

Midwest Open Air Museums Magazine



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Spring, 2023
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SAUDER VILLAGE, ARCHBOLD, OHIO



In This Issue: The Future is Now! Rethink, Rejuvenate, Regenerate
Volunteers Make the Difference
No Eggs, No Milk, No Butter: Bringing Back Depression Cake
Time to Dance: The Virginia Reel
You Can See a Lot Just by Looking: Early Photographs and You
Easter and Easter Eggs, *American Agriculturist*

Midwest Open Air Museums Coordinating Council
Midwest Region of ALHFAM

Association for Living History, Farm and Agricultural Museums



Join us at the 2023
ALHFAM Conference

June 23 - 26

Sauder Village in Northwest Ohio



Visit alhfam.org for more details

ALHFAM
The Association for Living History, Farm and Agricultural Museums



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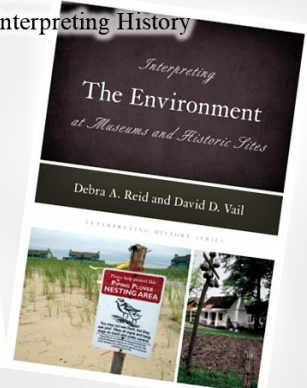
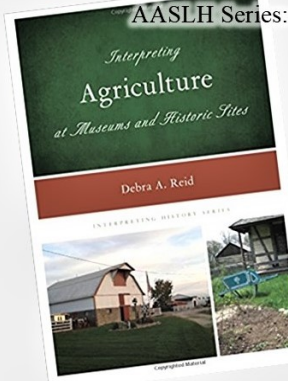
INTERPRETING AGRICULTURE AT MUSEUMS AND HISTORIC SITES

INTERPRETING THE ENVIRONMENT AT MUSEUMS AND HISTORIC SITES

By Debra A. Reid

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Cover Photos - Sauder Village in Archbold Ohio will be the host and venue for the 2023 Association of Living History, Farm and Agricultural Museums (ALHFAM) annual Conference on June 23-26. Pictured are the village green and craft shops, Lauber Pioneer Settlement, and the new 1920s Mainstreet. (Photos courtesy of Sauder Village)



MOMCC is the Midwest Regional Affiliate of

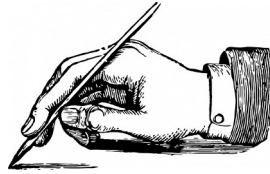
ALHFAM



The Association for Living History, Farm and Agricultural Museums

EDITOR'S NOTEBOOK

By Tom Vance



THE Illinois Amish Heritage Center, located three miles east of Arthur, Illinois, has taken another step in the development of their campus with the moving and restoration of an 1879 Amish barn this past year. The Pennsylvania forebay, bank barn was first developed as the Schweitzer barn in eastern Switzerland. It came to southeast Pennsylvania with European immigrants in the 18th century where it evolved and adapted to the needs of a diversifying agriculture.

As the Amish moved west, first to western Pennsylvania, and then to Ohio, Indiana, and Illinois, they brought the Pennsylvania barn tradition with them. What they didn't bring with them, however, were the rolling hills of their former Pennsylvania home and they had to adapt their barns to the flat prairieland of their new home. The second story threshing floor, originally accessed by the bank drive, was relocated to the first floor next to the livestock.

The Herschberger-Miller barn was constructed in the late 1870s with completion in 1879. As one of the last remaining historic Amish barns still in its original condition, it was donated to the Amish Heritage Center. It was documented and dismantled under the direction of Firmitas Timber Works (formerly Trillium Dell) of Galesburg, Illinois in February and March of 2022. A barn raising was held in late October to put the barn back up.

The barn is the latest addition to the site which also includes two early historic Amish houses, the 1865 Moses Yoder house and the 1882 Daniel Schrock house. The site also includes Moses Yoder's 1860s workshop and a ca. 1920 Amish school house. The site holds two large special events each year, a sheep to quilts event in May and either a steam

threshing show in August or a harvest event in October. The site is also open for tours during the summer months.

The 2023 MOMCC conferences will include a virtual conference on March 9-10 which will feature some of the best of recent conferences. A live conference is not being offered due to planning for the 2023 conference of the Association for Living History, Farm and Agricultural Museums (ALHFAM) which will be held at Sauder Village in northwest Ohio on June 23-26.

MOMCC is the Midwest region of ALHFAM and all individual and household MOMCC members are also members of ALHFAM and therefore eligible to attend the conference at the member rate. Sauder Village is an amazing site that includes a time-line from the native Americans and the early fur trade through their newest addition, a 1920s main street. Conference goers will be housed at the Sauder Inn which is right on site. This beautiful inn features a life-size reproduction oak tree in the breakfast dining area. There will be 79 sessions to choose from along with historic site visits, the ALHFAM auction, banquet, and many other features.

The MOMCC fall conference will be held at Tiller's International near Kalamazoo, Michigan in November. This will be a workshop intensive conference where you can choose from a long list of topics, all of which would normally cost hundreds of dollars when offered by Tillers at any other time.

When we were developing the farms and programs at Lincoln Log Cabin in the 1980s, many if not most, of the ideas implemented there came from visits to living history sites all over the United States and Canada at MOMCC and ALHFAM meetings. I still maintain friendships with professionals from many of these sites to the present day. Involvement in these organizations and attending their conferences can provide enormous benefits and networking opportunities. If you are a living history museum professional, these organizations are here to help and inspire you in your profession, so be sure to take advantage of what they have to offer. □





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.

DEADLINES: Spring – January 15; Summer – April 15; Fall – July 15th; Winter – October 15th



Midwest Open Air Museums Coordinating Council
Midwest Region of ALHFAM

PRESIDENT'S PERSPECTIVE

By Gail Richardson

IT'S hard to believe that spring is right around the corner. Our spring conference is virtual and FREE this year to our members. The dates are March 9th & 10th and the times are 12-6pm CST, 1-7pm EST. Please go to the MOMCC website to register for the conference. We want to extend an invitation to all ALHFAM individual and household members to join the virtual conference, also at no cost. Non-members of either organization can attend for the cost of an MOMCC membership, which of course has many more benefits than just the conference. I'm looking forward to seeing everyone soon.

We also want to let our members know that we are offering fellowships for the ALHFAM annual conference at Sauder village in Archbold, Ohio on June 23 – 26, 2023. For each ALHFAM conference, MOMCC gives out a limited number of fellowships to help offset conference costs. The MOMCC fellowship for the Annual ALHFAM conference awards amounts to the cost of full registration and is based upon need, applicants, and available funds. Fellowship applications are now being accepted for the ALHFAM conference this June at Sauder Village. Visit www.momcc.org for the full application including necessary qualifications and selection criteria.

The Fall conference is going to be workshop intensive at Tiller's International near Kalamazoo, MI. The theme is Living History: Discovering Cultural Connections. The dates are November 9th–11th, 2023. For each conference, MOMCC gives out a limited number of fellowships to help offset conference costs. Fellowships cover conference registration in addition to some funding for lodging. Applications must be received by October 15th, 2023. Again, visit www.momcc.org for the full application, including necessary qualifications and selection criteria.

Do you want to be part of a great team and organization? Do you love to plan and put events together? If so, MOMCC is looking for you. We need Conference Coordinators to help facilitate and organize conferences for now and into the future. Contact Becky Crabb at becky696@gmail.com for more information.

As the membership requested, Virtual Happy Hour is back every third Tuesday of the month at 6:30 CST, 7:30 EST. The first one is February 21, 2023. Check your emails for the virtual zoom link.

Don't forget to check out MOMCC Magazine, Winter Issue that just came out. If anyone has any interesting articles for the magazine, please get in touch with Tom Vance. Tom would love to hear from our members.

I'll see everyone soon,

Until then,

Gail Richardson



MOMCC FELLOWSHIPS

For each conference, MOMCC gives out a limited number of fellowships to help offset conference costs.
Applications are being taken for the following conferences:

June 23-16, 2023

2023 ALHFAM Annual Conference
Sauder Village, Archbold, Ohio

November 9-11, 2023

2023 MOMCC Workshop Intensive Fall Conference
Tiller's International, Kalamazoo, Michigan

Please visit www.momcc.org for the full applications
including necessary qualifications and selection criteria.

Conference Coordinators Needed

GIVE a special gift to MOMCC and yourself in the New Year. MOMCC provides magazines, conferences, workshops, and a professional exchange of ideas. The board is looking for an interim conference coordinator and conference team to help plan 2023 gatherings. It's time to give back – we want you!

Planning MOMCC conferences and workshops is a rewarding, collaborative experience. Currently, we're looking for one coordinator to fill an interim term through 2023, and another coordinator, plus several team members. Please consider joining our team as our organization moves into an exciting New Year, and beyond.

Position Responsibilities:

1. Serve as liaison between conference chairs and the Board.
2. Represent the Board's interests in discussions and decisions with conference chairs.
3. Act in an advisory manner, assisting conference chairs in organizing the conferences. In essence, conference coordinators serve as Board representatives throughout the planning process.

4. Every four years, coordinators present conference guidelines to the Board for review. An active review process is conducted annually.
5. Perform other duties as assigned by the Board.

Planning Includes:

1. Searching for and proposing future host sites.
2. Contacting and procuring future conference chairs.
3. Working with conference chairs on a regular basis, providing assistance to ensure high quality conferences.
4. Distributing a Call for Papers and press releases.
5. Overseeing progress and final reports to the Board.
6. Organizing Board members' duties at conferences, including session hosts, registration table, and other activities requested by local organizers.
7. Facilitate the process of session evaluations and conference surveys.
8. Write thank you notes to speakers, including evaluation feedback.

Contact Becky Crabb at: rebeccacrabb696@gmail.com

MIDWEST OPEN AIR MUSEUMS COORDINATING COUNCIL

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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

Media Resources



THE FUTURE IS NOW! RETHINK, REJUVENATE, REGENERATE ALHFAM CONFERENCE HOSTED BY SAUDER VILLAGE

June 23-26, 2023

By Tracie Evans, Sauder Village

THIS June the Annual ALHFAM conference is coming back to the Midwest Region and will be hosted by Sauder Village. With the theme of “The Future is Now! Rethink, Rejuvenate, Regenerate,” the conference will be a fusion of didactic, participatory, and cooperative sessions, workshops, and educational opportunities conducive to learners of all types. The conference will result in an experience rich in meaningful conversations, skills, new ideas, and future strategies.

Beginning on Friday, the conference will feature on-site and off-site educational opportunities. Each event will include information that enhances your knowledge and skills while providing enriching experiences. The eight off-site experiences will take participants from Fremont Ohio to Fort Wayne Indiana with conversations about presidential museums, historic farms, historic battlefields, environmental history, and more. These exciting experiences will be available on a first come-first served basis. The Collections, Preservation, and Registration (CPR) Professional Interest Group (PIG) will also host its annual volunteer project, this year working with the Fulton County Historical Society.

Plenty of on-site educational opportunities will await those who do not travel off-site. They will include a draft horse workshop illustrating the basics of handling and driving these important farm animals along with trade and craft classes in broom braiding techniques, white coopering, coal forge blacksmithing, copper smithing, and woodworking.



***The Broken Barrel Speakeasy** on the 1920s Main Street is hidden behind the candy shop and is part of a special event complex along with the theater and soda fountain.*



***The 1920s Main Street** which opened in 2020, recreates a two-block section of a 1920s Northeast Ohio main street and will be the setting for the Friday evening opening reception.*

(All photos courtesy of Sauder Village)

Other workshops include hearth cooking and the outdoor bake oven along with textile sessions creating your own bodice patterns, making a 1920s one-hour dress, and a US Sanitary Commission quilt.

New this year is the Living History Institute (LHI) that will critically analyze the methods and practices of living history in a discussion-based environment that participants will then apply throughout the conference. Participants will look critically at living history on Friday morning then throughout the conference will attend selected sessions and discussions to continue their work. At the end of the conference, participants will receive a certificate of completion and help evaluate and plan future LHI training.

Friday evening will kick off the rest of the conference program with the annual “Salted, Smoked and Pickled” opening reception which is planned for the 1920s Main Street at Sauder Village. This section, which opened in 2020, features two blocks of a typical 1920s Northwest Ohio Main Street. Participants can visit the various businesses along Main Street and perhaps stop for an ice cream soda at the pharmacy, grab a drink at the Broken Barrel Speakeasy, watch a silent film at the theater, or listen to the musical talents of CeCe Otto at the bandstand. In addition, participants are encouraged to bring regional fare to share with other attendees to highlight foods unique to your area.

Participants can also visit Sauder Village throughout the day on Saturday and explore the unique “Walk through Time” experience, visit working artisans, and shop at Main Street Confections, the Doughbox Bakery, the Lauber General Store, or the Sauder Village Gift Shop. In the morning, participants of all skill levels can join in the annual plowing competition. No experience is necessary for this fun event.

Selected half-day workshops will also be offered by pre-registration including hands-on activities related to 18th Century Natural Dyeing, historic tents, woodworking, marbled paper making, tool sharpening, skill preservation, wood stove cooking, and cooking without a stove or fire.

The evening will be capped off by the annual Presidential Banquet. Participants are encouraged to dress in their favorite period clothing as we enjoy the address of our keynote speaker, Claus Kropp, Manager of the Lauresham Open-Air Laboratory for Experimental Archeology in Lorsch, Germany and President of the Association of International Museums of Agriculture followed by the Annual fashion parade.

Sunday and Monday feature full days of concurrent programming with more than 55 offerings ranging from 45-minute sessions to four-hour workshops. These will include multiple sessions on diversity, equity, accessibility, and inclusion; dealing with controversial topics; the environment; administration; collections; interpretation; agriculture; trades; costuming; and programming. Participants will find the topics and information of interest as well as practical skills to share when they return to their home sites.



The 1844 era Witmer Roth House, located in the Pioneer Area of Sauder Village, will provide the venue for workshops on open-hearth cooking in the house and baking in an outdoor bake oven.



Grime Farm offers a complete 1920s farm experience including poultry, hogs, horses, dairy, sheep, and goats to corn and wheat. The Grime farmhouse features a variety of 1920s domestic activities.

In addition to the concurrent sessions, participants will enjoy the annual ALHFAM auction, a trivia contest, and the hospitality area as well as participating in a town hall, the annual business meeting, regional meetings, and Professional Interest Group (PIG) meetings. We encourage participants to bring an item for the annual auction that supports the work of ALHFAM.

A vendor's area will be open Saturday and Sunday of the conference in the lobby of Founder's Hall so spaces are available. For more information on the vender area, please contact Tracie Evans at: tracie.evans@saudervillage.org.



Sauder Village: Venue and Host Site

The host site is also the venue site for the annual conference. Sauder Village, Ohio's largest living history destination, is located in the fields of rural Northwest Ohio and in the historic Great Black Swamp area. Since opening in 1976, Sauder Village has grown to a 235-acre, not-for-profit complex that includes the historic village, the Heritage Inn and campground, the Barn Restaurant, the Doughbox Bakery, Founders Hall banquet facility, and a wetlands conservation area. The Sauder Village complex includes many opportunities to dine, shop, and stay overnight.

Main campus accommodations will be at the 98-room Heritage Inn, complete with indoor pool and hot tub, game and exercise room, meeting rooms, and even a "Great Oak Tree." Throughout the Inn, the beautiful fireplace, atriums with live plants, comfortable furniture, natural wood timbers, and hand-forged lamps and railings set a casual, friendly tone. The 87-site campground is a great place to relax and enjoy the outdoors with fishing, campfires, a splash pad, easy access to the walking trails around "Little Lake Erie" and in the Wetlands or enjoying the amenities at the Heritage Inn.

This venue offers space to not only hold traditional



The Campground provides 87 sites for those who wish to bring a camping trailer.

classroom-based sessions but allows integrated hands-on programs throughout the conference using our meeting rooms, historic areas, crafts areas, and farms. Additional off-site hotels and plenty of free parking enable Sauder Village to provide meeting space for our fellow museum colleagues coming from across the United States, Canada, and Europe.



The Sauder Heritage Inn provides both accommodations and the venue for many conference sessions and activities. With 98 rooms, the inn features an indoor pool and hot tub, game and exercise room, atriums with live plants, natural wood timbers, hand-forged lamps and railings, and the spectacular "Great Oak Tree" (left) which is the centerpiece of the breakfast area.

Off-Site Educational Opportunities

Rutherford B. Hayes Presidential Library and Museums

Participants can not only visit the Hayes Presidential Library and Museum but also obtain an extensive behind-the-scenes experience of the museum, storage areas, exhibits, and grounds as well as joining in discussions about dealing with controversial political history, site preservation, finding the silver lining to a worldwide pandemic, and reaching new audiences.

The Sustainable Farm Staple of the 1930s: Corn

Join staff of the Carter Historic Farm in learning about a full year's cycle of growing corn in the 1930s. Participants will have hands-on experience with equipment and techniques of planting, cultivating, and harvesting. The program will finish with a visit to the Historic Ludwig Mill.

Charge Ahead, Under the Glass and Over the Wall: Fallen Timbers/Fort Miami National Historic Site and Fort Meigs Historic Site

Visit two important locations where Indigenous People and Europeans met in conflict, first in the last major battle of the Northwest Indian Wars and then to a frontier fort used during the War of 1812. Participants will learn about these important sites and join in discussions related to land usage, preservation, and public support.

Wood County Museum: Let the Poor House Enrich You

Located in the Old Wood County Poor House, the staff of the Wood County Museum will share a behind-the-scenes look at its facilities and host a round-table discussion featuring their humanities partners from the Center for Archival Collections at Bowling Green State University, Carter Historic Farm, and Wood County Genealogy to discuss the work of their collaboration.

The Old Northwest Territory at the Confluence of the Three Rivers

Travel west to Fort Wayne, Indiana to experience a taste of the history of the Three Rivers area. Participants will visit the original treaty house of Chief Richardville and learn how Miami people continue to share their perspectives and history; visit The Old Fort, a reconstruction of the third Fort built at this strategic location and staffed by volunteer reenactors; and finally visit the Fort Wayne History Center.

Connecting Local Stories to the Larger National Narrative: Behind the Scenes of the Heritage Sylvania and the National Museum of the Great Lakes

In this unique experience, you will learn how two history sites share the impact of their local stories on national events. First you will visit the historic Lathrop House, the only underground Railroad House open in the region and then the National Museum of the Great Lakes. Both sites will take you behind the scenes to discuss issues, research,



Clause Kropp, manager of the Lauresham Open-Air Laboratory for Experimental Archeology in Lorsch, Germany and President of the Association of International Museums of Agriculture will be the keynote speaker at the presidential banquet on Saturday evening. He will also be part of the Joint Oxen Handling Workshop to be held at Tiller's International in conjunction with the Midwest Ox Driver's Association. (Photo provided by Claus Kropp)

and the preservation of their unique structures and ships.

Joint Oxen Handling Workshop

Join with members of the Midwest Ox Drover's Association (MODA) who will hold their annual meeting at Tiller's International. This joint activity will allow members of both organizations to meet, work together, and build relationships.

Visit the National Thresher's Association's 78th Annual Reunion.

Participants can spend a day at this show held annually in Wauseon OH (only 12 miles from Sauder Village) featuring dozens of steam engines, gas tractors, and engines. There will be a wide variety of steam and engine activities throughout the day. This year's show will feature 11-20 hp steam engines, John Deere tractors, and a John Deere gas engine.

About the Author – Tracie Evans is co-program Chair of the 2023 ALHFAM conference. She has worked as a curator for over 25 years and been the Curator of Collections at Sauder Village since 2008 where she also leads their exhibit program. She has been very involved with MOMCC over the past decade, planning conferences and as a regular presenter



Volunteers Make the Difference

ATTRACT AND KEEP PEOPLE WHO CARRY THE DREAM FORWARD

By Mike Tetrault, Carroll County Wabash & Erie Canal

LET'S face it: you have an incredible and fascinating story to tell. You are part of an organization that does wonderful work, and you are relentless in your enthusiasm. Of course, there are always jobs to be done and the to-do list never seems to shrink. You have a team of people to work with, but you could always use a few (or a few dozen) more people to fill the ranks.

Sometimes, you will meet someone new, and you eagerly give them all the right information so they can join your team. They will nod and smile, but usually you don't hear from them again. As time marches on, fellow volunteers move away or move on from the organization, and you wonder whether you'll be able to keep the dream alive to share your vital stories with future generations.

This is the reality for many volunteer-led or volunteer-reliant organizations. There is endless work to be done, but with a limited number of people and the pool to draw from seems to shrink each year. What can be done about it?

Since 2021, I have served as executive director at Carroll County Wabash & Erie Canal, Inc., located in Delphi, Indiana, which is devoted to preservation, education, and recreation. Prior to that, my career was in various not-for-profit endeavors. At the Canal, we steward the last existing watered, publicly accessible portion of the historic Wabash & Erie Canal in Indiana. At the same time, the site provides recreational options such as a 10-plus mile trail system, a canal boat playground, and a small campground.

In the 50 years since the organization's inception, it has been almost exclusively volunteer operated. As one might imagine, there is no shortage of work to be done and a variety of needed skills. Following are five critical components that volunteers need to join and succeed. These may not be an automatic fix for every situation, but they have been effective in my experience, and you might identify which of the items below are strengths or growth areas for your organization and take steps to address any identified deficiencies.

Clear vision and mission

Every volunteer should be able to answer the question: "Why am I spending time here, and what is our purpose?" If three different people give three different answers, there is more work to do! Does everyone know the organization's vision or mission statement without having to look it up?



Above: Canal Boat and Visitor Center – The visitor center complex was designed to replicate buildings in downtown Delphi in the 1850s. It includes an exhibit hall, conference center, and offices. (All photos courtesy of the Carroll County Wabash & Erie Canal Association)

At the Wabash & Erie Canal, our "official" mission statement is long, detailed, and hard to remember. It technically describes what we do but can be hard to recall word-for-word. To compound the issue, with 50 years of volunteering, every volunteer has a particular emphasis and passion. It is fantastic to create a space where diverse gifts and talents can shine, but there is a potential downside: if everyone focuses on "favorite" parts, the central mission can be neglected!

Therefore, as often as possible, I use a slogan that my mentor and predecessor, Dan McCain, uses: "Preservation, Education, Recreation." The origin of this phrase is not known, but it perfectly encapsulates the main points of our mission: preserve the canal sections and historic buildings we steward, educate visitors about them, and offer recreational opportunities as a way to interact with history. These keywords are used as a guide in nearly all our communications. You are encouraged to identify a memorable, effective vision or mission, and include it on the letterhead, graphics, newsletter, and in communications. Make your focus abundantly clear!

The adage, "What you win someone with is what you win them to" is very true. That is, whatever brings a person on board will likely be the thing they expect and want. If

volunteers join because of good snacks at a callout meeting, or because a best friend already joined, then those factors will likely be the “glue” that keeps them around. As soon as the snacks go away or their friend departs, they may soon follow. At some point, every volunteer will ask, “Wait, why am I spending all this time here?” If someone is devoted to your vision and purpose, you can keep them regardless of extraneous circumstances!

Clear expectations

If people are willing to donate valuable time as a volunteer, they will want to know what you expect from them. It is essential to tell people, “This is the minimum contribution I need from you.” It sets a mark that people will either meet, or they will decide it’s too much and move on (which isn’t always a bad thing!).

You may think, “If you just establish a minimal threshold, won’t that encourage people to do the bare minimum?” In my experience, people who are invested in the mission will often meet the minimum, gain traction, and increase their participation. On the flip side, people who choose not to be invested will simply filter themselves out.

If someone isn’t meeting expectations, you have an easy policy to point to and ask them to step up or step out. Without a minimum “active” threshold, you end up with people who are in a distant orbit, only marginally connected, and yet will still require your time and attention when it comes to recognition time at the annual meeting. And then it’s doubly difficult because you rarely see them, and you barely know what they even do! As a general rule, unmotivated volunteers will demotivate those around them. Motivated volunteers will mobilize those around them.



The Cooper Shop – Volunteer cooper, Peter Cooper talks with school children in the cooper shop.



Broom shop Visit – Since education is a big part of our mission, we attract volunteers who love sharing their gifts with children.

When you do need to have these difficult conversations, always prioritize the volunteer’s well-being such as by asking, “I haven’t seen you around much. Is there something going on that I can help you with?” It is important to remember that you are not just hounding them to get something out of them – we want volunteers to be at their best, because it ultimately promotes a healthy environment for everyone. If an inactive volunteer departs, it reduces the feeling among active volunteers of “pulling all the weight while others are coasting.” If inactive volunteers renew their efforts, perhaps you will have your teammate back! Other times, volunteers may wish to renew, but it simply isn’t feasible, and they eventually have to depart, and that is OK also.

The Canal has a huge resource to this end: a volunteer handbook. It includes general history of the Wabash & Erie Canal, the history of our organization, volunteer etiquette and behavior expectations, brief “job descriptions,” and a description for most of our historic buildings, trails, and assets. This document needs to be updated and digitized, but it is worth the effort to create something similar for your organization to set the standard for all volunteers.

Communication and organization

This topic is perhaps the least glamorous, but among the most important. It is essential to have adequate systems in place to let volunteers know what is needed and when. First, a strong recommendation is that your organization use some type of online signup or volunteer management system. These can be expensive, streamlined options for larger entities or free, limited-functionality options for smaller institutions.

The Canal uses SignUp.com (a free resource) to organize just about all our volunteer needs. I do my best to set up the signup pages as soon as a date and time is set for an event and will send out the relevant links to potential volunteers as events are created. The signup page includes the essential information for volunteers to plan around. At least one day (preferably 2-3 days) in advance we send an additional email to the event's volunteers with a summary of the essentials: who will be there, what will everyone be doing, when will everything be happening, and even some reinforcement of *why* we are serving and how this event fits with our mission. And of course, it is essential to include a "thank you" and description of how the volunteers make the event possible!

Volunteer management tools allow us to quickly update volunteers if there are changes. The paid software options are generally more robust and easier to use, but are suited for more complex operations. Either way, it is in your best interest to have a centralized scheduling system that can be easily accessed by your volunteer base. There is a time investment in setting up, but it is worth the effort when the busy season strikes!

Next, accurate contact information and an up-to-date volunteer roster is needed. The Canal has, for a long time, maintained a list of volunteer names and contact information on a spreadsheet. Some of the information needed updating, but it was fun to go down the whole list and get in touch with people to introduce myself and gauge availability for future needs. There are fancy software options available, but in smaller operations like ours, a simple spreadsheet does the trick! I recommend your volunteer list includes at least a name, street address, email, primary phone number, roles/jobs of the volunteer, perhaps the year they started volunteering, and a section for extra notes about each person.

Finally, when it comes to communication, you will need a centralized, accessible place to store documents and data. Many options are available, and the selected platform should fit your needs. At the Canal, we use Google Workspace because of our familiarity with it, plus it is 100% free for non-profit organizations. It includes free software for text documents, spreadsheets, creating online forms, slideshows, and more. It also includes online storage on Google Drive, which has allowed us to digitize over two decades of board meeting minutes, plus store and share training documents related to different areas of the park. When someone needs to know a policy or retrieve a report, the necessary documents can be shared electronically with no need to visit a building during specific hours.



Left: John Making Toys – A new volunteer to us this year, John specializes in making small toys for children on his lathe in a matter of minutes. **Right: Sue at the Loom** – We partner with the local weaving guild to bring in talented weavers, like Sue, to demonstrate their craft.

Training

Volunteers must be equipped to serve on your team, and it is too easy to assume "they'll figure it out." That can risk alienating a team member. If you prefer in-person training methods, that is often extremely effective and personable. The downside is the difficulty of scheduling such sessions, and the requirement of your time (or someone else's time) to do the training.

As mentioned above, Google Drive is a great place to store documents that have checklists or job descriptions. There are also effective video-sharing tools that can be used to create something quickly and relatively easily. Whether it's YouTube, Vimeo, or another free video site, you can use a smartphone to make brief tutorials of which ever tasks make sense for your purposes. YouTube falls under Google's umbrella, so it is convenient to link a YouTube channel to your Google Workspace.

At the Canal, for instance, we have training videos for volunteers who will work at the front desk. We use Square for on-site transactions, which can be daunting for new volunteers to use. To create tutorials, I simply made a list of all the tasks someone would need to know to do the basics – process a sale, set up and put away the devices, and things like that. Then, with a camera rolling I complete each of those tasks and explain the steps. To make things easier, each video focuses on one task, so users can easily find help with what they need. Also, since these resources are for internal use, there is no need to make them fancy! Simply set up the camera and walk through the process as if there was a trainee standing beside you.

Such training materials are useful because they are ready for volunteers to watch and learn anytime, anywhere. When people have questions, there are answers ready for them, even if I am not at work! It is astonishing what can be made quickly with today's tools. You likely have a video and photo camera in your pocket that vastly outperforms top-of-the-line equipment from 10 years ago!

Videos are handy, but if that is not your preferred medium, creating a printed manual is also useful if it stays on site. For example, the Canal has an audio-visual system in the conference center with a binder that explains (with pictures and text) how to operate everything. It took time to make, but it also saves dozens of explanations for volunteers who might be just as willing to teach themselves.

While it feels good to be needed, I try to measure my success on my replaceability. If you disappeared from your organization tomorrow, would they be able to keep going without too much disruption? Ample training resources will help ensure a healthy future no matter what changes may come!

Acceptance and self-expression

This topic may seem odd, but it is a key component in attracting and retaining volunteers! As leaders, we must let people do what they love and be themselves, which is how Canal Park has become what it is today. People of varying skills and hobbies have been welcomed unconditionally, and they have sparked incredible ideas that would not have been possible if we forced participants to fit into a cookie cutter.

For example, our volunteer maintenance crew often faces complex and challenging tasks that require creative solutions. A tradition when dealing with such conundrums is for the team to gather and brainstorm ideas. There is no top-down hierarchy that dictates a solution. Once an idea has been negotiated and approved by consensus, the work begins. If it succeeds, everyone shares in the success because everyone participated in the planning. And if it fails miserably, there is no bitterness or blame, because the team collectively created the action plan.

To cite another example, we have a beloved volunteer who is perhaps the most resourceful person I have ever met. She refuses to throw anything away, and always sees treasure where others see trash. Several summers ago, she found a neighbor with massive chunks of a chopped-down tree strewn about his yard, and she dragged those behemoth logs to the park. She also brought along some old tools (like wedges, a hatchet, an axe, and a hammer), and suddenly had a "wood-chopping exhibit" to share with visitors. Thanks to her efforts, the Canal had visitors of all ages getting hands-on with Canal-era chores (safely and supervised). The same person also runs a "General Store" in the park that contains all sorts of trinkets. In some

ways, she is a complete liability because of her nonstop adventures and acquisitions, but I would never dream of disparaging her spirit! She is part of what makes our park unique. If I told her, "Stop bringing this stuff in," how would that make her feel? Would she be bringing her fullest, most ambitious, most off-the-wall exciting ideas and actions to the team?



Beverly at the General Store – Beverly greets a group of children during a school tour at her one-of-a-kind General Store.

To be clear, this does not imply that you should turn all your volunteers loose to do whatever they want! You must always refer to the clearly defined vision and mission. Volunteers should be free to be themselves as they seek to fulfill the mission. We welcome new ideas and pursuits if they can be clearly tied to our purpose.

Hopefully, these items offer encouragement and a chance to assess how to best serve your valuable volunteers. As we have learned from others here at the Canal, it is evident that the volunteer landscape has changed drastically during the past several decades. However, the good news is that certain values and priorities have remained consistent even while the tools have evolved. Prioritizing people and meeting them where they are, will always help attract new volunteers, and that will keep your organization thriving. □

About the Author – Mike Tetrault has served as executive director of Carroll County Wabash & Erie Canal, Inc. since 2021 where he is passionate about serving people. During his time in this role he has become an unapologetic canal nerd. He lives in Delphi, Indiana with his wife Autumn, children (Eloïse and Arlo), and their dog (Butters).



NO EGGS, NO MILK, NO BUTTER

BRINGING BACK DEPRESSION CAKE

By Jayne Kranc

WHILE lamenting the cost of eggs with some friends, I mentioned the fact that my grandmother made awesome cakes without eggs, milk, or butter. She called them depression cakes because they came back into popularity during the Great Depression – an era when cooking supplies were limited. People still wanted tasty desserts and found that they could indeed make that happen without these ingredients. Clever cooks in the 1930s managed to do without those ingredients which were a luxury at the time, like our egg prices at the start of 2023. A friend who was eating dairy free perked up, intrigued as well.

Depression cakes avoided ingredients that were either expensive at the time or hard to obtain. They were similar to earlier cakes known as "War Cakes," since they avoided ingredients that were scarce or were being conserved for use by soldiers. Instead, many unusual ingredients such as mayonnaise, vinegar, baking soda, and even canned tomato soup were used to create moist, delicious baked goods. The substitutions had to be carefully chosen, however, to gain the same results as the ingredients left out.

Butter usually keeps a cake soft and tender by coating the flour molecules in fat and preventing them from developing a tough gluten matrix. In these recipes, butter is often replaced with cooking oil or shortening, which can achieve the same effect with only slightly less richness.

Eggs help leaven cakes by creating steam that puffs up the batter as it bakes, giving structure to the risen cake as the proteins firm up. In many of these cakes, the eggs are replaced with a combination of vinegar and baking soda, which foams up quickly, making the cake light and fluffy.

Following the Stock Market Crash in 1929, families were forced to stretch their budgets. Desserts became a luxury for most, and depression cake was a more affordable alternative to other cakes that used expensive milk, eggs, and butter.

Even after the Great Depression when cooks had full pantries again, many of these recipes remained family favorites. For modern bakers, depression dessert recipes are a perfect way to show the tastiness of budget-friendly baking.



Chocolate Depression Cake – also known as "War Cake," "Crazy Cake," "Whacky Cake," or "Poor Man's Cake." (Photo by the author)

Radio shows and women's magazines, such as *Ladies' Home Journal* played a large role in circulating the recipes for depression cakes. Betty Crocker had a successful radio show called "Cooking Hour" that provided some of these budget-friendly recipes. Depending on the time period of a historic site, some of these recipes can be educational, fun, and yes, great tasting.

I managed to locate many of these old recipes and tried several. Here are two of the best. You can use any frosting recipe on them – and frosting is recommended!

EASIEST VANILLA CAKE

Ingredients

- 1 1/2 cups all-purpose flour
- 1 cup sugar
- 1 teaspoon baking soda
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1 teaspoon white vinegar
- 5 tablespoons vegetable cooking oil
- 1 1/2 teaspoons vanilla extract
- 1 cup water

Instructions

Preheat the oven to 350 degrees F. Line an 8x8 square pan with parchment paper, leaving an inch over each side for easy removal. A non-stick pan or one very lightly sprayed with cooking spray will also work.

Add the dry ingredients and mix well in a large bowl, forming three caves (depressions) in the dry mixture. In one, add the vinegar. In the second, add the vanilla extract, and in the third, add the oil. Pour water over the top and using a whisk or wooden spoon, mix together, until fully combined.

Transfer the vanilla cake batter into the lined pan. Bake for 25-30 minutes, or until a skewer or toothpick comes out clean. Remove from the oven and let cool in the pan for 10 minutes before transferring to a wire rack to cool completely. If desired, (and it is highly recommended!) frost the cooled cake.

CHOCOLATE DEPRESSION CAKE

Ingredients

- 1 1/2 cups all-purpose flour
- 1 cup sugar
- 1/4 cup unsweetened cocoa powder
- 1 teaspoon baking soda
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 1 teaspoon white vinegar
- 1/3 cup vegetable oil
- 1 cup water

Instructions

Combine flour, sugar, cocoa powder, salt, and baking soda in a large mixing bowl.

In a separate bowl, combine vanilla, vinegar, oil, and water using a measuring cup if you wish. Add wet ingredients to dry ingredients and mix until completely combined and no lumps remain.

Pour batter into a 8x8 square pan. A non-stick pan needs no greasing, but other pans might need a slight bit of cooking spray

Bake in a preheated 350-degree F oven for 30-35 minutes, until a toothpick inserted in center comes out clean.

Let the cake cool completely before frosting.

Praised on and off over the years for their practicality and flavor, depression cakes are still worthwhile and worth trying, even when baking in a modern kitchen, and they certainly suit some historic sites since they have been around for so long. If icing them seems too difficult or in some way inappropriate at historic sites, powdered sugar

sprinkled on top will do just as well. These cakes can be made educational and fun, and making tasty food never seems the wrong thing to do. Cake, in particular, is nearly always appreciated, and so is offering a way to extend one's food budget. Hasn't everyone had to "make do" at one time or another?

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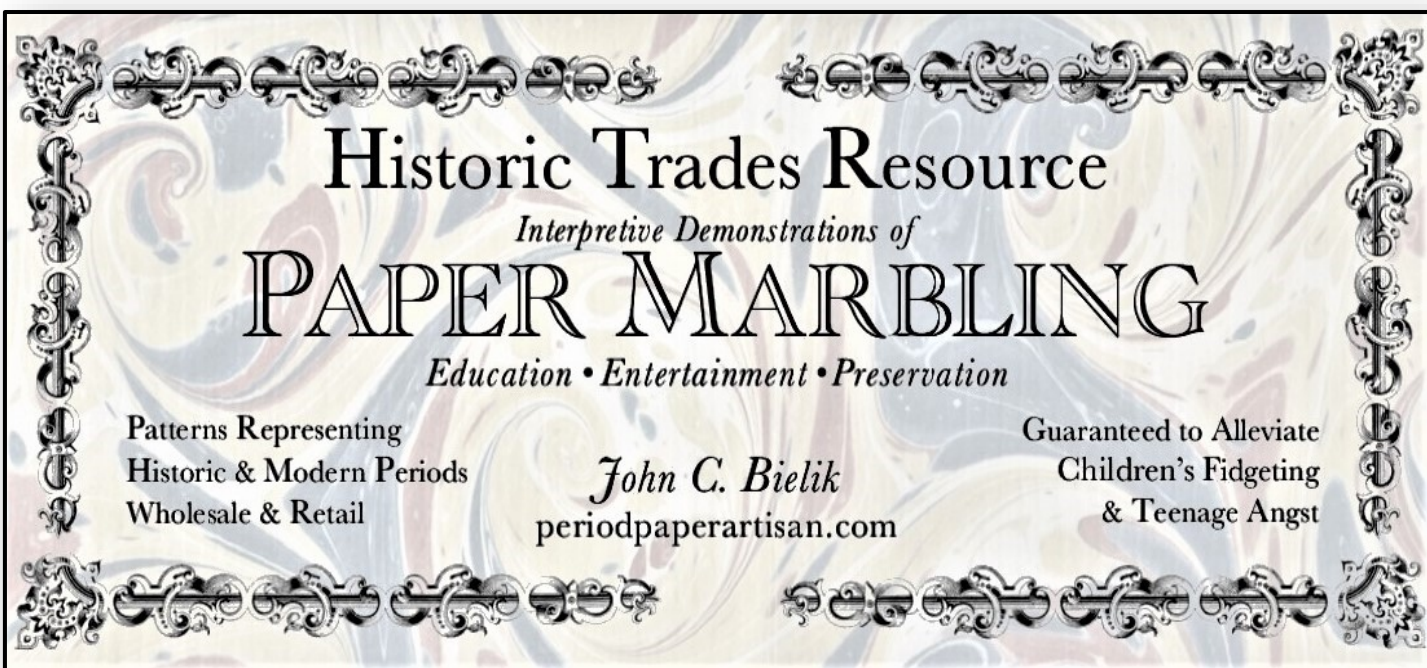
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TIME TO DANCE: INTERACTIVE HISTORY AT ITS BEST

THE VIRGINIA REEL

By Jeanette Watts, Dance Historian, Instructor, and Author

MUSEUMS are perpetually in need of interactive material for patrons. The Founder's Day gala, important anniversaries in local history, a Mother's Day celebration, and other fundraisers are some examples where a large number of visitors may be coming, and the museum wants additional programs. Don't forget all those fourth grade classes that visit in the spring. Learning is best done with moving and touching, as well as listening. And kids can only dip so many candles.

Dance is a much-overlooked answer. It is a significant part of our history. Until the last generation or so, everybody danced. George Washington danced. Enslaved peoples danced. Soldiers stationed in forts out West (where there weren't any women to dance with) danced. Every American president to this day throws an Inaugural Ball: balls are formal occasions that are specifically for dancing. Musical education was important because people needed music to dance to. Yet, despite the very prominent role dance played in American culture until the 1970s (when it became socially acceptable NOT to dance), it is almost completely neglected by educators who specialize in history.

Museums have the space and visitors who want to know more about how people used to live. All they need is music, and a staff member who knows how to teach people to dance. There are a lot of dances that ought to be part of a historian's knowledge base: this article is the beginning of a regular series explaining what those dances are, and how to do them.

The Virginia Reel (called Sir Roger de Coverley in England) is one of the most perfect dances in all of history for being accessible, fairly gender-neutral, light on necessary skills, flexible for large and small groups, and relevant for more than 100 years. The structure reflects the aesthetic of the times: dance is how people socialized, and the Virginia Reel is eminently social.

Originating in Scotland, reels are a distinct dance form of their own. The earliest known reference was in 1590. Fittingly, reels still survive today mostly in Scottish Country Dancing. Unlike modern Contradances or English Country Dancing, reels are not repeating patterns of the first couple dancing with the second couple. Contradances least resemble reels, being an improper set with the number one couples all starting each repetition on the "wrong" side of the set. English Country Dancing (ECD) is a closer relative, with a line of gentlemen facing a line of ladies.



Virginia Reel being danced at the Christmas Ball in Charlotte, North Carolina in 2021. The dancers are "Stripping the Willow." (Photo by the author)

English Country Dancing, the direct predecessor of Contradancing, however, still relies completely on the number one couple dancing with the number two couple, the number three couple dancing with the number four couple, etc., in repeating patterns in lines of an infinite possible length. Virginia Reel's unique diagonals mean the lines need to be of a limited length. There are several inactive couples standing in between the two active couples, and there is a limited length before the lines would be too cumbersome. The inactive couples also make most English Country Dance figures like pousettes and heys impracticable.

So, how did America acquire this dance? With Scottish immigrants steadily arriving in America since Cromwell began sending defeated Scottish troops in the 1600s, the reel as a dance form was deeply embedded in the American cultural fabric. It was called The Hemp-Dressers Dance when King George III danced it. The Scots called it "The Haymakers" in the early 1800s. It was referred to as "The Finishing Dance" in 1820, when it was generally agreed that it should be the last dance of the evening. This tradition lasted for at least 50 years and it was still on the ball dance program towards the end of the evening in 1903. Next, instructions for dancing the Virginia Reel.

The Dance

Traditionally, a line of men faces a line of women. (The two lines are called a “set.”) Ideally lines should be about five or six couples long, and the two facing lines should NOT be close together. For most of the dance, the action is in the middle of the two lines. Lines of four or seven are fine, it just means the set will take less, or more time, for everyone to have a chance to dance. In the lines of facing dancers, the two closest to the music (and the person teaching the dance) is the head couple; the pair on the far end of the lines is the foot couple.

To start, the head lady walks forward on a diagonal and meets the foot gentleman in the middle of the set. They both walk forward, meet in the middle, and bow or curtsy. The same two then return to where they started. Now the head gentleman meets the foot lady in the middle of the set, they greet and return to place. [Diagram #1]

This trajectory will repeat several times: the first diagonal couple turns by the right hand; the second diagonal couple also turns by the right hand. The same pairs turn by the left hand, then both hands, then do-si-do (right shoulders around, no hands!) Ideally, each move on each diagonal takes 16 counts.

Once the diagonals are complete, the most complicated part is called “Strip the Willow.” The head pair ONLY does a right-hand turn once and a half around each other, [Diagram #2] and then starts a weaving pattern. The head gent left-hand turns the second lady while the head lady left-hand turns the second gent. The head dancers then find each other in the middle of the lines for a right-hand turn. They part again to do a left hand turn with the third dancers in line, then right-hand turn each other, then the fourth dancers in line, etc. The head couple weaves down the line

until they have danced with everyone in the opposite line. [Diagram #3]

Once they reach the bottom, they turn halfway around with two hands one last time to get back to their own side of the line, and gallop back to the top. [Diagram #4]

This segment of the dance ends with a game of follow the leader. The head gent casts off to the left and leads the men down behind that line, while the head lady casts off to the right and leads the ladies down behind their line. Everyone marches single file to the bottom of the set, to where the foot couple had been standing. The head pair then stops and makes an arch with both hands. The second couple passes through the arch and keeps walking up to where the head couple had been standing, followed by the third couple, fourth couple, etc. The head couple falls in at the bottom of the set, and everyone is now standing in two lines in a new position. The second couple is now the new head couple, and the previous head couple is now the new foot couple. [Diagram #5]

It is prudent to warn gentlemen that being at the foot is “the hot spot.” They have just successfully danced the whole thing, so they’re done, right? Wrong! The top lady is standing in the middle of the set, waiting for them. So, no snoozing after finishing with the arch.

Often, dancers become confused and disoriented during Strip the Willow. It can help, while teaching, to step into the middle of the line with the dancers to direct traffic, to remind the active pair to find their partner before turning the next person in the line, to figure out that the active pair drifts down the middle of the set as they go until they reach the bottom. Usually, dancers figure out the pattern by the third iteration, giving the teacher time to get out of the way and back to the top before the dancers start galloping toward them.

Illustrations by Michael Watts.

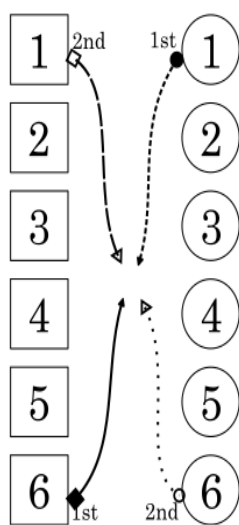


Diagram #1
Meet in the middle

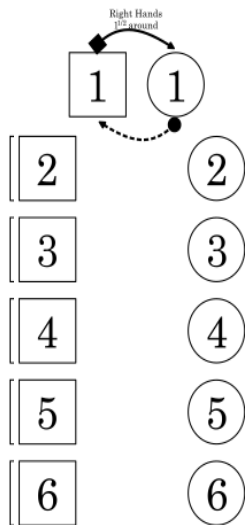


Diagram #2
Right hands around

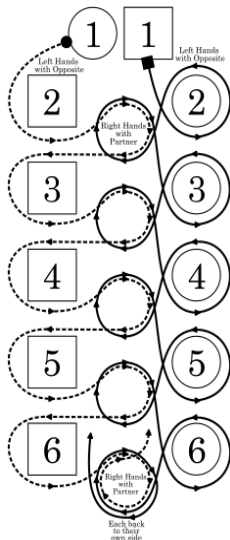


Diagram #3
“Stripping the Willow”

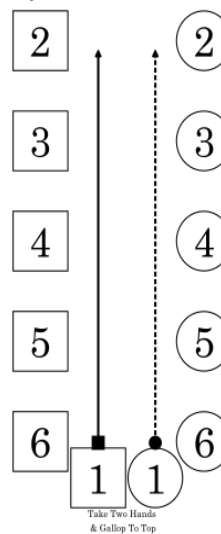


Diagram #4
Back to the top

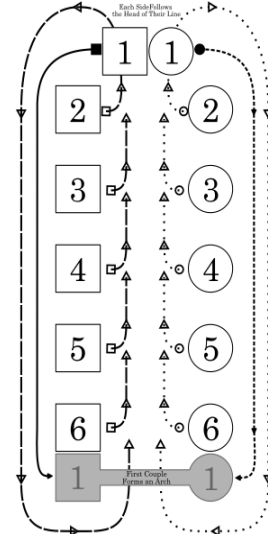


Diagram #5
Cast off – make an arch

VIRGINIA REEL.

First lady down the centre half way (foot gent. up at the same time to meet lady), balance there and return to places, 1st gent. and foot lady the same, 1st lady and foot gent. meet and swing with left hand and back to places, 1st gent. and foot lady the same, 1st lady and foot gent. meet and swing with right hand and back to places, 1st gent. and foot lady the same, 1st lady and foot gent. meet and swing with both hands and back to places, 1st gent. and foot lady the same, 1st couple give right hands and swing once and a half round, swing second with right hand, partner with left, 3d with right, partner with left, 4th with right, pt. with left, 5th with right, pt. left, 6th with right, pt. left, up centre with pt. and swing, all lead round (ladies to right gents to left), all up centre, 1st couple down centre to foot and stop.

1866 Instructions for dancing the Virginia Reel – From American Dancing Master by Elias Howe.

Notes for teaching children

Children's sensibilities include some strong objections to holding hands with a member of the opposite gender. Rather than battle with children to take two hands for the gallop, or turn their partner by the right hand, it will save a lot of time and trouble to avoid this battle altogether. If the children are invited to select a buddy to dance with, they will eagerly hold hands with a friend of their own choosing. This makes dance something fun and exciting for them to do, instead of something traumatic that they will hate. Have the children line up in two lines and find some alternative way to designate traditional gents' and ladies' lines. Pick two landmarks in your dance space that you can use as references: at a historical plantation where I taught, children facing the barn were the barn line, the children facing the house were the house line. Alternatively, have some token for the children to wear – a ribbon or lanyard in the school colors – and they can dance in a blue line and a gold line.

Variations

The older a dance is and the more people that have danced it, the more variations will exist. No two dance manuals from 1800 to 1900 describe the Virginia Reel in exactly the same way. Deviations from the above description include: the initial bow/curtsey is missing or gets moved to the end. Or the do-si-do is eliminated. A popular variation is to eliminate the arch in follow the leader – the head couple leads the lines all the way around back to the top, and then they take two hands and gallop to the bottom of the set -

sometimes while the other dancers all make arches.

A significant difference between Virginia Reel and Sir Roger de Coverley is replacing Strip the Willow with a weaving pattern: the head couple crosses right shoulders and casts down around the second couple, then they cross each other again in the middle of the set, and cast around the third couple, etc, continuing to weave down through the standing couples until they reach the bottom of the set. Only the head couple is active – everyone else simply stands and is danced around.

In 1939, Lloyd Shaw complained about the boredom of all the standing around, waiting to be the head couple, and recommended that instead of the diagonals, all couples simply do all the figures across the set with their partner. His version of the dance became common by the 1950s.

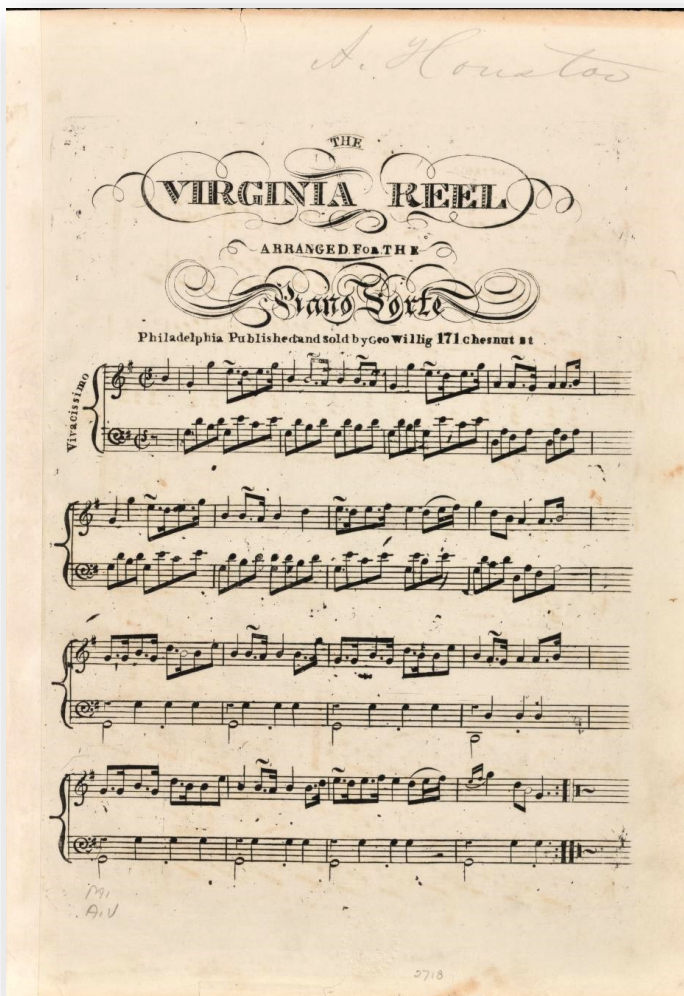
Music

Among the many variables that make Virginia Reel both delightful and confusing is the music. A musical piece called "Roger of Coverley" was in print in England by 1695 in John Playford's dance manuals. (The dance is not the same, however. It would probably be bad form for an Englishman to print a Scottish dance.) 1816 directions suggest that Virginia Reel/Sir Roger de Coverley can be danced to the old Playford tune. Around 1820, dance manuals instructed people to use any reel in 9/8 time.

Another tune associated specifically with the Virginia Reel, in Virginia, was called My Aunt Margery. In the



SOLDIER'S BALL AT HUNTSVILLE, ALABAMA – DANCING THE "VIRGINIA REEL." *Harper's Weekly*, April 9, 1864, 236.



Virginia Reel Sheet Music – 1824. (Library of Congress)

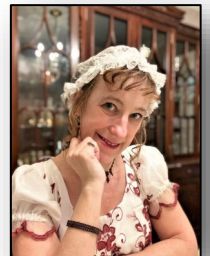
1950s, the suggestion was for live musicians to start with a jig in 6/8 time, then move to a peppy 2/4 reel, and end with a 4/4 march, or otherwise use any slip jig in 6/8 or 9/8. An online search for Virginia Reel music will bring up a significant number of options, with a variety of lengths and tempos. Two of my favorite Virginia Reel medleys are recorded by Spare Parts of upstate New York; the music is available at <https://www.bfv.com/spareparts/products.htm>.

The most important thing to tell students when dancing – make a lot of mistakes and giggle a lot. It's traditional – that's how Charles Dickens describes the dance in *A Christmas Carol*. □

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About the author – Jeanette Watts teaches workshops on historical dances from 1500-1968 for museums and re-enactors all around the United States. She is also the author of six published books. Jeanette is available for hire at Jeanette@watts.com.





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Since MOMCC is hosting the 2023 annual meeting and conference of the Association for Living History, Farms and Agricultural Museums (ALHFAM) at Sauder Village in Archbold, Ohio on June 23-26, we decided to hold an all-virtual MOMCC spring conference featuring the best of past conference presentations. The times are March 9 & 10, noon - 6:00 CST with Happy Hour at 6:00 on Thursday, March 9 and Closing Remarks at 6:00 on Friday, March 10. Keynotes, one-hour concurrent sessions and resource groups are featured each day.

All sessions will be virtual.

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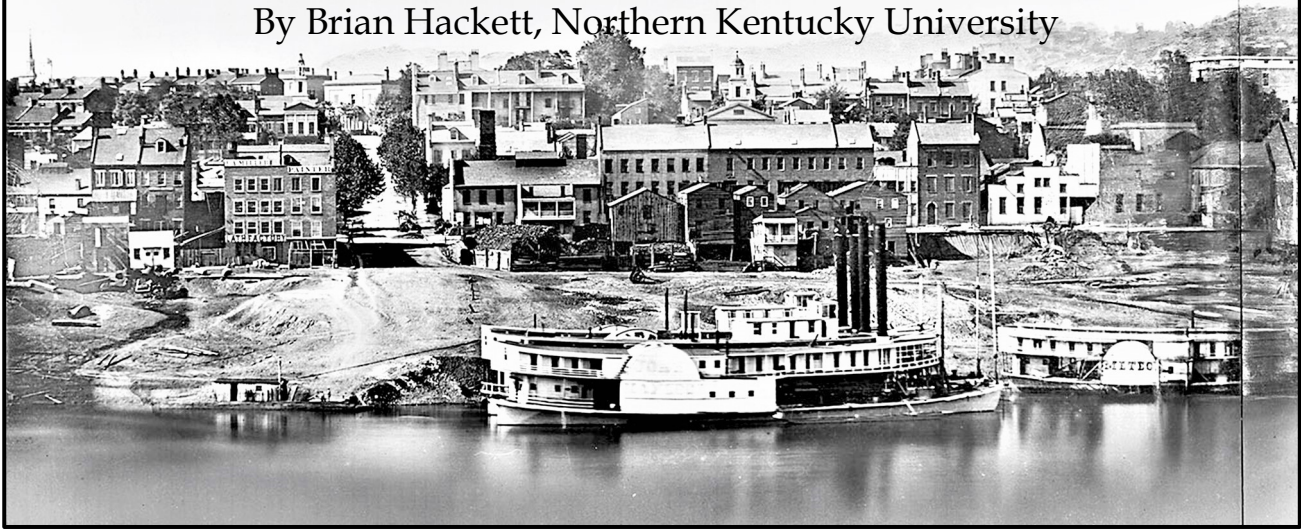
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YOUR PATRONAGE IS APPRECIATED!

"You Can See A Lot Just by Looking"

EARLY PHOTOGRAPHS AND YOU!

By Brian Hackett, Northern Kentucky University



One of several daguerreotypes taken in 1848 showing the Cincinnati Waterfront. (Courtesy of the Hamilton, County, Ohio, Library)

“YOU can see a lot just by looking,” is often attributed to Yogi Berra, famous baseball manager known for his humorous quotes. The point to be made here is that one can learn a lot from photographs often by just knowing some simple things and taking a really good look. Photographs are windows to an earlier time, and like any written work they can be read and interpreted just like any document. They reflect their time, the culture of that time, personal and sometimes private lives of people, and even clues to a long-forgotten past.

The Daguerreotype

The daguerreotype, invented by Louis Daguerre in 1839, was the first practical method for producing photographs. The process used a silver-coated copper plate treat-

ed with chemicals to make it photosensitive. The plate is only usable when the emulsion is wet, thus the process is called a “wet plate image or process.” Exposures could last up to 30 minutes which is believed to be a reason that smiling in early photos was rare since holding a smile for more than a few minutes is difficult. It is also a reason that the eyes of some photographed subjects look blurry, because the person is blinking during the process. The image is a reverse positive meaning the image in the photograph is a mirror reflection of the original. Some clever photographers used mirrors in their cameras to get a correct image.

The daguerreotype came to America in the early 1840’s with many images available by 1842. The developing pro-



Holding a daguerreotype at a certain angle turns the photo to a negative which is one of the ways to help identify a daguerreotype.



Occupational daguerreotype images: **Left** – Image of a nail maker, circa 1848, showing a workman in work dress at his anvil making nails for horseshoes. (Private Collection) **Right** – Image of a firefighter, circa 1850s. (Courtesy of www.worthpoint.com)



A Showing of Daguerreotypes – a circa 1850, daguerreotype, quarter plate, 3 1/4 x 4 1/4 inches. (Courtesy of The Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art)

cess was difficult and dangerous as it sometimes used mercury vapors. The daguerreotype photograph is a one-off, meaning that unless the camera is designed to take multiple images, the photo is a one and done. Making duplicates, involved taking a picture of the picture. The magic of the image is that there is no grain structure like you would see in later photographs or pixels as seen with digital images.

The daguerreotype's image is like looking in a mirror, and therefore it can be greatly enlarged without loss of image quality. A series of daguerreotype images were taken of the Cincinnati waterfront in 1848 including the first image on the previous page. An incredible amount of detail can be seen when these are enlarged. They are available by googling: Cincinnati daguerreotype.

Daguerreotype images were expensive to produce, so often were reserved for important events and clients who could afford them.



Early Daguerreotype – Seated woman with a large book, circa 1845. The simple metal mat around the image and silk pillow cover liner date the photo to the 1840s. (Private collection)

Identifying a Daguerreotype

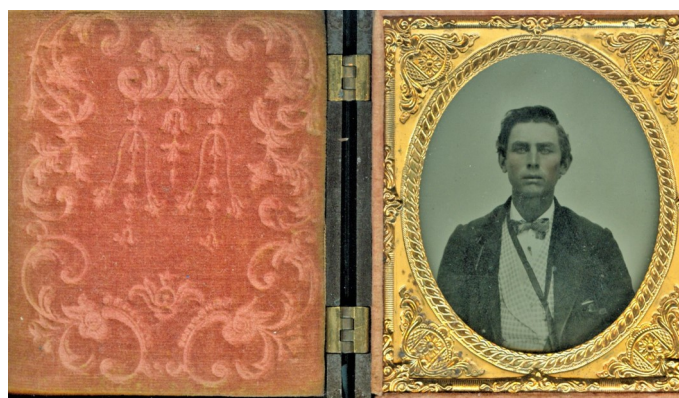
Identifying a daguerreotype is fairly easy. First, for the image to last it must be in a case because the image is on silver which tarnishes. The case prevents air from destroying the image, but ambrotypes and early tintypes are also in cases due to the fragility of their emulsions.

The next thing to examine is to see if the image looks positive when you hold it a certain way and negative when viewed from a slightly different angle. An easier way to do this is to place the image vertically on a piece of white paper with half of the image off the paper on a dark surface. When done correctly the image should appear half positive and half negative.



Image Cases

Two common image cases are shown above. The first is made of wood with a pressed paper cover, and of the two, it is the earliest style and the most common. The second case is a hard rubber, often called "gutta percha," a substance derived from the Malaysian Percha tree. As seen here, complex designs can be made on the case using a mold process. In this example, firefighting images can be seen and the case holds the image of the firefighter on the previous page. Images found in these type of cases are later and generally date to the 1850s.



Later Daguerreotype – Image of a man wearing a lanyard, circa 1854. The more ornate metal mat on the photo and the crushed velvet pillow cover liner date it to the 1850s. (Private collection)



Daguerreotypes of two seated women with a book –The one on the left is circa 1845 and has woven hair inserted along the bottom. The simpler metal mat is an indication of an earlier period image. The one on the right is circa 1850 and shows the hair style, dress, and chair of the period. The elaborate metal mat around the photo dates it to a later period. (Both photos from a private collection)

More about Daguerreotypes

Just like any other antique, value depends on rarity. Plain portrait images are nice and can tell us much about fashion, culture, and style. The more valuable ones include outdoor scenes, images of workers, servants, slaves, artwork, the dead, and not surprisingly, pornography.

The Ambrotype

The ambrotype is similar to the daguerreotype in that it is also a wet plate process, but instead of a silver plate, a glass plate was used. It must also be cased but was cheaper, easier, and safer to produce than the earlier daguerreotypes. The name ambrotype comes from the Greek language and means “immortal image.” The image is also a direct positive, with

each image being one-of-a-kind. Ambrotypes were popular from the early 1850s to the middle of the 1860s.

The ambrotype can be seen clearly only with a black background behind the glass photograph, such as paint or other black material.

What to Look For

As with the daguerreotype, the ambrotype is a reverse positive, meaning the image is like looking into a mirror. Looking closely at the image, it may be possible to see through the image, which means the black backing is failing or flaking off. The “pillow” on the inside of the case cover, if there is one, will be of the crushed velvet variety. Sometimes, an ambrotype image can be purchased inexpensively because the black background is missing or damaged. Replacing the background with a piece of black paper restores the image.



Ambrotype of two boys, circa 1860. Small cracks in the image identify it as an ambrotype. (Private collection)

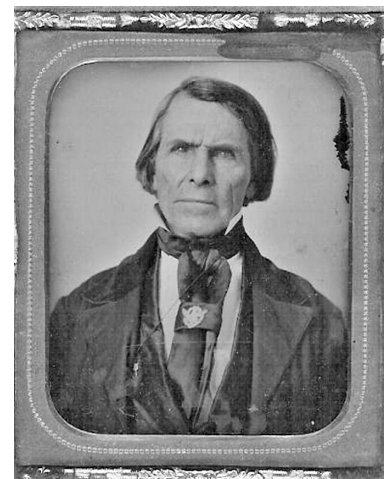
As with any kind of photograph, one can see a lot by close examination. Often you will find things that will add to your understanding of the image and the time it was taken. For example, a rather stern-looking man with a large tie in the example below has a spread eagle shako plate pinned to his tie. This was used on military hats during the Mexican War indicating he may be a Mexican War Veteran.

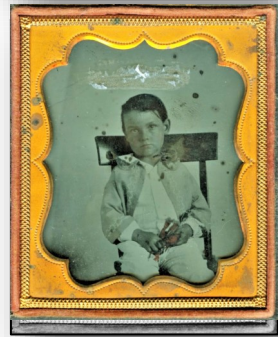


Ambrotype image of child being held by cloaked adult, circa 1860. These images are one and the same – the difference is the second image is put against a black background clearly making the image more visible. (Private collection)



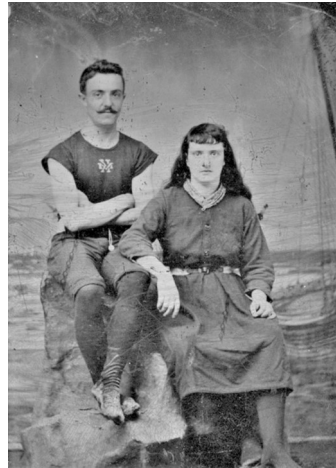
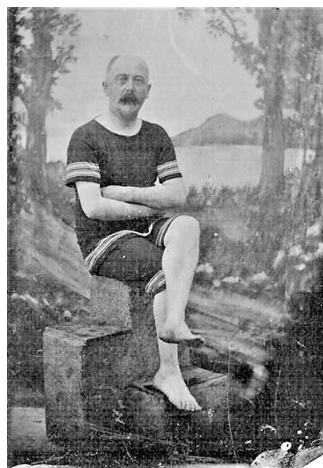
Ambrotype of man with a large tie, circa 1860. A close-up on the left shows a spread eagle shako plate used as a decoration on American military hats during the Mexican War in 1848 indicating he may be a Mexican War veteran. (Private collection)





Ambrotypes: Upper left – Young child with kitten, circa 1860. Lower left – Young boy with toy, circa 1860. Right – A young family, circa 1858. Note the “fading” of the image due to the black paint on the back of the glass flaking off. Also note the crushed velvet pillow.

Above are two images of children being children. Neither look like they are interested in having their pictures taken. A smart photographer or wise parent gave them something to hold their attention while the photographs were taken. Often it is easy to see a hand, a hidden parent, or some other method of keeping a child under control for the sitting.



Tintypes of Victorian swimmers in bathing suits – Dating from circa 1880 and 1885, both photos were probably taken in beachside studios. Tintypes were popular because they were inexpensive and instant – being ready in a matter of minutes. Note the Victorian swimwear fashions.

Tintype image of a woman – The bell sleeves on her dress date this photo to circa 1860. Also, there is a surrounding mat or imprint of a mat indicating that this tintype may have been cased as were the early ones. This tintype has been rephotographed to create a copy of it. (Private collection)



The Tintype

The tintype method was invented in 1855 as a cheap alternative to ambrotypes. It was easier to produce and could be made in a small studio, often on the back of a wagon, which is why there are so many tintype photographs of Civil War Soldiers. The photographer could go to the camps rather than the soldiers coming to a studio.

Like the daguerreotype and ambrotype, the tintype is a wet plate, direct positive, but instead of glass or silver plate, the image is produced on metal such as tin, thus the name. Early images had a soft emulsion which can easily be removed by a careless touch, so these images were cased. Later a coat of lacquer eliminated the need for a case.



Tintypes of a young boy and young girl dating from circa 1880 and 1890. Note that the mother is holding up the boy, and mother’s face appears behind the little girl. (All from private collection)



A variety of tintypes from the 1870s – 1880s – all from the same family album. (Private collection)

The attractiveness of the tintype was that it was inexpensive, easy, and quick to produce – cheap enough for soldiers to afford to send pictures to loved ones. It was the first “instant” photograph that was ready for the sitter in a manner of minutes. Some tintype photographers used cameras with multiple lenses which imprinted multiple images on a larger tin plate. The images were then cut apart.

Their widest use was during the 1860s and 1870s. After 1875, they were most commonly taken by photographers working in booths at fairs and carnivals or by itinerant sidewalk photographers. This is why there are so many images of people on vacation, providing one of the first views of everyday people enjoying a bit of leisure. There is also a

larger percentage of outdoor shots because tintypes were less technical than the earlier methods of photography. Tintype photography captured a wider variety of settings and subjects than any other type of photograph of the period.

Photo Prints: Carde de Visites

Carde de visites (CdVs) or calling card images are photographs printed on paper and mounted on card stock. They were more expensive than tintypes, but had an advantage because the image was produced with a negative and therefore could be easily duplicated. These photos were popular because the duplicates could be used like calling cards and were commonly traded among friends and visitors during the 1860s. When visiting a friend’s home, they were placed in a small footed dish called a receiver. Most homes by the 1860s had a “carte album” in the parlor.

The carte de visite was introduced by Andre’ Adolphe Eugene Disderi in 1854 and were slightly larger than a modern business card. Slow to be adopted at first, the images became all the rage in the late 1850’s when they suddenly became popular. This is why they are so commonly



Howard’s Greatest Mechanical Show on Earth – Tintype, circa 1925. The front end of a car or truck can be seen behind the small stage. This image was originally a mirror image but has been reversed so the lettering can be read. Tintypes were so popular and inexpensive that they were used well into the 20th century.



Early Carte de Visites – The bell sleeves on the dress in the left photo date it to circa 1860-1862. Bell sleeves went out of style in 1863 in favor of the bishop sleeves seen in the CdV on the right. The right photo has a three cent tax stamp on the back dating it to 1865-1866. The woman on the left appears to be pregnant. (Private collection)

found in albums and “lost relative” boxes in antique stores. They were a popular item with Civil War Soldiers and family members who could easily mail them to one another. Photos of Lincoln, Grant, and other celebrities of the era were also popular in the north.

In the final year of the Civil War, congress enacted a tax on photographs to help pay for the war requiring photographers to place a stamp on the back of images. This tax lasted from August 1864 to September 1866. Such pictures are therefore date-able and thus worth more than plain, stamp-free images.

The “carte craze” lasted from 1860 to 1866 after which the carte de visite declined in popularity due to the cabinet card. They continued in use, however, until the late 1880s.



Contemporary tintype and cabinet card of the same family dating to ca. 1885. The older son is missing from the Tintype indicating it may have been

more spur of the moment at a fair or itinerant photo booth. The cabinet card measures 4¼ x 6½ inches. The Tintype measures 2½ x 3½ inches. (Private collection)



ability to shoot outdoor scenes, private home interiors, and believe it or not, selfies! Photography that was once an expensive luxury was now an inexpensive medium available to just about anyone.

Conclusion

Photographs are truly windows to the past. If one takes the time to look more closely, quite a bit can be seen, whether intended or not. Some of the best photos are those that many people have previously overlooked. The images often end up in antique shops or thrift stores for little cost. Even if the image does not have a name or location attached, it can still be a valuable learning tool. The images on the next page are included because they say more than just a simple photograph. Please look and find out that you “can see a lot just by looking.” □



Cabinet card – A family proudly poses in front of their home, circa 1890, in Hoopeston, Illinois. (Private collection)



Carte de visites – The photo of the dapper gentleman on the left dates to circa 1865 due to the tax stamp on the back. The CdV of the children in the middle dates to the 1860s. The card on the right may date later due to the rounded corners.

Cabinet or Studio Cards

Cabinet or studio cards were the next evolution in the development of photography. Popular starting in the 1870s, they had displaced the smaller carte de visite by the late 1880s. They get their name because most of the images were taken in studios, although they were initially used for landscape views before being adapted for portraiture in 1866. They differ from the carte de visite in their larger size (4¼ x 6½ vs 2½ x 4 inches) and in the often-elaborate advertising for the photographer on the back of the card.

The earliest of these photographs, as with the carte de visite, used an albumen process where chemicals derived from eggs were used to fix the image. The result is a brown tone called sepia or sepia-tone associated with old photos, and which now can be duplicated with photo software. In the late 1890s new, more advanced techniques produced truer black and white images.

In 1888, Kodak introduced the Brownie Box Camera which was the beginning of the end of the studio card industry. Now individuals could take their own pictures and were not chained to the studio. The Brownie brought the

What do These Photographs Tell Us?



Photograph of a Confederate Veterans Reunion, circa 1890. Note the lone figure in the far upper right of the image. He is the only Black person in the picture. Drafted by the Confederate army to serve as a cook, (he was a freeman), he successfully sued for a veteran's pension. Although unwelcome, he attended reunions as an act of defiance. (Photograph courtesy of the Rutherford County Historical Society, Murfreesboro, TN)



Studio photograph of young boy pushing a cart, Cincinnati, Ohio, 1886. What is "Hokey Pokey?" Hint: It's not a dance! Do you see the bell in the foreground of the image? Could this boy be a street vendor? Is there a clue to his ethnicity in this image? The boy is a street vendor selling "Ice Cream," which was often called "Hokey Pokey" by Italians in America. (Private collection)



What is this photograph from the 1880s showing? What is the lady holding? What do you think is going in the barrel? Is there a clue to the ethnic origins of these people? Could they be pickling cabbage? Do you think they are making sauerkraut? (Private collection)



One half of a stereo card showing a graveyard scene, 1865. Does this look like a normal graveyard scene? Look closely at the headstones. What do they say? Are they real? How about the skulls just laying about? How about the people in the image? Did you guess that this is a scene from a play? (Private collection)

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EASTER AND EASTER EGGS

American Agriculturist, April 1881

IT will soon be Easter, or Easter Sunday, and many a boy and girl has looked in the almanac to see when it comes this year. Easter is the Church festival of the Resurrection of Christ, and the name comes from the German *Ostara*, a goddess of light or spring, in whose honor, in ancient times, a feast was celebrated in April of each year at about the same time as the Christian festival. In olden times the celebration of Easter lasted for more than a week, and was a time of great rejoicing. Many popular sports were engaged in, and a great deal of fun was made by those who would scarcely laugh all the rest of the year. Easter corresponds to the *pascha*, or Passover of the Jews, and is frequently called Pasque or Pask. The most interesting ancient Easter or Pasque rite, and the one most widely known at the present day, was that in which eggs were used. In the good old days, everybody, everywhere, all over the Christian world, prepared, exchanged, and ate "Pasque Eggs" on Easter morning. These eggs were often very gaily and expensively adorned. We see a little of this done at the present day, but the high art of "egging at Easter" is not now known. The eggs were stained of all colors by the use of dyes. By coating a portion of the shell in tallow, this is kept free from the coloring, and variegated eggs with strange design were produced. It used to be the custom, in Scotland, for the young people to go out early on Easter Sunday, and search for wild fowl's eggs for breakfast, and lucky would be the one who should find the largest number. This is doubtless the origin of a practice among American children, which the accompanying engraving very likely bought to mind before a word was read. Lucky is the child who finds the



AFTER THE PASQUE EGGS ON EASTER MORNING.—Drawn and Engraved for the American Agriculturist.

largest number of eggs on Easter morning! The desire to be the "lucky" one has developed the practice of making that luck depend upon the capacity to hide the greatest number of eggs day by day for weeks before the joyful morning comes. What out-of-the-way places are sought for! What depths of the hay-mow are reached, and what high beams in the barn are scaled, that fresh eggs may be put where they will keep! I remember that one spring the hens, which I took special pains to feed well for their work, did remarkably as to laying, and were particularly free from any desire for sitting. I watched them with the greatest care, and gathered the eggs daily. Enough were taken to the house to satisfy the table—none to sell—and the rest were put away in a peculiar shaped hole in the side of the hay mow. The covering was always carefully placed, so

that I might easily detect it if any one had been to my "nest." An old aunt once remarked in my hearing that the hens did not seem to do quite so well this spring, except in the way of "cackling," and there was a plenty of that. I wondered that another boy in the same family with myself did not take some interest in eggs, but he seemed as thoughtless of the coming Easter as the hens themselves. When Easter morning came I went out bright and early with a large tin pail, to milk the cow, and of course went straight to the "hen's nest." The cover had not been molested, and the eggs were there as I could feel, as I put my arm down the hole. The hay was dug away, and began to take out the eggs, but stopped after thirteen had been removed—because there were no more. This seemed strange. Yes, it was strange, and would bear looking into. Below, and a trifle to one side, I

found an opening large enough for a rat to pass to a hole in the floor below. Just at this moment I saw a young relative of mine of mine standing on the barn floor with a great basketful of oval shaped white and brown bodies, that are sometimes sold by the dozen. I looked again, and he seemed to laugh, I thought he was laughing at me, and do to this day. More than that, I think he got all his eggs out of one "nest," and did not mind how the hens could have laid them there either. I felt so sure about

the whole matter, that I did not even ask him whose eggs he had, but left him to have all his sport by himself. It was something of a disappointment to me, to not get what I went after, but perhaps it paid after all. Some people profit by sad lessons of experience, and the next year the egg matter was much more in my favor.

The picture on [the previous] page tells its own story. It is Easter morning, and the boys, and a girl too, are after the Pasque eggs. The hay mow is being searched in a thorough man-

ner, and with great success, if we may judge from the show of eggs. It is a time of considerable sport, but the one who does not enjoy it the least is not observed by the children, though he may be in their minds. It is hoped that they may all have a good Easter breakfast—"A Feast of Eggs." That the little girl may not fall or bang her basket against the ladder in descending is the sincere wish of your UNCLE HAL. □

American Agriculturist, April 1881, 162

EASTER EGG-ROLLING AT THE WHITE HOUSE IN 1887

Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper, April 23, 1887



Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper, April 23, 1887. "Washington D.C.—a unique festival—egg-rolling on the White House grounds on Easter Monday." The Easter egg-rolling tradition at the White House began in 1878 under President Rutherford B. Hayes and his wife Lucy and continues to this day. (Library of Congress)

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Canal Boat Tour – Volunteer boat crew members take guests on a narrated ride up and down a section of the original Wabash and Erie Canal (No prior seafaring experience needed!) at the Carroll County Wabash & Erie Canal Park in Delphi, Indiana. (Photo courtesy of the Carroll County Wabash & Erie Canal Association)