Midwest Open Air Museums Magazine

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TILLERS INTERNATIONAL

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.

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Midwest Open Air Museums Magazine

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FEATURE ARTICLES

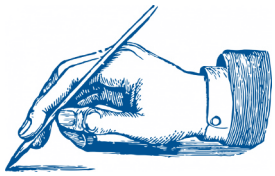
DEPARTMENTS

Cover Photos - Tillers International – **Upper left** – Tillers' oxen, Blue and Hershel. **Upper right** – Plowing with cattle in Madagascar; **Lower right** – Tillers trains trainers (TOT), who then in turn are able to conduct workshops with a greater number of communities. Here a Tillers' trainer conducts a "Farming with Oxen" clinic in Uganda. **Lower left** – Training of trainers class at Tillers Mozambique. (All photos courtesy of Tillers International)

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

Editor's Notebook

By Tom Vance



JUST when we thought the coast was about clear, the pandemic has returned. The 2020 fall conference and the 2021 spring conference were both held virtually, and now the 2021 fall conference is following the same path. The conference, which was to be held at Tillers International, has been postponed to the fall of 2023. A virtual conference for this fall is now being planned, and information will be posted on the **www.momcc.com** website as soon as it becomes available.

The MOMCC magazine is also suffering the effects of the pandemic. Most of the articles for the magazine come from the conferences and the article supply is now running low. I write an article for most issues to both fill out the issue and also to set an example of what kinds of articles could be written.

I worked at Lincoln Log Cabin State Historic Site south of Charleston, Ill. for 28 years and am now working with the Five Mile House near Charleston and the Illinois Amish Heritage Center near Arthur, Ill. All of these give me an abundance of article ideas. Research we did at Lincoln Log on chickens and cattle, for example, I have researched in much greater depth for the articles I wrote on those topics – information I wish I had access to back then. A big difference today is the resources available on the internet.

So, pick something from your site that you would like to know more about, research it, and then write an article on it. Putting the information down on paper will force you to clarify it in your mind and give you a much greater understanding of the topic.

Articles can be written on any number of topics and ideas can come from anywhere. The idea for my article on solar eclipses of the 19th-century, published in the fall 2017 issue, came from a segment on CBS Sunday Morning, and, in particular, Thomas Edison's involvement in an expedition to view the 1878 eclipse. A little internet research expanded the article to all of the 19th-century eclipses.

One article can cover a number of areas. The barn article in this issue, for example, covers family history, historical farming, barn architecture, restoration, adaptive use, fund-raising, and programming.

Ideas for articles:

1. Interpretive programs & special events
2. Research, historical information, primary sources
3. Crafts and trades
4. Period clothing
5. Collections, interesting artifacts
6. Exhibits
7. Historical buildings, restoration
8. Crops, gardens, livestock, historic farming
9. Photo features, "Looking Through Time"
10. Administrative concerns, personnel, training, grants, fund-raising
11. Book reviews
12. Feature your site, site blogs

Reasons to be an author

- You can make a meaningful contribution to your profession.
- Looks great on your resume.
- Gives you greater professional stature.
- Can enhance your research and writing skills.
- Gives you greater in-depth knowledge.
- Can make you an expert on a topic.
- It's fun to see your name and ideas in print.
- Impress your family, friends, and colleagues.

I have one last story relating to the article on page 25 about corn-stalk fiddles. About 1981, we were building a log smoke house on the Lincoln farm. The west side of the building faced the path where visitors entered the farm. I had acquired a fiddle and had learned the D scale and "Go Tell Aunt Rhody." We also had made some corn-stalk fiddles that summer. On a Sunday afternoon, an interpreter sat outside the smoke house with a corn-stalk fiddle, greeting visitors. I was inside the smoke house (with no chinks and daubing yet) with my fiddle. To the visitor's amazement, the interpreter played a D scale and "Go Tell Aunt Rhody" on his corn-stalk fiddle – until one of the visitor's kids looked in the door, that is. ❑

Be a Published Author!

Write an article for MOMCC Magazine

Midwest Open Air Museums Magazine is the printed publication for MOMCC and Midwest ALHFAM members. Articles, reviews, monographs, and opinion pieces that reflect the diverse practical, research, and activity interests of the membership are welcome. These may relate to museum and historic site concerns, historical research, skill development in historic trades and domestic arts, interpretive techniques, living history practice, farming, rural industries, historic houses, collections, historic administration, and a host of other topics. As planning and formatting for each issue proceeds, sometimes articles are added or shifted to another issue depending on the space available. Submissions are welcome any time before, and sometimes after the stated deadlines.

- **Articles:** Range in length from 2 to 6 pages, single-spaced, 11-point, Times New Roman, plus up to six photographs or illustrations with captions. Average word count: 1,500-3,500.
- **Reviews:** Books, websites, audio recordings, DVDs, exhibits, or performances are all welcome to be reviewed. Review length is 1 to 2 pages, single-spaced, 11-point, Times New Roman. Average word count: 500-1,500.
- **Documentation:** Articles should be foot-noted as appropriate and a bibliography or list of sources provided following the MOMCC style sheet which may be found on the MOMCC website: www.momcc.org, or emailed upon request. The MOMCC style sheet follows the *Chicago Manual of Style*.
- **About the Author**: Author should provide a short bio and current photo for inclusion at the end of the article.
- **Submissions:** should be made to: Tom Vance, editor, at **tsevance@mchsi.com** in MS Word. Photos should be submitted in JPG format. Email or call 217-549-1845 with any questions.

2021-2022 Deadlines: Winter – **October 15**; Spring – **January 15**; Summer – **April 15**

Midwest Open Air Museums Coordinating Council

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
Digital Media

President's Perspective

By Mike Follin

AS I prepare to leave the presidency after serving two terms, I look back at what those years have entailed. I started out four years ago with lots of enthusiasm and thoughts. The first was a Board retreat to come up with and put into place a three- to five-year long-range plan. The retreat went well; we came up with a plan that had several parts to it all working toward making MOMCC a strong, viable, and up-to-date organization for our members. Of the many working parts, one of the most important was the part dealing with membership. Another part involved moving MOMCC and the way we conducted business from the 20th into the 21st century. This has been and will continue to be an ongoing process. So much of our world today includes digital and social media that it has become an accepted part of doing business and providing service. The board was willing to take steps to make that happen, and they continue to work on that ever-changing area.

Another part was listening to our members. We heard from members that they felt the organization had become "stagnant" in providing traditional annual conferences and workshops. Therefore, we put out a questionnaire to the members, asking what they had in mind. As a result, the board took a leap of faith and did their first-ever "non-traditional" conference on a paddle boat on the Illinois River, which was well-attended and received.

THEN came COVID. This was truly a mind-boggler. None of us could have ever thought that such a thing could cause so many widespread and continuing changes to our world. Suddenly, museums and historical sites were fighting to keep their doors open both figuratively and literally. Staff found themselves working in totally new environments they had never imagined. MOMCC was faced with how to stay in touch with, support, bolster spirits, and still provide help and information to its members. As a result, we were shoved into the virtual 21st century. Many of our members learned new digital skills and virtual ways of communicating and providing programs. Likewise, the board took to virtual meetings and sharing thoughts and ideas with members via a "virtual Happy Hour." We as an organization produced our first leap into a virtual conference. Limited as it was, it still provided information found useful by many and accessible to those even outside our region via the wonders of technology.

Then we came to the 2021 fall conference, which we hoped would be face-to-face in "real time." We were planning it as another first for the organization, a fall conference composed entirely of lengthy two-day workshops. However, due to the recent rise in COVID cases, the board voted to postpone the conference until 2023. Thanks to the hard work of the conference coordinators, Becky and Monique; Jim Slining conference host and organizer; and Ed Crabbe, conference registrar, we were off to set a new milestone. However, a Fall VIRTUAL Conference is in the making with the theme "Managing Challenges in Unknown Times," so watch for more information.

Speaking of milestones, let me circle back to the long-range plan that the board set upon four years ago. While some of the plan has had to be tabled due to COVID and changes in board priorities, there have been some major accomplishments. First, thanks to Melinda Carriker, the membership part is working. She has done a lot to clean up, update, and maintain our membership records. While on the board, Melinda agreed to take on the project and has continued to work on it after leaving the board. She currently serves as board-appointed membership coordinator. Ann Cejka has also worked hard to help bring the board into the 21st century by creating a Google virtual office for the board, a Google classroom for our conferences, and creating and chairing the digital and social media interest group. These may not appear to be major milestones, but I look at them as major accomplishments by the board to better the organization.

My enthusiasm though, tempered by the last four years, has not changed. There are still things that I would like to see happen as I leave the presidency. One is to put into place a system by which we recognize our members for outstanding programs, interpretive talents, and other historical skill sets. I would also like to see MOMCC produce a series of short YouTube videos, (piggy-backing on ALHFAM's STP program) which are all STRICTLY Midwest oriented. Last, I want to see MOMCC continue to grow and serve the Midwest as a viable, informational, and educational organization, a place where Midwest museums of all kinds can find the information, help, and support they are seeking. This can only happen with the support of YOU, the membership. The board can only do so much, and it takes the support and efforts of everyone to achieve our goals. Thanks for your support and friendship over the past four years. ❑

Important Notice

The 2021 Fall Conference
PRESERVING THE FODDER OF HISTORY
OUTSIDE OF THE SILO
Scheduled for November 11-13, 2021
At Tillers International, Scotts, Michigan
HAS BEEN POSTPONED TO THE FALL OF 2023

Due to the COVID pandemic, MOMCC has decided to postpone the Fall 2021 conference and reschedule it to the Fall of 2023. We are sorry for any inconvenience this may cause, but we made this decision with the health and safety of all members in mind. Everyone who has registered and paid will receive a full refund. If you paid with a credit card, we will refund your card. If you paid with a check it will be returned to you. Registration for this conference has been disabled on the website. If you have questions or concerns, email Ed Crabb, registrar at crabbef@hotmail.com.

In the meantime, watch for information on the 2021 fall virtual conference.

Annual MOMCC Fall Conference

November 11-12, 2021

Virtual Conference

Managing Challenges in Uncertain Times

Make plans to join us for the Annual Fall Conference

As we continue to experience the ups and downs of this pandemic, join us again for a virtual conference as we explore how our living history community is meeting the challenges of Museum Operations.

Watch the MOMCC website at www.momcc.org for posting of the final conference program.

Questions about the program can be directed to:
Tracie Evans, Program Chair, PO Box 235, Archbold OH 43502
tracie.evans@saudervillage.org ❖ Phone (419)446-2541 x2072 ❖ Fax (419)445-5251

MOMCC is a Regional Affiliate of
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MOMCC Annual Meeting Minutes

November 12, 2020

Via ZOOM

President Mike Follin called the 41st annual meeting to order at 7:05 pm with 24 participants.

The treasurer's report and minutes from the last annual meeting were also published in the magazine. Secretary Dawn Bondhus Mueller provided an online copy of the minutes of the 2019 Annual Meeting held at the Holiday Inn and Suites in Carol Stream, IL. Jim Patton moved and Becky Crabb seconded to approve the minutes as presented. Motion carried. There will be little income and few expenses in the budget for next year. It is a reduced budget due to the current situation.

Treasurer Debra Reid presented 2020 - 2021 budget online for review. Last year ended well, being in the black. Gail Richardson moved and Jim Patton seconded to approve the Treasurer's report and the budget as presented. Motion carried.

Active membership: 71 individual; 30 household (7 under them); 34 institutional; and 12 complimentary. There are 164 total members as of today. Thank you to Melinda for all of her work getting things straightened out! She will work on streamlining and updating the household membership list this winter.

Editor Tom Vance reported some delays in the mailing – especially with the summer issue. Tom presented an outline of the next three issues. There are some spots open for articles in the summer issues. Tom continues to work on getting advertisers in the magazine. Call for sessions was updated for the virtual spring conference. Tom usually gets articles from the conferences, so without in-person conferences, he encourages everyone to submit.

ALHFAM June 11 – 14 at Sauder Village – a Midwest site! At this point it is uncertain if it will be in-person and virtual, or just virtual. They are looking at tracks of 3 concurrent sessions. Much is unknown, but the virtual conference will happen no matter what. If necessary, they are hopeful that the conference could be postponed to 2023 or 2024.

Betsy Urven announced the following results from the election which took place primarily online and with some paper ballots: Debra Reid reelected Treasurer; Dawn Bondhus Mueller reelected Secretary; and Kate Garrett reelected Member-at-Large.

The 2019 Candace Matelic Award went to Rob Kranc for his article on the History of Radio. This notice will go in the magazine. The 2020 award has yet to be determined.

Becky Crabb did a presentation on the upcoming Spring Virtual Conference. There will probably be an extended wrap-up meeting. There will be a workshop "how-to use Zoom" prior to the conference. Sessions are still needed, and are accepted until December 30. The theme is "It's a New Time; Finding our Way in a Changing World"- held March 18 - 20, 2021.

Fall 2021 Conference at Tillers International near Kalamazoo, MI November 10 – 13. Tillers will be focusing on the hands-on component, as that is their forte. More information will be coming in the next months.

It is nice to see people from other regions attending this virtual conference! Thank you to Ann Cejka and Melinda Carriker for getting this to work.

Jim Patton moved and Becky Crabb seconded to adjourn the meeting. Motion carried and the meeting was adjourned at 8 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Dawn Bondhus Mueller

MOMCC Secretary

MOMCC 2020-2021 Financial Report & 2021-2022 Budget

End of Year - September 1, 2020 to August 31, 2021

Prepared by Debra A. Reid, Treasurer

	Actual - Year Ended	2020-2021	2021-2022
Income	**Aug 31, 2021**	**Budget**	**Budget**
Membership Dues	$ 4,975.00	$ 4,500.00	$ 4,750.00
Advertising (Magazine)	830.00	800.00	810.00
Magazine Sales	0.00	0.00	0.00
Auction	0.00	1,000.00	500.00
*Fall 2021 Conference	2,810.00	0.00	3,000.00
**Spring 2021 Conference	2,600.00	3,750.00	7,500.00
Fall 2021 Conference	0.00	0.00	0.00
Miscellaneous (including donations)	10.00	400.00	100.00
Interest	2.22	4.00	1.84
Total Income	$11,227.22	$ 10,454.00	$16,661.84
Expenses			
Magazine Expenses	$ 3,607.00	$ 4,000.00	$ 3,600.00
Membership Service			
Printing/copies	128.00	50.00	75.00
Postage (mail 4 magazines, ballots, dues renewals)	940.89	1 ,200.00	950.00
Supplies	0.00	30.00	30.00
Liability Insurance	0.00	0.00	0.00
*Fall 2021 Conference - Virtual	1,000.00	0.00	1,000.00
**Spring 2022 Conference – Springfield	0.00	1,250.00	7,184.00
Fall 2022 - Advanced payments to the Osthoff and to Kalamazoo ($500 each)	0.00	1,000.00	0.00
Marketing (GoDaddy; 3 yr. web domain; e-voting cost)	250.00	200.00	200.00
Board Member reimbursements	75.00	0.00	0.00
Bank of Am. & credit card fees	611.51	750.00	1,000.00
Wild Apricot website fees w/ Affini Pay	1,188.00	1,166.40	1,300.00
MOMCC Conference sponsorships, 4 @ $25	0.00	100.00	100.00
Audit	0.00	250.00	250.00
Matelic Award	0.00	200.00	200.00
ALHFAM Fellowship	0.00	500.00	500.00
Disaster/Outreach Fund (restricted)	0.00	250.00	250.00
MOMCC Archives	0.00	0.00	0.00
Miscellaneous	0.00	0.00	0.00
Total Expenses	$ 7,800.40	$ 10,946.40	$ 16,639.00
Net Income (Loss)	$ 3,426.82	$ (492.40)	$ 22.84

Assets/Fund Balance: Unrestricted, Checking Acct. - $15,647.68; Temp Restricted - $5,258.66; Restricted (Endowment) - $13,565.36; Total - $34,473.92.

*Fall 2020 conference postponed to 2022 and replaced with a virtual. Fall 2021 conference postponed to 2023.

**The Spring 2021 conference postponed to 2022 and replaced with a virtual conference.

Where do we go from here?

Reflections from the 2021 Spring Conference

By Kristie Hammond, Colonial Williamsburg

MY idea for a discussion session at this spring's conference began at last spring's conference. Last year I wrote describing my experience as a first-time conference attendee, this year I write as a first-time presenter. I want to thank everyone who gave me feedback and encouragement leading up to the conference and welcomed me back to the Midwest, as well as all the hands that went into making the first virtual conference possible. I would also like to thank all the attendees who shared ideas from their sites. As I said at the beginning of my session, I am new to the field and don't have answers, but I have lots of questions! So, I thought I would share the six main questions I posed and some of the ideas and follow-up questions we came up with along the way. Maybe this will spark some ideas and collaborations at your site!

1. **How do we attract a modern audience? (Or what stops people from coming and how do we fix it?)**

Notes:

- "Author Days" at Sauder Village, hands-on activities relating to books, costuming etc.
- How can we be more hands-on while still following COVID safety measures?
  - ◊ Virtual weaving – Ohio Village: document camera in addition to webcam.
  - ◊ Caravan tour – York Trail in central Illinois.

Follow up Questions:

Are retirees the common visitor/donor group across other sites? How can we attract other demographics?

Speaker notes:

I often hear from marketing and research teams that our dedicated audience are our retirees, yet that pool of visitors is shrinking. It seems to me we need to find ways to attract families and encourage them to return, strengthening our dedicated guest pool.

2. How do we use technology effectively at a historical site?

Notes:

- Ohio Village: "Pleasures of the Cup" historic cocktail tasting, speakeasy, etc. Virtual how to make the historical drink, etc.
- Virtual House museum tours: how to make them more engaging?
  - ◊ Show more detail or different aspects of the space and artifacts, themed spaces, shared experiences, (ex- cooking, medicine)
- With many virtual options, how do you stand out?
  - ◊ Know your audience, go local, lean into your niche.
  - ◊ "History bounding" How-to videos.
  - ◊ Collaboration- Log Cabin Village and Art Center.
  - ◊ Social Media – have fun! Collaborate with other sites for fun challenges.
  - ◊ Genealogy, Archaeology, Historical Society, DAR, city, etc. all collaborated for a successful cemetery walk.
  - ◊ Historic Fort Wayne – collaboration with reenactors, etc. Historical fiction "meet the author"– working with schools, "meet the artist" student artists, "meet the musician."

Follow up questions:

What are some key considerations to make this technology the most useful?

Speaker notes:

If we're going to launch an app, is it user-friendly, does it have the most accurate and useful information? Some considerations: virtual tickets, balancing guest ease with security- preventing or recognizing screen shots over live tickets.

3. How can we better serve guests who may need accommodations under the ADA? (Especially if the building or site itself cannot be made accessible). How can we bring the experience to the guests if they cannot come into a building or site?

Notes:

- Technology- videos and show-and-tell, 360-degree views.
- Binders - vision challenges – large print info in binders
- Audio tours- 30- to 60-second highlights
- Retrofit storage space to sensory-safe space, comfy furniture, fidgets, etc.
- Ramps for special events if can't be accommodated on a regular basis.
- Consider hearing loss – microphones, printed materials.
- Insurance, publicity? – find local organizations to partner with to aid in meeting the needs of guests.

Follow up questions:

Beyond physical accessibility, what about guests on the autism spectrum or are sensitive to sensory overload, loud noises or other considerations?

Speaker notes:

One method we have is to show guests pictures in a binder or on an iPad of the second floor if they cannot take the stairs.

4. How can we make museums more economically accessible (without creating a million types of tickets and false hopes with "your ticket includes this but not that")?

Notes:

- Very regional, depends on local areas, Blue Star program for military families.
- Other factors, size, demographics,
- Virtual programs can alleviate not only COVID concerns, but also aid in accessibility.
- Be careful to not be priced out of the market.
- Memberships can be a better value.
- To maintain health of both visitors and staff; engage all ages.

Follow up questions:

Have other sites tried scholarship/fellowship type programs? What works, and what is a challenge?

Speaker notes:

I often wrestle with the idea that history shouldn't be a privilege to only those that can afford it. Working at Colonial Williamsburg, our site at first glance is largely representative of the wealthiest of Virginians, those who had the means to build substantial homes that last 300 years. While we are being more intentional about telling the stories of all people in Williamsburg, our audiences should not be limited to those that can afford it. In talking with colleagues who have been with the foundation longer, we have tried the multiple ticket route, but it leads to more frustration for both staff and guests when a cheaper ticket comes with a more limited experience. We have had donors support certain school groups, or sponsors support veterans and families to come on Memorial Day weekend for example, but how can we do more?

5. How can we better engage with children of all ages and meet the needs of families in general?

Notes:

- Interests of all ages, school programs- 4th grade state history, reach out to all ages.
- STEM – state educational standards for math – subtraction for younger, percentages for older
- Relate to what is familiar.
- Multiple lyrics to the same familiar tune, allows better memory of words when you don't have to focus on the tune as much. The different versions can tell us a lot about that time in history.
- "Tour your site as a visitor, not an interpreter" Spy museum- make the visitor a character in the story, role play, kids are wired to play.
- Giving kids a role of a real person, engage them in their own research, began returning with sources the site hadn't found yet.
- Zombie survival camp- pioneer survival skills, continue returning, create their own lore, remember better.
- Takes a lot of time but pays off, kids are so engaged they create a lot of the programs and games for future groups.

Follow up questions:

What amenities can we offer families to help ease travel with children so they can worry less about strollers, meals, restrooms, etc. and focus more on what they're learning and making memories with their families?

Speaker notes:

From a former teacher's perspective, I see ways to interpret topics like government to children without lecturing but by encouraging them to participate. I find if you can interpret at a level kids understand, everyone understands, whereas if you get hung up on technicalities and jargon, it may sound impressive to an adult audience, but kids are less interested.

6. How can we open a calm, factual dialog about difficult topics in history, for example, slavery? Or methods for "myth-busting" while keeping a positive relationship with guests?

Notes:

- Music can change perceptions, open a dialogue and emotional connections, universal concept.
- Indigenous people – How can we better tell their story sensitively, respectfully and accurately?
  - ◊ Difficult to make in-roads to learn more, and therefore share.
  - ◊ At least say something- start with acknowledging who lived there initially and begin to build from there
- Importance of support exhibits and materials to interpreters trying to tell the story.
- Include everyone at the table.

- People are not perfect, then or now; don't gloss over it.
- We want to discuss, but don't know how after being limited to 140 characters.
- Definitions are important. Clarify what we mean when we use terms that have changed contexts.

Follow up questions:

How do we address our institution's history, warts and all? If we can't address past mistakes, how are guests supposed to trust everything else we tell them?

Speaker notes:

I was recently lamenting to a supervisor that while I want to tell the whole story, of all the residents in town, free, enslaved, American Indian, women, different faiths, etc, these are difficult topics to get comfortable with and to bring up, especially when many guests come expecting to have their beliefs confirmed, not challenged. She gave me some wise words, *"You don't have to be comfortable with it, in fact, if you are, then something is wrong. Slavery is an uncomfortable topic and institution, so we need to be brave and share it despite the discomfort."*

As is often the case, with answers often come more questions. Admittedly, these were not small questions that had one simple answer. A lot depends on the details of a specific site. But if there's one thing I've learned, it's that we need more collaboration, not competition. We're all on the same team trying to educate our guests about the past. Nothing reminds me more of this shared purpose than the conversations at conference; whether it's sourcing artifacts, partnering with programs, or sharing knowledge of resources, we truly are ALHFAMily.

I'd love to continue the discussion, so please feel free to email me at khammond@cwf.org.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR: Kristie Hammond has been an interpreter at Colonial Williamsburg for two years. Originally from south central Ohio, she graduated from Mount Vernon Nazarene University with a bachelor's degree in History and Integrated Social Studies. Before starting at Colonial Williamsburg, she was a substitute teacher. In her spare time, she enjoys gardening, listening to audiobooks, and working on paint-by-numbers.

MOMCC
2022 Spring Conference
Call for Sessions and Speakers

Springfield IL
March 17-21, 2021

Unraveling our Past and Moving Forward:
Discovering our 21st Century Voice

Join us in the "Land of Lincoln" as we look for ways to break the patterns of our past practices to find solutions for operations, programming, and interpretation as we charge headlong into the third decade of the 21st century. Sessions will address pandemic recovery, cultural institutions and the Green movement, practices for a healthy planet, social equality, and economic opportunity.

The conference organizers seek speakers, session and workshop proposals relevant to this broad theme. Session topics may include, but are not limited to:

- Challenges, solutions and/or issues for institutions relating to any of the following
  - The pandemic
  - The Green Movement
  - A healthy planet
  - Social equality
  - Changing economic environment
  - Dealing with controversial topics
- Interpretation and Audience changes, challenges, and successes
- Topics related to the successful operations of living history museums
- Programming in the Present and Future in our new social climate
- Staffing and volunteer issues
- Working with Schools and Students
- Working with boards, administrations, staff, and community
- Marketing in a changing digital world
- STEM/STEAM programming
- Historical crafts, trades, and classes
- Managing collections
- Disaster Planning and Preparedness

Session proposals should be submitted no later than Nov 15, 2021

Submit to Tracie Evans, Program Chair, PO Box 235, Archbold OH 43502
tracie.evans@saudervillage.org ❖ Phone (419)446-2541 x2072 ❖ Fax (419)445-5251

Tillers International

Sharing our rural heritage with the world

By Jim Slining, Tillers International

SOME of us attended the wonderful virtual conference "Draft Animals in the Past, Present, and Future" which was organized by ALHFAM member Claus Kropp. One thread permeating the comments at this meeting was that draft animal power is viewed worldwide as a "throw-back;" that it is viewed as part of history and therefore has no serious role in the world of today. This assessment is not new for anyone involved in rural development. Although much of the farming practiced in the world today is accomplished through human or animal power, the global poster child for "successful" farming is "Big Agriculture" as practiced in the United States. It is the predominant sentiment even while this model of agriculture is increasingly brought into question by scientists and American consumers alike. How might history be studied and presented so as to demonstrate its applicable pertinence to contemporary life?

Tillers International is a non-profit organization whose purpose is to help improve the lives of farming communities worldwide. Its origins reach beyond its official birth forty years ago, to when its founder Richard Roosenberg completed his commitment to a Peace Corps effort in Benin, West Africa. Visiting living history museums upon returning to Michigan, he quickly identified America's agricultural story as one bursting with powerful low-cost concepts, many still suited to specific circumstances yet today. Under Dick's visionary leadership (he retired five years ago, though is still an active Board member) Tillers has continued to develop its physical infrastructure, moving its campus to rural Scotts, MI in 2001. Now, with Rob Burdick as Executive Director, Tillers continues to refine its focus. Although not a typical public history site, the manner in which Tillers attempts to catalyze cultural models from America's rural past for contemporary application is relevant to living history.

Public history in this country often presents the past as a topic unto its own; the methods through which people "back then" strived for an improved civilization are offered up comparatively. "They didn't have technology back then, so they had to use this crank to get water from a well" is an all too typical interpretation I heard a number of years ago. Imagine a similar presentation a hundred years from now: "Before they had autonomous vehicles, they had to steer cars by hand." Would that conjured image of toil and drudgery experienced by unsophisticated humans living in 2021 accurately reflect what we are feeling as we are actually living it?

***Blue and Hershel,** the old wise masters, faithfully travel along a road they helped to make well-worn.*

When history is studied with the goal of identifying concepts helpful in solving specific current problems, the general premise is changed. Instead of assuming cultural practices at a given place and time resulted for the want of another choice, one might begin by asking "why was this choice historically adopted as best over all the competing ones". An important parallel question is "what cultural paradigm organically developed to support an enduring livelihood for the community in question". Assessment of historic practices is hindered when the intangible skills necessary for the optimal performance of simple tools, machinery, and live sources of energy have disappeared through disuse. Attempting to replicate these skills is difficult. Another culture may have approaches to work activities vastly different from our own. The language defining parameters such as "efficiency" or "quality" are often unique to a given place in time.

The conditions realized by many of the world's rural inhabitants are quite unlike that of the United States. Electric power and other public utilities are commonly unreliable or nonexistent. Poor roads and transportation make sourcing materials and parts difficult. Cash is scarce which limits the purchasing power of many individuals. Among other effects, this makes warehousing merchandise and parts on speculation infeasible. Labor is often inexpensive and may be comprised of a generous quantity of woman and children. In such an environment so called "power agri-

culture" (tractor farming) is unrealistic, even if it is greatly desired. Intermediate models are necessary, which can provide greater security in the immediate term.

Comparable conditions can be found in specific examples from America's rural past. Tillers studies agricultural history as broadly as possible. Perhaps ironically, this broad picture grows clearer with the notice of each increasingly small detail. We focus on farming models (or paradigms) with particular attention to understanding the contributing conditions required for their success. The goal is to loosely apply modified aspects of an historic model to that of a developing community whose environment might favor its acceptance. Successful models must generally function with inexpensive inputs. Again, the tools of affordable farming systems are basic in nature and typically require a skilled user if their potential is to be realized.

Training of trainers *class at Tillers Mozambique. Attention to yoke construction for greater comfort can result in greater and more durable power in the field. Construction methods are often adapted to local conditions. Here, traditional steam-bent wooden bows are replaced with those made from PVC pipe.*

There is another twist. Because the communities where these models are to be introduced do not have easy access to expensive shop tools and replacement parts, any field tools introduced may best be made locally in a manner conducive to inexpensive, versatile hand tool processes which encourage affordable local repair. The tradespeople in these small communities generally understand hand-tool technology. These finely developed skills are comprised of the rote mechanical techniques hand-tools require, but also the ability to work within the appropriate paradigm necessary for such tools to function optimally.

Test plots at Tillers *are used to understand how elements of various historic farming models might be beneficial in use today. Also of interest is the testing of new concepts in tools and processes. The buildings in the background support this effort.*

As an illustration of the powerful role cultural paradigms play, consider this example. Modern US agriculture requires large machinery to withstand the time constraints of monoculture. When hundreds or thousands of acres of a single crop is planted, the opportunity to ready and plant fields is short lived. Combine harvesting must also be accomplished during a small window of time when grain is at its optimal condition. The system was developed for application in the flat, large fields of America's Midwest. It is able to flourish with limited labor inputs so long as a robust quantity of (often borrowed) capital is available. Big agriculture typically has a couple huge spikes of labor and machinery requirements in a given year, each of a short duration. Obviously, this model is not hospitable to technologies containing limited power and speed. Historically however diversified, mixed crop/livestock farming was intricately designed to accommodate the limited availability of human and animal power by spreading it evenly over a large portion of the year. It is a sophisticated system appropriate where small fields (undulating terrain), sufficient labor, and limited capital exist.

To summarize, Tillers' model is comprised of understanding the "place" where our international partners live, comprehending America's rural history so as to recognize models which may fit that place, and finally collaborating with that community's farmers and artisans in creating farming systems whose tools can be produced and repaired locally and affordably. To accomplish this, Tillers relies on its four collaborative elements: a research collection of historical farm tools, an experimental farm, and a vibrant effort supporting the advancement of traditional (hand-tool/

low cost) supportive trades. That's three. While all of these arms support our rural development work, the fourth is directly responsible for the on-site effort, outcome measurement and evaluation, and administrative functions required to keep various projects focused and on track. The research and training Tillers conducts empowers our own staff as well as visiting international partners, international field workers and interns, and a variety of American small farmers, future farmers, tradespeople, and hobbyists – we welcome them all. Our purpose is to help (mostly) small farmers here and abroad thrive and flourish to provide safe and secure (long-term) food supplies.

Concerns about the environment and global warming, supply chain vulnerabilities, and food safety/security are prevalent within the communities living history sites serve. There has never been a better opportunity to demonstrate our importance to those communities. This relevance converges with the credibility and interest currently extended to "intangible cultural heritage." If our patrons are to seriously embrace historic practices as having value for contemporary problem solving, living history professionals must first demonstrate confidence in their subject. Historic skills have long been proven to have a positive impact with our presentations. The experience at Tillers demonstrates the potential of intangible skills as a research tool; the ability for accurately practiced historic skills to flush out numerous questions concerning history, questions not easily exposed by other means. Accomplishing this will require re-imagining many museum disciplines. Protocols developed to verify provenance and enhance object cataloguing, preservation, scholarship, and education are currently practiced with material culture. We need to adapt them for use with intangible culture for reasons of accountability, credibility and protection. What will these standards and protocols look like? What additional training will museum professionals require to permit dialogue with this additional (intangible) cultural classification? What resources are needed to broaden our understanding and mastery of practices left dormant for generations or centuries? Tillers International will be hosting MOMCC's Fall Conference, November 2-4, 2023, where we will be exploring these conundrums. Come join us in this effort. ❑

Plowing with cattle in Madagascar – *Limited power is a fact when using humans or draft animals for work. This fact is a greater consideration with small breed sizes in many parts of the world. Oxen are expensive. Encouraging neighbors to share teams of cattle is one solution. Designing tools which can function with small power inputs is another.*

About the author – Jim Slining is a lifelong student of historical work processes and their interrelationship with broader cultural paradigms. These considerations shape his role at Tillers International which includes working with a collection of historical farm tools, as well as involvement with the draft horse and blacksmithing programs there.

Blacksmith (left) and Woodwork shops are designed and furnished to train students in hand-tool work skills.


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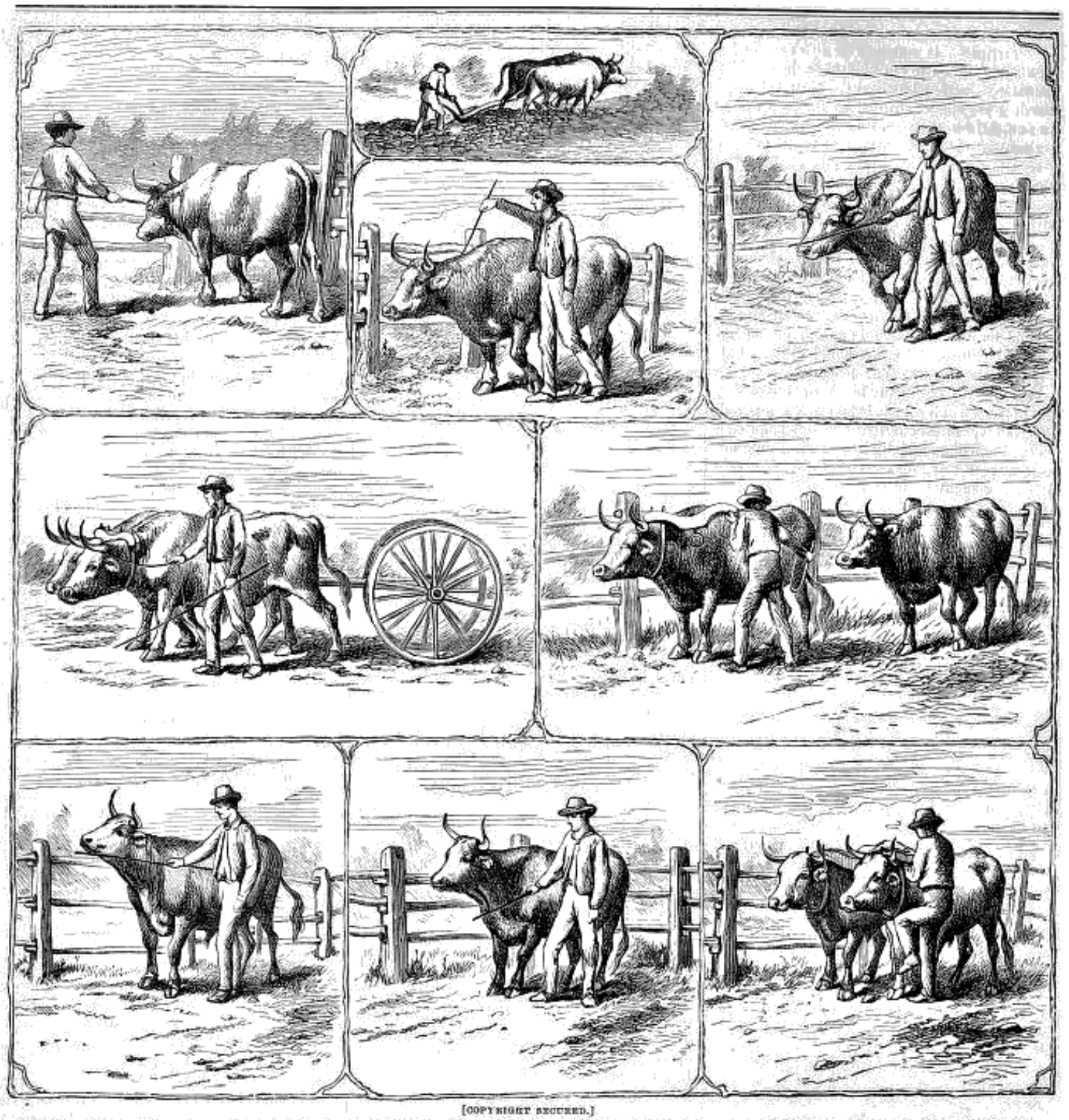
Training Steers

American Agriculturist, 1873

The future conduct of a yoke of oxen very much depends on the training they receive. This should commence at an early period of their lives, at least during their second year if possible. It should be commenced gradually; one lesson being taught at a time, and that well learned before the next is undertaken. Afterwards, at every lesson, those previously taught should be gone through, that it may be kept fresh and not forgotten. Great gentleness should be exercised; the steers should never be frightened, worried, or wearied; the lessons should be short, and in teaching the greatest patience and firmness must be used. No command should be given and not enforced. The words of command should be sharply and distinctly pronounced, but in a low voice, and never with shouting or bawling. When a command is promptly obeyed, the animal should be encouraged by patting the neck, by a few gentle words which are soon understood, and by a reward in the shape of a nubbin of corn, a piece of apple, a little sugar or salt, or a piece of bread and molasses.

The first lesson is to stop when "Whoa!" is said. To teach this, the steer (only one) should be driven alongside of a fence or barn wall up to another fence or wall or a wagon placed purposely, and when he reaches the impediment, the word, "Whoa!: should be spoken sharply but quietly. Of course, he must stop. This should be repeated until the word and action are fixed on the memory. He should then be taught to stop before the obstacle is reached, until he will stop at the work anywhere and everywhere. The second lesson is to "Haw" or "Come around!" To teach this, he should be touched on the off shoulder or on the off side of the neck with the end of the whip, and this should be continued until he will come around the driver in a circle by the mere motion of the whip and the voice. The next lesson is to Gee! The driver should step in advance of the steer on the nigh side, and hold the whip at an acute angle with his nose, lightly touching him at the same time, and using the word "Gee." When the steer will gee round at the word while the driver stands behind him, and without being touched with the whip, and moved by the voice only until he faces the driver, this lesson is learned.

The next is to hold up the head. The butt of the whip should be pressed lightly beneath the chin, and the words "Hold up your head!" spoken distinctly. If the steer is slow in learning this, a smart tap beneath the chin, with the words spoken at the same time, will teach him what is wanted. Before this lesson is learned, he must be made to hold up his head as high as possible by the use of the words only. To "Back" is then learned. The steer must hold up his head, and then by a touch on the brisket, and the words, "Back! Whoa-a-a-back!" he must be exercised until the word of command is sufficient without the touch of the whip. After these exercises are well taught to each singly, the steers should be exercised together a few times, and then yoked up. The yoke should be a light one, made for this express purpose. To yoke them up is the next lesson. The off steer is tied to a fence or wall, and the yoke fastened on to him. The nigh end of the yoke should then be held up with the left hand, and the bow and bow-pin taken in the right hand. The steer, having been previously driven up to his mate, is then made to step up under the yoke, the words "Come under!" being spoken at the same moment that he is touched on the flank with a light switch or whip held in the hand along with the bow. When he is in place, the bow is put into the yoke, and held up with the left knee while it is secured with the bow-pin. The off steer is then untied, and the pair are left to stand in the yoke and move about for an hour or two, or while they are fed, after which they may be unyoked. They should never be left alone in the yoke until well used to it, lest they may get frightened, or learn to turn the yoke, a trick once learned they never forget or neglect to play when they can. After one or two yokings, they should be driven around the yard, and then, a short rope having been tied to the nigh steer's horns, they may be taken out to a field or on the road, but for a very short distance at first. They should never be allowed to run away; if they do it once, they should be driven back to the place from whence they started, and be made to stay there for a short time, and then driven slowly home. This should be done without fail, whether it be noon or night, or they will learn to start off home when unhitched and when they are not wanted to, at whatever work they may be, or if they are at work a long distance from home; and much time be lost in consequence. They must be taught not to do anything until told to do it, and to do what they are told promptly. When they are perfect, they may be hitched on to a light ox-cart, or the front wheels of a wagon, the off ox being taught to step over the tongue, the words "Step over!" being spoken as



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ILLUSTRATIONS OF THE METHODS OF TRAINING STEERS.—*Drawn by E. Forbes for the American Agriculturist.*

he comes up to it, so that he may learn to step over anything else as may be needed at any time. The first few lessons with the cart or wagon should be long enough to tire the steers considerably, so that in coming home they will go steadily. In teaching them to back a wagon, they should be made to keep their heads up, and not allowed to hold their heads down, and to stand out from the tongue. It is by being allowed to hold their heads down, and to stand out from the tongue in backing, that they learn to turn the yoke, which they will do when working with a chain, as in plowing or logging, and which when done not only makes it necessary to unyoke and reyoke them, but makes all concerned look and feel very ridiculous. The engraving given above represents the chief points of these lessons in such a manner as to make the directions very plain and easy to follow. ❑

American Agriculturist, June, 1873.

Footwear in the Early 19th Century

Shoemakers and Cobblers Gave it Their "Awl"

By Norman Walzer

MAKING simple shoes is a relatively straightforward process that can be learned quickly and, since many tasks are performed in a seated position, it was known as the Gentle Craft. For this reason, it appealed to people with certain physical limitations working in their homes, making parts of shoes for shoemakers who assembled and sold them in shops; this industry was one of the largest employers in the 1800s. A distinction is often made between shoemakers who made complete shoes with new leather compared with cobblers who mainly repaired shoes. The terms "footwear" and "shoes" are used interchangeably in this article recognizing that footwear also includes boots.

Many shoes were "bespoke," meaning that they were made on demand from a user with unique characteristics in design, style, materials, or even construction methods. This makes dating shoes more difficult. Likewise, as is true today, multiple styles of shoes and boots persisted over several decades making it difficult to date a shoe unless the maker or user added that information. Much of our knowledge about shoes is from specimens in museums and other collections that may lean more toward stylish or high-end shoes worn only on special occasions. Everyday shoes were worn-out and discarded. Thus, our discussions must be very general regarding styles and time periods.

This article examines several aspects of historical shoemaking including differences in construction methods ushered in by the Industrial Revolution, style changes as a way to date shoes, types of footwear worn by people in various trades, and tools used to make footwear. The intent is to give volunteers, reenactors, and curators insights into available footwear and their construction. Examples included are from a variety of sources including the BATA Shoe Museum in Toronto and the Steamboat Arabia Museum in Kansas City as noted.

How Were Shoes Made?

Wooden lasts, shaped and sized to a user's foot, are the starting point in making a shoe; the more closely the last matches the foot, the more comfortable the shoe. Because wooden lasts were hand-carved, they were relatively expensive, so shoemakers in small communities probably did not have many sizes and widths. However, patches of leather could be added to adjust lasts for irregularities in a user's foot. Various approaches and techniques used are available

Figure 1. *Shoe styles in the early 1800s. (All photos courtesy of the author except figure 7)*

in period manuals that are still available for research. (deGarsault, 1767; Rees, 1813; Devlin, 1839; and O'Sullivan, 1934). Likewise, several major museums have excellent collections of footwear. The BATA Museum in Toronto, one of the largest in North America, is seriously committed to advancing the knowledge about footwear. The Arabia Steamboat Museum has a major collection of tools, clothing including footwear, and other items from a steamboat headed from St. Louis to western Iowa in 1856. The collection is well-preserved and is a rich source of information about footwear styles and construction for this period (see the back cover).

High heels became popular in the latter half of the 1600s as a sign of wealth and esteem (as in a well-heeled person). Multiple sizes for heels, however, meant that shoemakers needed lasts for each heel height as well as foot size, which substantially increased their investment, especially for a shoemaker with a small trade. Thus, it became common to use a "straight" (not shaped) last that fit (with minor adjustments) either foot, rather than a pair of "shaped" lasts. This approach continued until the early 1800s.

During the early 1700s, the popularity of heels except on military boots declined, especially for men, making shaped lasts more common. Likewise, the French Revolution in 1789 and the rise in the middle class brought a pref-

erence for dancing and other activities that further reduced the popularity of heels. While square toes of shoes had been introduced, they did not become popular until after 1820, at least in Europe. Thus, by the turn of the century (1800), shoes, especially for women, with a low or even no heel, were popular. A more detailed discussion of changes in footwear styles is available in Riello and McNeil's works.

Also in the 1700s, highly decorated buckles were common on both men and ladies' footwear but were less often seen after the turn of century on shoes with low heels that now had laces or ribbons for closure. Cotton and wool fabrics were also used for women's slippers during this period, especially for indoor use.

The style of shoes and how they were made depended on use and status in life. For instance, men wore boots with pant legs tucked in to protect the legs from brush or other growth rather than for style or to identify with a certain trade or industry such as was the case with western, engineering, or motorcycle boots in the 20th century.

Shoe toe shapes went from being relatively narrow and pointed in the early 1800s to more rounded, and then to a rounded square shape by the 1850s and 60s. Thus, a volunteer for the 1820s to 1830s might consider an ankle-high laced shoe or boot with low heels and a rounded toe. Those working closer to the 1850s would wear a broader toe, laced shoe or boot.

Other styles also gained popularity in this period, especially for ladies as shoe styles adjusted to length of hems. Previously, it was common to hide ankles and feet but over time, hemlines raised, making shoes more important. For example, in the mid-1830s, J. Sparkes Hall introduced an elasticized closure using elastic thread and wire on the side of booties instead of ties. This style found favor with Queen Victoria and became popular in the next decade as the Congress Gaiter or Boston Boot.

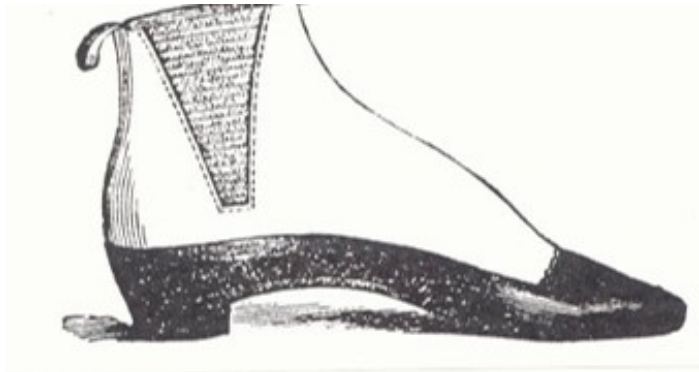

Figure 2. *Elasticized side opening introduced in the mid-1830s and which became popular in the 1840s as the Congress Gaiter or the Boston Boot.*

Interpreters during this period have more options regarding suitable footwear. Heel height and toe shape often provide useful clues as to when a shoe was made, though the period can be difficult to pinpoint to a specific decade. Nevertheless, interpreters can more accurately estimate when shoes were made when they understand that some styles and construction methods may not have been readily available beyond large population centers.

Boots were worn in rugged occupations, but the Hessian and the shorter Wellington boots also became popular for style. Abraham Lincoln, for example, wore boots as a surveyor in the early years of his career at New Salem, but also continued to wear them as president and reputedly wore boots to Fords Theater the night he was assassinated. They were tall boots made with maroon and black Russian calf leather and had a squared toe. Lincoln commissioned these boots from Conrad Loch, a noted bootmaker, for $19.50. (Granahan, "Lincoln's Boots Tell Their Tale,")

Figure 3. *Tall boot from the 1850s.*

How Shoes Were Made and Sold

The post-Revolutionary War period had a shortage of trained, skilled shoemakers in the U.S. during a time of population growth and the need for accompanying footwear. This brought a need for quicker and less-expensive shoemaking techniques and led to footwear being constructed in several ways. Wooden pegs made of maple had been used to attach heels, so using them to attach soles was relatively easy to learn and faster than sewing the sole. Skilled shoemakers, however, still sewed the mid-sole to the upper and a welt, and then sewed the outer sole to the welt using boar bristles and hemp or linen thread. This technique produced a longer-lasting product, but at a higher cost.

The Industrial Revolution brought mass production to shoe manufacturing. Instead of shoemakers working in small shops, places such as Lynn and Worcester, Massachusetts, developed production assembly lines with specialization of labor that produced shoes at lower cost. They marketed shoes to other cities. Thus, a resident might have the option of purchasing mass-produced shoes from a local store or could deal directly with a shoemaker for a bespoke or ready-made shoe.

Figure 4. *Common early shoemaking tools.*

While pegged soles were less expensive, they did not wear as long as sewn soles, which also could be more easily repaired by replacing a worn-out portion of the sole. The length of wear depended on use and how well the shoes were maintained. In the 1830s, for example, pegged shoes might sell for $1.50 to $1.75 per pair, the equivalent of pay for one and one-half day's work as a day laborer. Sewn soles cost substantially more, depending on time spent making them. An experienced shoemaker could expect to make a pair of pegged shoes in a day, or perhaps six pairs per week including cutting the parts from a hide. In larger areas, a shoemaker could contract with people to sew the various parts of a shoe in their homes, substantially reducing the assembly time.

The early 19th century brought several changes that affected shoe styles and construction. Thomas Blanchard invented a lathe in the early 1820s that reproduced items with irregular shapes like gunstocks and shoe lasts. Shoemakers could purchase machine-made shaped lasts at lower cost, making rights and lefts more available. Cooper (1991), however, reports that the patent for this reproducing lathe was tied up in litigation for many years due to unauthorized use of the machine. Since high heels had become less popular, shoemakers could invest in shaped lasts for rights and lefts leading to their expanded use.

A pegging machine, invented by Samuel Preston in 1833 could peg shoes much more quickly. This machine made shoes more available but further threatened many small shops. By this time, shoemaking businesses could buy machine-made lasts plus a pegging machine to manufacture or repair footwear.

During this time, sewing machines were also being developed by several inventors. Elias Howe made a machine in the 1840s that was modified by Lyman Reed Blake in the late 1850s, and then refined by Gordon McKay in the early 1860s. This machine attached soles to uppers, vastly quickening the shoemaking process as well as reducing the cost. The shoemaking process would further advance when Jan Metzlinger patented a shoe-lasting machine in 1883.

Small independent shoemakers supplied the market prior to the Civil War. One attraction to shoemaking as an occupation was the relatively small start-up costs for tools. Essential tools would include a hammer, a pegging awl and sewing awl, lasting pliers, knife, and burnishing tools to polish edges of soles. In some cases, these tools were adapted by users from those available or, in the case of wood burnishers, were made by the shoemaker for their purposes. This allowed people to do shoemaking as a part-time activity or contract with other shoemakers to supply parts of the shoe.

The greatest expense for tools was purchasing wooden lasts in the appropriate sizes and styles. However, I have several handmade lasts (as shown in Figure 5.) that were hand-carved and, in some cases, modified with pieces of leather to adjust for nonconformities of a foot. Commercial shoemaking tools were readily available from several makers such as Joseph English in Newark, New Jersey, in 1826. He sold his business to William Dodd in the mid-1850s, and it became the CS Osborne business in the early

Figure 5. *Hand-made shoe lasts in the author's collection.*

1860s. Tools with the same or similar shapes and designs can be purchased today.

Wooden shoe pegs could be made with a pegging plane that cut and pointed the ends of the maple pegs. Maple wood was preferred because it absorbs water quickly, so that when the sole leather got wet and swelled, the pegs would swell and then shrink back with the leather and stay tight. Nails, on the other hand, would make the holes larger and looser. Shoemakers with an apprentice or hired help could produce the pegs locally or could buy them from finders in large cities.

Figure 6. *Pegging plane.*

Some shoemakers used a boot jack to hold the shoe while the pegs were inserted to attach the sole. The boot jack freed both hands to position and insert the pegs around the perimeter of the sole and the heel. While it might not be considered a major invention, it substantially reduced the time needed to peg a sole or to inseam a shoe. Some extant jacks are obviously homemade while others have more sophisticated working mechanisms. The one in the middle of Figure 7 has the simplest construction, with holes and a dowel used to adjust the tension. Shoemakers straddled the boot jacks for pegging, tacking, or rounding and burnishing the edge of the sole and heels.

Figure 7. *Types of boot jacks.*

Of course, the most important part of making shoes is high-quality leather that could have been purchased from a local tanner or a commercial firm. Depending on use, footwear was typically made from oak-tanned calf leather in 4-5 ounce weight (one ounce is 1/64th of an inch) which, when wet, stretched and formed around the last. Waxed Calf with a cod oil and lampblack finish was common in the early 1800s, but other types of leather were used in dress shoes and boots. On inexpensive shoes, the grain side (smooth side) was placed next to the foot with the flesh side on the outside so that the shoes did not have to be lined to be comfortable. The flesh side could be polished smooth and shined with a rubbing stick and various types of dressings. Early manuals in this period devoted sections to recipes for leather finishes and treatments.

Sources of Period Shoes

Interpreters can purchase reproduction shoes from many sources on the internet, depending on the accuracy and authenticity desired. Authentic tools are also available from skilled shoemakers who specialize in using period styles, techniques, and materials. Prices vary depending on materials and time needed to make the shoes. Thus, a pair of hand-sewn soles will cost more than machine-sewn, but may be more appropriate for the 1850s and later and less so for earlier periods. Likewise, rubber soles and heels came into use late in the 19th century. Shaped shoes (rights and lefts) existed in the early 1800s but probably were less common, especially in rural areas, unless purchased from a larger shoe manufacturer. Thus, interpreters have a relatively wide range of choices depending on authenticity desired and the price they are willing to pay.

General Observations

These discussions barely scratch the surface of how shoes were constructed and general style changes between the Revolutionary and Civil Wars. Indeed, many books have been written about the interplay of styles, politics, and types of footwear worn during this period. This topic can be exciting because it is at the center of many events and trends in this period. Shoes were a way of expressing one's philosophy or attitude as well as being an essential part of one's daily life. My hope is to stimulate the curiosity of curators, interpreters, reenactors, and others to explore footwear styles and construction and to learn more about how they interacted with other current trends. A large and interesting literature exists on this topic with only a few examples listed in the bibliography. The more one reads, the more interesting the topic becomes. ❑

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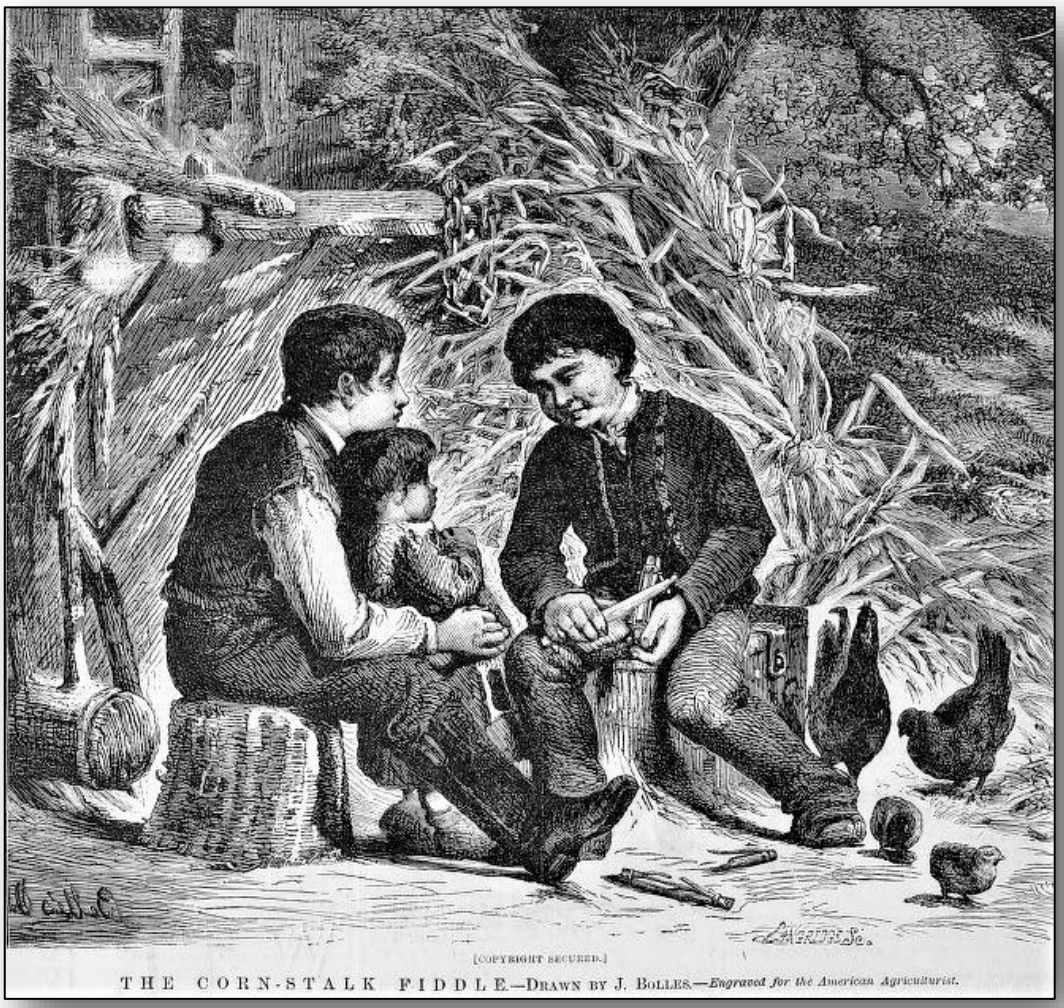
About the Author – Norman Walzer has done leatherwork and studied footwear as a hobby for more than 50 years and volunteered in the Lukins-Ferguson Cobbler Shop at Lincoln's New Salem Historical Site for nearly 30 years. He also served on the board of the Honourable Cordwainers Company, which includes people interested in historical footwear, and has spent time visiting major shoe museums including the Steamboat Arabia in Kansas City and the BATA Museum in Toronto. As part of these experiences, he studied shoe- and boot-making at Colonial Williamsburg and Old Sturbridge Village. Drawn by an interest in making footwear using original tools, he has collected nearly 150 leatherworking tools made prior to the Civil War.

Author sewing a shoe at Lincoln's New Salem.

The Corn-Stalk Fiddle

American Agriculturist, 1870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THE CORN-STALK FIDDLE.—Drawn by J. Bolles.—*Engraved for the American Agriculturist.*

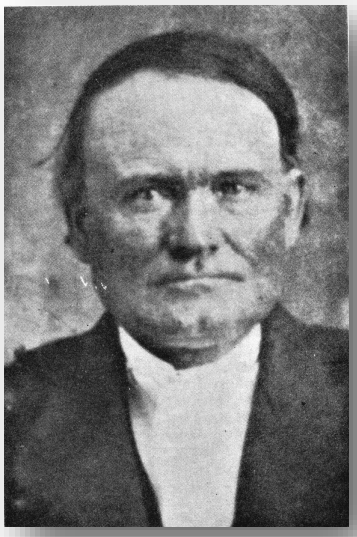
Here's Fun! Not boisterous, rollicking fun, but fun in a quiet way—only four of you, and having a real good time. "Four?—I see only three,"—says some boy or girl. The fourth one is you who are looking at the picture. There is so much satisfaction in the faces there that we are sure you must feel pleased at seeing them. The boy with the fiddle is beaming with pleasure, because he knows he is amusing his little brother and sister. Happiness is very "ketching," as some old-fashioned people say,—almost as much so as unhappiness, about which we won't talk just now. How many of you ever saw a corn-stalk fiddle? Probably most boys who live on farms, but as there are a great many of our young readers who live in towns and villages, we shall have to tell them how it is made. You know that a corn-stalk has a great number of joints—places where the leaves start, marked by a slightly raised ring. There is a joint, several inches of stalk, another joint, another space, and so on from the bottom to the top. The stalk between the joints is not entirely round—a perfect cylinder like a piece of a broom-handle, but there is a broad, flat groove, which is first on one side of the stalk, and above the next joint on the other side, and so on alternately. Now to make a fiddle, we need three joints and two of the spaces between them. One of these sections, between two joints is the handle of the fiddle, and the other the body. Now for the strings; we take a knife and run it along the edge of the groove before spoken of, just beneath the surface so as to separate a shred of the stalk from one joint to the other. The same thing is to be done to the other side of the groove, and we have now two loose strings which are attached at each end to the joints. Now we must whittle out a couples of wooden pegs to answer as bridges, which we slip under the strings, thus stretching them quite tight—not too tight, or they will break. Then the bow—that is made just like the fiddle. Having made both fiddle and bow you may then play a tune with them—if you can. "What! Can't you make music with it?"—Well, you can imagine it is music; at any rate it is a capital squeak. Music! It depends altogether upon who makes it, and whose ears listen to it. Don't you suppose it is music to those little ones who have watched their brother make the fiddle? After all it is not so much what we do, as the motive with which we do it, that gives happiness. Those little ones understand it, and the crude fiddle of their loving brother gives them more pleasure than would Ole bull himself.

American Agriculturist, Oct. 1870.

Commodore Perry Davis' 1880 Barn

Adaptive Restoration at the Five Mile House

By Tom Vance



Commodore Perry Davis

THE Five Mile House is located five miles from the Coles County Courthouse in Charleston, Illinois. It had many owners over the years. According to local tradition, it was a wayside stop, a staging point for travelers headed west during the gold rush, and was associated with local Copperheads during the Civil War and the Parker family of Quanah Parker fame. It was located on the route traveled by Abraham Lincoln on the Eighth Judicial Circuit and the young lawyer probably stopped there before embarking on the last leg of his trip into Charleston.

Tradition also has it that Stephen Stone, the farmer and veterinarian who bought the property in 1849, shod horses and oxen and repaired wagons for travelers. While Stone probably did not have a formal blacksmith shop, there has been a vision of recreating a blacksmith shop at the Five Mile House from the beginning when a local not-for-profit committee was formed in 1999 to purchase the property and restore the mid-19th-century house.

After searching for several years for a suitable barn or other period building to modify into a blacksmith shop and considering the option of new timber frame construction, the group became aware of a barn located just three miles east of the Five Mile House. The 1880 barn was constructed with hand-hewn timbers and was of a size that could provide the materials for a blacksmith shop despite it being deteriorated. Some local research revealed that the barn had been built by Commodore Perry Davis, a local farmer, in 1880.

***The Commodore Perry Davis barn** in 2017. 20th-century shed additions had been added on the sides and rear of the barn. (All photos by the author except where otherwise noted)*

C.P. Davis was a Coles County farmer his entire life. He was born, oldest of 15 children, to John Calvin and Elizabeth Davis in September 1829 in Lawrence County, Indiana. Shortly after his birth, the family moved to what would become Hutton Township, Coles County, Illinois. Initially working splitting rails and mending shoes, John C. Davis made land purchases in 1834, 1836, 1839, and 1850 totaling 120 acres. The 1870 Agricultural Census lists his farm as including 100 improved acres and 20 acres of woodland with a value of $6,800. John died in November 1871.

C.P., or Perry as he was sometimes called, grew up helping his father on the farm and learning 19th- century agriculture. At age 21, according to the 1850 census, he still lived with his parents on the family farm. In December 1851, he married Elizabeth Connelly; the following year they acquired a 40-acre farm just north of his father's farm.

According to the 1869 Coles County Plat Map and the 1870 Agriculture Census, C.P.'s farm included 105 acres – 65 improved acres and 40 acres in woodland. The 1870 Agricultural Census lists him as owning two horses, two milch (milk) cows, no other cattle, 10 sheep, and 28 hogs. His farm produce included 50 bushels of wheat and 200 of corn.

After his father died in November 1871, C.P. acquired 60 acres of his father's land along with another 60 acres, for a total of 225 acres by 1880. His farming operation more than doubled; his 1880 Agricultural Census lists him owning five horses, six milch cows, and 25 other cattle. His corn production increased to 35 acres with 1700 bushels on-hand and 65 acres of wheat with 690

bushels on-hand. C.P. Davis obviously needed a new barn to accommodate his growing farming and livestock operation.

The Transverse-Crib Barn

The style of barn he built is called, in folk architecture terms, a "frame, three-portal, transverse-crib barn." Fred Kniffen, in his article "Folk Housing: Key to Diffusion," describes the evolutionary progression of crib barns in the Upland South from single crib to double-crib, to four-crib, and finally to transverse-crib.[1] *(notes are cited at the end)*

Terry G. Jordan-Bychkov, in his 1998 article, "Transverse-Crib Barns, the Upland South, and Pennsylvania Extended," describes the defining elements of a transverse-crib barn as including:

1. Gables facing front and rear.

2. A central runway directly beneath the roof ridge and having wagon access at both ends.

3. Four to 10 cribs (most typically six) situated on either side of the runway.

4. A loft positioned above the cribs.

5. Multipurpose function, including at a minimum a threefold division among granaries, stalls for draft animals and/or milk cows, and hay storage.

A versatile structure, the transverse-crib may also have cribs dedicated to various types of storage, and grains can be husked, shelled, or threshed in the runway.[2]

Jordan-Bychkov reports that well over 95 percent of extant transverse-crib barns are built of frame construction with milled siding boards affixed either vertically or horizontally. The dominance of frame construction reveals the success of the transverse-crib barn in making the transition from the folk phase of upland southern culture to the 20th-century.[3] He also says he has seen red, white, blue, and black transverse-crib barns, but the majority remain unpainted.[4]

In distribution, Kniffen found the transverse-crib barn "throughout the upland South and periphery as the dominant barn."[5] Jordan-Bychkov adds, "I would go a step further and suggest that the transverse-crib barn is *diagnostic* of the Upland South, both because it reflects the diversified mixed-farming system underlying that subculture and because it reveals the Scotch-Irish preadaptation and preference for lateral rather than vertical expansion of structures."[6]

Southern Upland culture extends into southern and central Illinois. Transverse-crib barns were found to be dominant in the Shawnee Hills of southern Illinois by Doug Meyer,[7] and Keith Sculle and Wayne Price found 163 specimens in Hardin County, Illinois alone.[8]

The size of the original barn *can be seen here after later additions were removed. Workers in the photo are removing the later siding exposing the original siding.*

From the map in Figure 1, Upland South boundary could extend well into central Illinois. In the first-person interpretive program that we developed at Lincoln Log Cabin south of Charleston, Illinois, of about 35 Lincoln neighbor families that we researched, the vast majority were from the Upland South. Only two were from Pennsylvania, and none were Yankees.

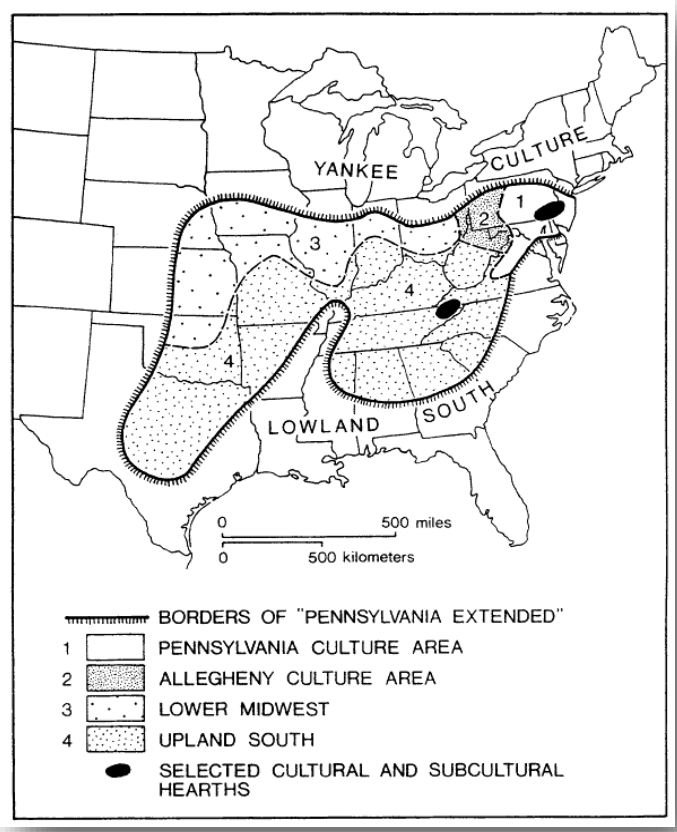


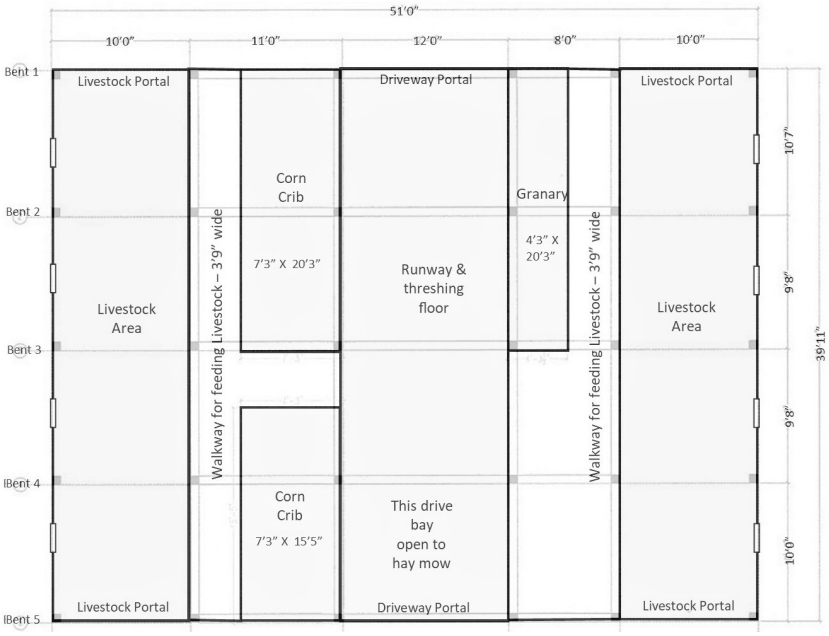
Figure 1 – *Pennsylvania Extended showing the boundaries of the Lower Midwest and Upland South culture areas. (From Terry Jordan-Bychkow, 6)*

Analysis of the Davis Barn

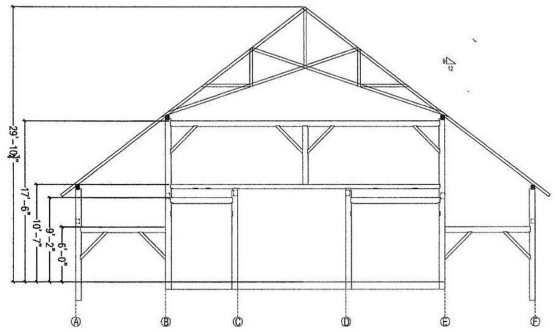
The Davis barn measured 51 feet wide, 40 feet in depth, and 30 feet from the sill beam to the roof peak. The center driveway was 12 feet wide and opened at both ends. As evidenced by remnant beam ends, the drive originally had a raised wooden threshing floor.

On the left side of the drive were two corn cribs measuring 7 x 15 feet and 7 x 20 feet. On the right side was a 4 x 20-foot granary. Behind the granary and cribs was a three foot, nine inch walkway for feeding the livestock. On each side of the barn was a 10 foot wide livestock area. The first bay over the drive was open to the loft so that loose hay and sheaves of grain could be forked from a wagon into the loft.

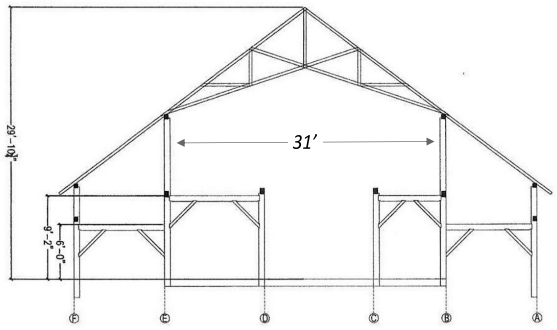
There was a wooden track supporting a hay trolley in the barn. The hay trolley has a patent date of



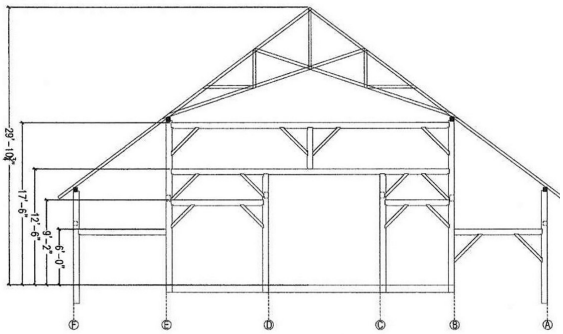
The Davis barn floor plan *showing two corn cribs on the left and the granary on the right of the central drive. The side areas were for livestock.* ***Left*** *– drawing of the barn bents including the unusual scissor trusses. (All measured drawings were done by Trillium Dell Timber Works)*



Bent 1 – the back of the barn



Bents 2-4 – inside the barn



Bent 5 – the front of the barn

1905, so it was a later addition. The trolley's hay fork lifted hay up through the same opening in the first bay. Updates were probably made to the barn after the death of C.P. Davis in 1905, including the addition of the hay track and the removal of the wooden threshing floor.

One unusual feature about the barn was the scissor trusses that spanned 31 feet. These provided enough structural strength that upper beams were not needed to span the width (see the drawing of bents 2-4 on the left). Rick Collins of Trillium Dell Timber Works

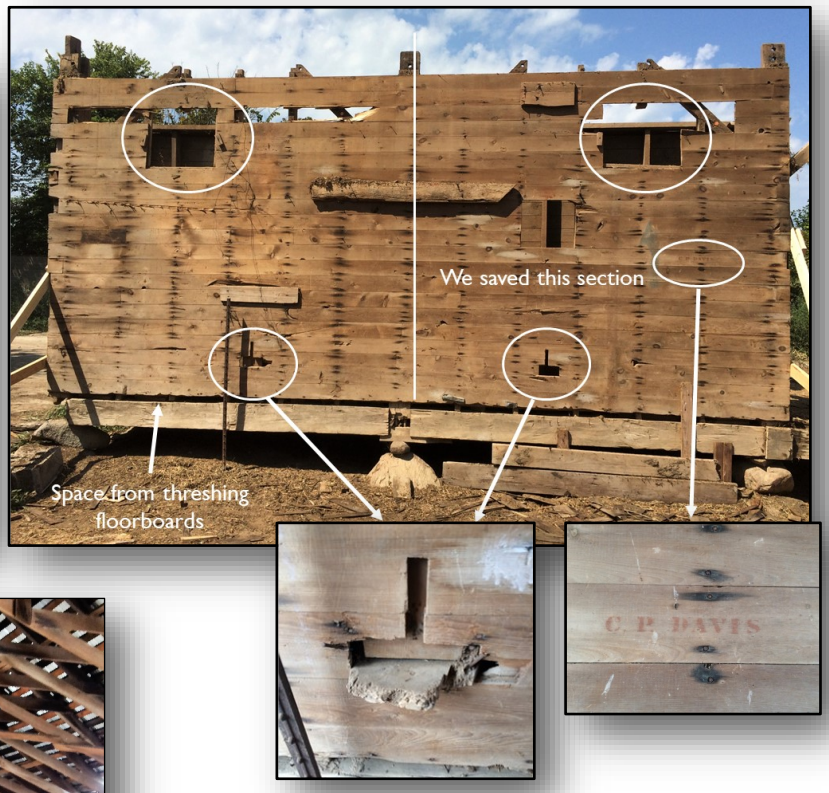
Scissor trusses *spanned a total of 31 feet. Note the wooden hay trolley track and trolley.*

says that out of hundreds of barns he has looked at and worked on, the Davis barn is the only one he has seen with scissor trusses.

According to the 1880 Agricultural Census, C.P. Davis had 35 out of 225 acres that he owned in woodland, so the timbers for the barn probably came from his property. All timbers were hand-hewn white oak, and all joists, most floorboards, wall studs, truss materials, corn crib slats, and roof purlins were circular-sawn white oak. The barn siding is rough-sawn white pine, and the tongue and groove, planed boards used for the walls of the granary are also white pine.

Four 10-inch square, 40-foot long sill beams ran the entire depth or width of the barn. These hewn beams framed in eight- and 11-foot wide areas on either side of the central drive. Two by ten-inch joists were notched in every 18 inches. An occasional joist was dove-tailed in to keep the beams from spreading. More than 40 large granite boulders, originally brought to the area by the glaciers, supported the barn.

Photo of the central drive *showing the two corn cribs on the left and granary on the right. The drive opened at both ends so wagons could pull through.*



Upper left – *The granary on the right side of the central drive showing an entrance door on the east end.*

Above *– Front wall of the granary showing the openings (circled above) for inserting the grain, and the shoots (lower circles) for removing the grain. Stenciled on the right is "C.P. Davis" in red letters. The right half of the wall has been preserved and mounted in the new barn.*

Left *– This shows the opening in the first bay for forking and later, lifting hay and grain sheaves into the loft.*

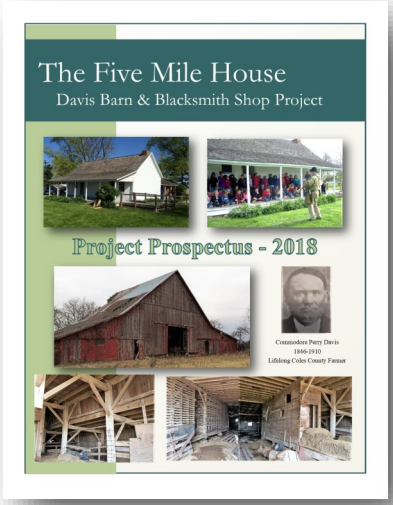
So, We're Moving A Barn

Our first exploration of the Davis barn was in January 2017. An initial funding appeal for the barn was made in the 2017 Annual Campaign in March with a follow-up article in the May newsletter. We raised enough money to start the project with the demolition of the later additions to the barn. An Eastern Illinois University volunteer workday gave us 20 college students for a morning in August. They did some major clean up in and around the barn.

In the meantime, we had been in touch with Rick Collins of Trillium Dell Timber Works based in Galesburg, Illinois. We had enough funding to have Trillium Dell do measured drawings and an analysis of the barn. They gave us a cost estimate of about $105,000 to dismantle the barn, reconfigure, repair, and replace the timbers, and then erect it on the new site. With the addition of siding, roof, brick floor, electric service, and forge, the initial estimate came to $175,000, which rose to over $200,000 in the end.

For the 2018 Annual Campaign, we put together an eight-page portfolio outlining our vision for the barn and turned the effort into a capital campaign. A local charitable foundation challenged us to raise $100,000 by April 30 to qualify for a $25,000 grant from them; we used that as leverage in the campaign.

The Five Mile House has a mailing list of about 700, of which more than 200 donated to the project. We had been cultivating this list since 2009, when we did a capital campaign to put in a parking lot, sidewalks, handicap ramp, and other improvements. This cultivation process consisted of keeping the Five Mile House programs and improvements in front of our supporters through the annual campaign, newsletter, periodic email updates, a fall BBQ fund-raising event, and the year-end appeal.



The campaign portfolio, *left, and the annual newsletter kept the vision and progress on the project in front of our donors and potential donors.*

In August 2018, Trillium Dell workers dismantled the barn, loaded the timbers on a large trailer, and took them back to Galesburg to work on them over the winter months.

The barn is loaded *and ready for its trip to Galesburg, IL.*

Deconstruction of the original barn *took place in August of 2018.*

Creating a New Barn from the Old

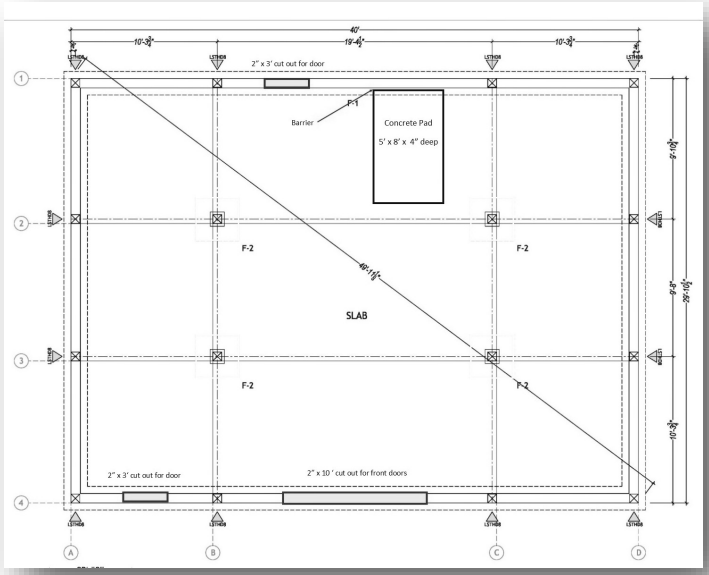
By March of 2019, the barn timbers had been repaired, re-configured and replaced where necessary, and Trillium Dell set a date to return and raise the new barn. Concrete foundation footings were poured, the inside filled with road-pack, and we were ready for the new barn to arrive.

The construction equipment arrived March 22 and the barn timbers followed soon after. The Five Mile House grass lawn quickly turned into a quagmire with two- to three-foot deep ruts, but the first bent went up on March 26. The other three bents soon followed and the timber framework began to take shape.

The exterior form of the barn remained the same. The size of the barn, however, was reduced from five bents and four bays to four bents and three bays. The size went from 51 by 40 feet to 40 by 30 feet. The interior of the new barn was completely opened up to accommodate a large space for programs, and a blacksmith forge was incorporated in the center-rear of the new barn.

The original barn had two-foot square windows, one per bay, on each side of the barn, and this design was replicated in the new barn. The original window and door hinges were strap hinges, and each had a blacksmith-made iron hook. The original Davis barn had sliding doors on the front or east end of the central drive by the 20th century, but may have originally had hinged doors or no doors at all. We put sliding doors on the new barn using the track salvaged from the original barn.

About 70 percent of the beams are original and 30 percent are replacements. Since the barn is an adaptive restoration, Trillium Dell did not use hewn white oak for the replacement beams, but rather sawn spruce. The spruce beams came from trees that had to be cut at the Morton Arboretum in Chicago and were given to Trillium Dell to use on a project.



Floor plan of the new barn *– The barn is 40 feet wide and 30 feet in depth with four bents and three bays. The floor plan is open to accommodate programs and events. The concrete pad in the upper bay is the base for the forge.*

The scissor trusses were replicated to cover the 20-foot span in the new barn. One of the original 31-foot trusses is mounted and on display in the new barn to provide a contrast with the new. The wooden hay track was shortened and hung from the new trusses and the original hay trolley and a hay fork are suspended from the track. For the roof, Trillium Dell recommended a raised-seam metal roof.

The original barn had a single layer of one- by 12-inch boards for siding with no battens. The new barn has "board on board" siding which consists of two layers of one- by 12-inch boards. The outer layer is offset by six inches to seal the crack and still maintain the look of the original barn. Enough of the original siding boards were salvaged to provide the inner layer for the front of the new

Raising the new barn *– Left: four bents are up; Right: the roof is on.*

barn and the first bay on both sides. We purchased white pine lumber for the siding, roof purlins, doors, and other uses from Midwest Timber near Branson, Missouri.

The floor in the new barn is made of bricks from the historical Colonial Brickworks in Cayuga, Indiana, which has since closed. As part of the site's fundraising efforts, commemorative bricks were sold for $100 each. This allowed donors to have their name inscribed in the brick walk in front of the barn.

Dating the barn – *C.P. Davis dated his barn on the front gable with the year 1880 and three stars (above left). A local woodworker, Dave Clausing reproduced the design on the front gable of the new barn (above middle) and then restored the original for display inside the new barn (above right).*

Original joists and floorboards were used to create storage lofts along the rear bay of the barn and sections of the original corn crib and granary were saved and incorporated into the new barn. These will facilitate exhibit panels that tell about the original barn, how it was used in late 19th-century agriculture, and its transformation into the barn we have today.

A distinguishing feature of C.P. Davis' barn was the 1880 date and three stars carved into the front gable. A local woodworker routered the date and stars into the boards forming the front gable on the new barn and also restored the date and stars on the original gable boards. These boards are now a display that is mounted inside the new barn.

The central feature of the barn is the blacksmith forge. The bellows are yet to be built, but the forge will also have an electric blower, leaving the bellows mostly for demonstration purposes. Electric service has been run to the barn, and track lighting highlights various features of the barn, including planned exhibits on the side walls. Pierced tin lights also add atmosphere.

We have been using the barn for our summer programs since 2019. That year, attendees could see added progress on the barn siding with each program. Power Point programs were possible this year with the addition of electricity. Future plans include blacksmithing, spinning, and other educational classes along with opening the facility to weddings and other events.

The C.P. Davis barn project has affirmed the principle that once you commit to a vision, the needed resources

Left *– The new barn is now complete except for a coat of red paint. (Photo by Riley Milburn)* ***Right*** *– The new forge.*

will appear. The project energized our donor base, our board of directors, and our volunteers, and has resulted in a resource that will not only benefit the Five Mile House but the whole community for years to come. ❑

Notes

1. Fred Kniffen, "Folk Housing: Key to Diffusion," 17-18.

2. Terry Jordan-Bychkov, "Transverse-Crib Barns, the Upland South, and Pennsylvania Extended," 7.

3. Jordan-Bychkov, 13.

4. Jordan-Bychkov, 16.

5. Kniffen, 18.

6. Jordan-Bychkov, 18.

7. Douglas K. Meyer, "Diffusion of Upland Southern Folk Housing to the Shawnee Hills of Southern Illinois," 61.

8. Keith A. Sculle and H. Wayne Price, "The Traditional Barns of Hardin County, Illinois," 23.

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Jordan-Bychkov. "Transverse-Crib Barns, the Upland South, and Pennsylvania Extended." *Material Culture*, Vol. 30, No. 2 (1998): 7-18.

Kniffen, Fred. "Folk Housing: Key to Diffusion." *Common Places, Readings in American Vernacular Architecture,* edited by Dell Upton and John Michael Vlach (Athens, GA: University of Georgia Press, 1986): 17-18.

Meyer, Douglas K. "Diffusion of Upland Southern Folk Housing to the Shawnee Hills of Southern Illinois." *Pioneer America,* Vol. 7, No. 2 (1975): 61.

Sculle, Keith A. and H. Wayne Price. "The Traditional Barns of Hardin County, Illinois." *Material Culture*, Vol. 25, No. 1 (1993): 23.

Summer programs *are now held in the new barn.*

MOMCC Magazine

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Due to the COVID pandemic

Shoes, boots, and other leather goods from 1856 on display at the Arabia Steamboat Museum in Kansas City. (Photo Credit: Steamboat Arabia Museum)