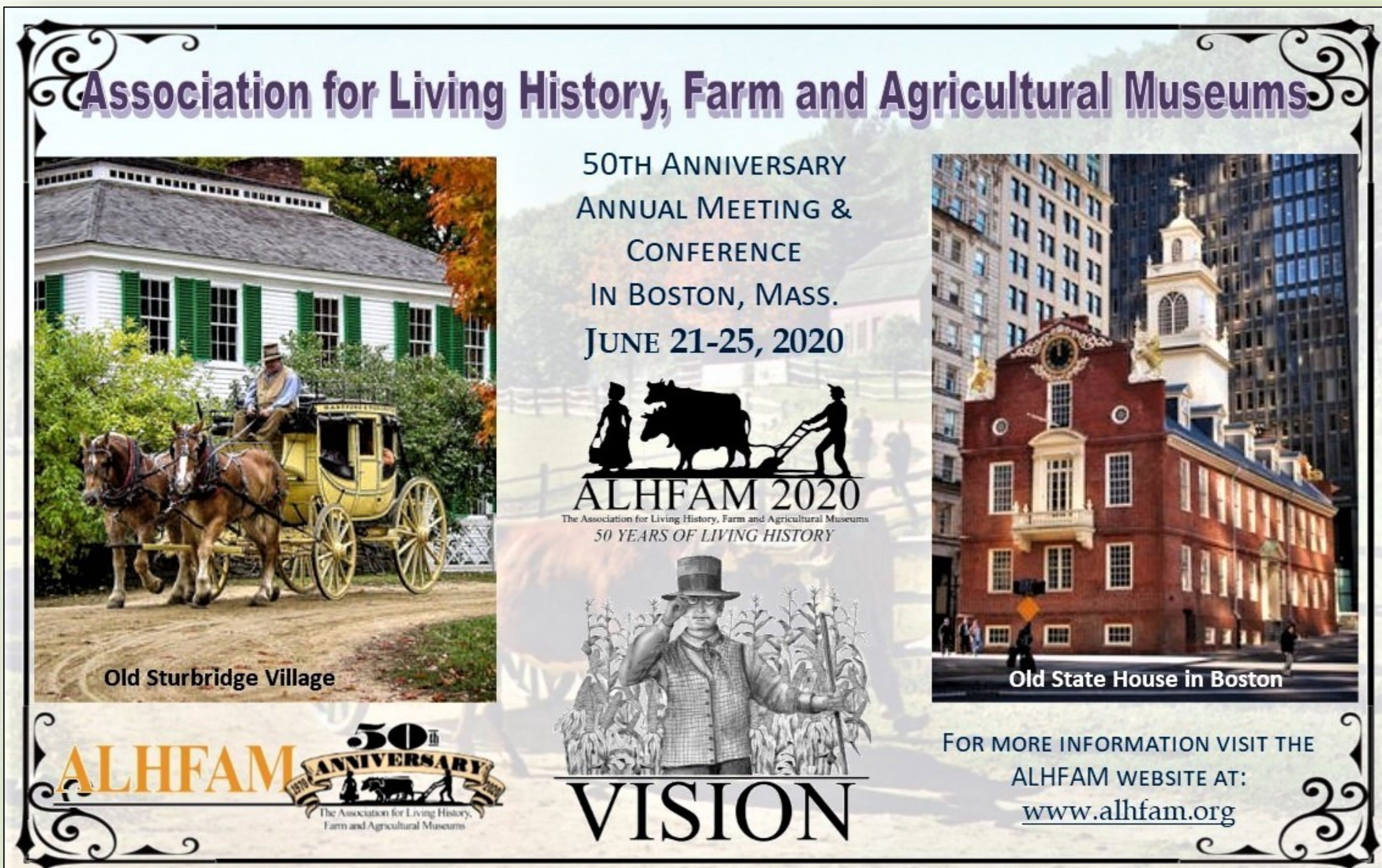


***The ALHFAM 50th Anniversary Conference and Meeting** will be held in Boston, Massachusetts on June 21-25. The conference will include a day-long visit to Old Sturbridge Village, the site where ALHFAM was founded in 1970. Members of MOMCC are also members of ALHFAM so can register for the conference at the member rate.*