



MCHS News

Sept 2016

Opening Doors to Madison County History

Vol. 4 No. 5

715 N Main Street
Edwardsville, IL
62025

Hours:
Wed-Fri 9 am - 4 pm
Sunday 1 pm - 4 pm
Group Tours Available

Free Admission

Museum Phone:
618-656-7562

Library Phone:
618-656-7569

Web Address:
madcohistory.org

E-mail:
info@madcohistory.org

About Us:
The MCHS museum complex, consisting of a modern archival library, a museum in the 1836 Weir House and the Helms Collection Center, is owned by the nonprofit Madison County Historical Society and operated jointly with Madison County.

The Madison County Historical Society is a 501(c)(3) charitable organization.

WHEN GRANTFORK WAS FITZ-JAMES CROSSING

WHERE IS IT ?—We are informed that "Grant's Fork" is the name of a Post Office recently established in Madison County, but we are not advised as to what part of our county has been the recipient of said favor. The post master at this place would like to know.

The new post office was named Grantfork, (sometimes spelled "Grant Fork"), but evidently no one told the Edwardsville Postmaster. This article is from the January 20, 1870 edition of the Edwardsville Intelligencer.

The small cluster of homes known as Fitz James Crossing was located along the old stagecoach road connecting the early Illinois state capital of Vandalia to the town of Edwardsville. Today it is known as Grantfork, although residents have used Highland addresses ever since they lost their post office a few years ago. The village was originally platted as Fitz-James Crossing in 1837, then recorded in 1840 as Fitz-James. In 1866 a new plat for the village was filed giving it the name Saline. But, in 1870 the U. S. Postal Service informed the village that there was already a town named Saline with a post office in Illinois, and there couldn't be two. Residents then decided on the name "Grantfork" after the then U.S. President Ulysses S. Grant,

with "fork" being a reference to the village's location at the fork of two creeks.

But the village still had a bit of an identity crisis. Although the post office was now Grantfork, the name of the Village was not officially changed at that time. After 1870 the local newspapers all reported "Grantfork" news, but the old name of Saline was used on county and state documents until it was officially changed to Grantfork in 1917. The 1840 plat shows the village is located in Saline Township, but the later plat of 1866 extended into Leef Township with the village's Main Street marking the divide between the two townships.



Above is an undated view of northwestern Grantfork. Of note is the Catholic Church seen in the foreground and the John Bardill house on the right, across John Street. The John Bardill family donated land for both Catholic & Protestant churches in Grantfork. The Catholic Church is located on what is labeled "Public Square" on the plat shown on page 4. (MCHS)

Save the Date!
Sunday, Nov 6, 2016
Dining in History
Diamond Mineral Springs Restaurant

Reminder!
Museum Closed for Renovation Work
Archival Library Remains Open

ABOUT US

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VOLUNTEERS

There are abundant and varied opportunities for volunteers at either the museum or the archival library. Please call if interested.

MEMBERSHIPS

Several membership levels are available to those interested in supporting the work of preserving Madison County history through an MCHS membership. Memberships run on the calendar year, Jan 1-Dec 31. Applications are available on our web site, at the MCHS Museum or at the Archival Library.

PUBLICATIONS

MCHS NEWS

6 issues annually
Cindy Reinhardt, Editor

WEB SITE

madcohistory.org

ARCHIVAL LIBRARY SPOTLIGHT

By Mary Westerhold, Archival Research Manager

The Edwardsville Library of 1819

It is sometimes difficult to remember that the museum displays include many items from the archival library. However, in preparing the museum for the upcoming repair work, it became necessary to remove (at least temporarily) several library items that were currently on display. The biggest task for the library staff and volunteers was the removal, cataloging, and storage of books from the Edwardsville Library of 1819.

The catalog of the original Edwardsville Library was printed in the *Edwardsville Spectator* on November 30, 1819. Working from this catalog and other reference material, the nearly 90 volumes were verified and their condition noted before the books were prepared for storage.

So what did our ancestors consider important reading in 1819? A few of the titles include "The History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire" (8 volumes), "The History of England" (8 volumes), "The Iliad and the Odyssey of Homer" (3 volumes), "Elements of Criticism" (2 volumes), and "A Ramble Through Swisserland in the Summer of 1802". (And, yes, it is spelled "Swisserland" on the title page.) By today's standards, most of these titles seem to promise more of a cure for insomnia rather than a "can't put it down" book.

However, one title that caught the attention of one of our volunteers proved to be very interesting. It was "Naval History of the United States from the Commencement of the

Revolutionary War to the Present Time," published in 1814. There are two volumes in this history with Volume 2 containing over 60 pages of "British Vessels Captured by Public and Private Armed Vessels of the United States" beginning in 1775 and continuing through 1813. The list includes the name of the capturing vessel, the name and type of the captured vessel, number of crew and arms, contents and their value, and the disposition of the vessel. Some were captured after a "desperate action," and these notations included the number of men wounded or killed on each vessel. Some of the captured vessels were burnt while others were sent to various ports. Everyone who was working on the project became intrigued with the listing, particularly the contents of the vessels which included coffee, rum, sugar, fruits, and mahogany with total value of the contents ranging from a \$100 to over \$150,000.

Many of the books also contained an Edwardsville Library bookplate inside the front cover with a handwritten number. In addition, names of previous owners of a few of the books were inscribed in the front of the book. These included "B. Stephenson," "P. H. Winchester," "John T. Lusk," and "John Todd."

Because of their age and condition, these books will no longer be on permanent display. However, with proper exhibit cases and lighting in the museum, they can be displayed for short intervals with pages open to some of the more interesting items.

MUSEUM SPOTLIGHT

By Jenn Walta, Curator

Museum staff and volunteers have been working on cataloging, photographing, and storing any items that may be in danger of damage during museum construction. In the process, they have discovered just how many items had been crowded into some of the museum display cases over the years.

This project also allowed the curatorial staff to delve into the accession records and provide background on some of the artifacts. For example, while looking for the accession record for an antique china head doll made to resemble Mary Todd Lincoln, the staff uncovered an interesting story.



Mary Todd Lincoln doll donated by Laura Ochs (MCHS)

The doll, which had been part of a display in the Children's Room, has a blue velvet dress (now faded to green) with sashes, three petticoats and a pair of pantaloons. Around her neck is a brooch on a chain.

Laura Ochs saw the doll in a Lyons, CO antique shop when visiting her son and his family in 1974. She didn't buy it, but regretted that decision after returning to Illinois. She wrote to her son and asked him to purchase it for her, but he told her the doll had already sold. That was only "a little story telling." Ochs found Mrs. Lincoln under the Christmas tree that year.

Often the stories that accompany donations to the museum are as valuable as the item added to the collection.

RECENT MCHS NEWS



MCHS is pleased to announce that the historic Diamond Mineral Springs Restaurant in Grantfork will be the location of the 2016 Dining in History event. Although anyone can dine at the Diamond Mineral Springs Restaurant, they can't have the experience that our guests will enjoy on Sunday, November 6.

Participants who opt to arrive early will be given a walking tour of the grounds as well as the historic "Pie House," built for the Stephen Bardill family in the late 1860s.

A brief walking tour of the grounds will show guests the "lay of the land," so they can imagine what was there a century ago when guests stayed at either the Windsor Hotel or one of the cottages on the property. Hotel patrons were treated to mineral baths purported to improve their health, dining, dancing, picnics and even hay rides through the rural area. There were boats on a man-made lake (still on the property), bowling parties and strolls through elaborate gardens. The tour will be over a mowed lawn, but surfaces could be uneven so appropriate footwear is recommended.

The house, which sits at the entrance of the grounds, was in such a state of disrepair when the Michael family purchased the property in 1979 that many would have torn it down. Fortunately their love of history took that option off the table. They brought it back to a condition where for many years it provided restaurant offices and a pie bakery for the restaurant's famous "Foot-Hi Pies." Twelve years ago, their son, Gaylen, and his wife, Amy, moved into the house. They have gradually renovated and restored the house, keeping the spirit and character of the original architecture while using creativity and skill to turn it into a very special home for 21st century residents.

The "Pie House," the restaurant with attached ballroom, and one of the former cottages are the only buildings remaining on the historic property that was once a popular summer resort and health spa.

After the tour, guests will dine family style, as has been the tradition at the Diamond Mineral Springs for over a century, and will, of course, enjoy a delicious slice of pie. Dinner will be served in the former ballroom, followed by a program on the experience of visiting the mineral spa a century ago. Did the mineral water have curative powers? Was the experience only for the wealthy? How did St Louis guests travel to the hotel? These questions and more will be answered during the program by local historian Cindy Reinhardt.

For reservations, return the enclosed form or call the Madison County Archival Library at 618-656-7569. Additional reservation forms are available at the library or on our website, www.madcohistory.org. Credit card payments are accepted at the library but are not available on-line.

RENOVATION NOTES

TEMPORARY CLOSINGS FOR SAFETY

As contractors work to rebuild the chimneys and replace the roofs at the 1836 Weir House, it may also be necessary to close the Archival Library for a few days during construction to assure the safety of staff and patrons. Please call before visiting the Archival Library to make certain it is open. As previously announced, the Historical Museum will be closed for the duration of the work.

A SNEAK PEAK AT THE FUTURE

Although the removal of paint from the bricks of the Weir House will not be part of these early renovation phases, visitors can take a sneak peak at what it will look like in the future. The architect and contractor determined that since all the roof surfaces are being replaced, they should first remove the paint from the bricks above the back porch. If not done now, the shingles would be damaged by the chemicals used to remove the paint later. The paint is being removed because it causes 19th century soft bricks to deteriorate.



Nick Clements of James G. Staat Tuckpointing Company is removing paint from the wall above the Weir House porch roof while others (not pictured) work to repair the chimneys. The contractor for renovations is Tindall Construction of Granite City. (Reinhardt)

NEW AND RENEWING MEMBERS

July-Aug ♦ Thank you for supporting MCHS!

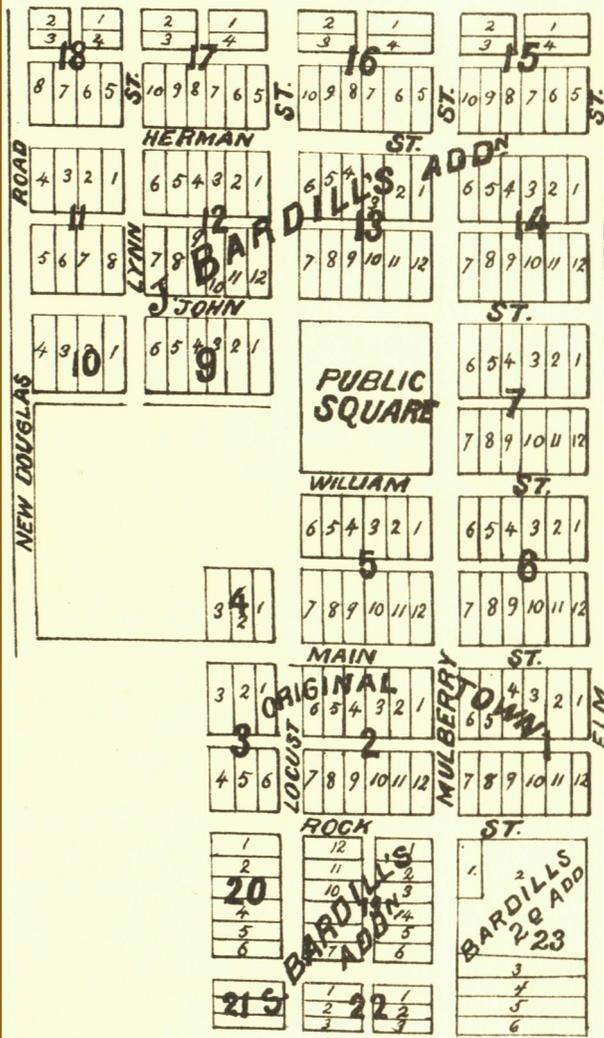
Individual \$35

Maxine Callies

Charles Howard

THE BARDILL FAMILY

SALINE



The above plat of Saline is from the 1892 "New Atlas of Madison County." Diamond Mineral Springs is located to the left of the area shown on this map, and north of Main Street.

THANK YOU

Historian Roland Harris has been writing about the history of Highland and surrounding communities for many years. He has a special interest in Grantfork because both he and his wife are descended from early settlers of the community. The essays on Grantfork throughout this newsletter contain excerpts and information gleaned from Harris's "A Thought to Remember" column in the *Highland News Leader*. Mr. Harris has written this series for 27 years. He often comments in his column that it would not be possible without the generosity of many collectors of Grantfork history and genealogy. We are grateful to Mr. Harris and his company of historians.

In August 1840 the Josias Bardill family arrived from Switzerland and settled in Saline Township. The Bardill family consisted of Josias, his wife Clara (nee Marguth) and two sons, Conrad and Stephen. A third son, John, was born after they were living in Madison County. Their farm was located in the southeast quarter of Section 16 in Saline Township.

The three Bardill brothers in 1866 laid out the town of Saline. The new village was much smaller than the original settlement of Fitz James, but two additions in 1870 included the property previously excluded. (The John Bardill Addition and Bardill Second Addition). Stephen Bardill also made an addition to Saline about 1872. Four blocks (19-22) were added south of Rock Street.

Of the three Bardill brothers, Stephen's family is the only one that remained in Madison County. Stephen and his wife, Elisa (nee Janett) raised three children to adulthood. The eldest, Josias, is pictured below in the 1930s.

Conrad Bardill (1836-1904)

After service in the Civil War, the oldest brother, Conrad, invested in a Grantfork mercantile business with his brother Stephen, but in the late 1860s decided to become a physician. He attended Humboldt Medical School in St. Louis and afterwards moved to Longmont, CO and later to Los Angeles, CA.

Stephen Bardill (1838-1914)

In 1862 Bardill opened a stone quarry and lime kiln with a brick yard in Leef Township on the property that is west of what is now Grantfork. It is believed that many of the older brick buildings in town were constructed with Bardill bricks, including the 1866 hotel at the corner of Main and Locust. This historic building is still standing and is being restored.

A few years later, in 1870, he sank a shaft while prospecting for coal. At a depth of 142 feet he struck a large spring of water, but didn't have it tested until 1886. Then he discovered that the water contained a "high standard of medicinal properties." Thus, Diamond Mineral Springs, the health spa, was started. He began offering baths in the spring water, and in 1888 Bardill built the Windsor Hotel to accommodate overnight guests. In the early years the baths were not heated except by the sun and facilities were primitive.



Pictured above are Josias G. and Elizabeth (Harnisch) Bardill and their three surviving children (l-r), Orville, Ruth and Hubert. It was taken on their 50th wedding anniversary in 1937 at their home located at 929 9th Street in Highland. Josias, a son of Stephen Bardill, became a successful merchant-banker who served multiple terms as an Illinois State Representative and Senator.

(Courtesy of Stephen Bardill's great-grandson, Robert Tibbitts)

THE BARDILL FAMILY (CONT FROM PAGE 4)

Bardill sold the Diamond Mineral Springs to Anton Kraft in a property exchange in 1892 where Bardill took possession of the hotel and tavern built in 1866. Anton Kraft paid an additional \$10,000 and took ownership of the Diamond Mineral Springs and Windsor Hotel.

John Bardill (1841-1930)

In 1858 the older Bardill brothers purchased a store on the corner of Main and Locust, called Bardill Brothers. In the 1860s John bought out his brothers and it became Bardill's Cash Store. As proprietor, John Bardill was also Grantfork's first postmaster. John sold the store in 1873, and the following year built the beautiful brick home that can still be admired in Grantfork today on the northeast corner of Locust and John Streets.

Although he retired as a merchant, he had many other endeavors. After a trip to Europe in 1875, he accepted a position as County Commissioner and became very active in Republican politics. In 1891 he secured the patent rights for his "Red Cross" corn harvester and in 1892 had 500 machines produced for sale. He remained fire chief of the Grantfork Fire Department until May 1899 and in April 1904 he was elected town clerk. He also had an interest in an early Grantfork creamery. In 1909 he sold his home to Jacob Reaber and moved to California where his daughter Emma and her husband, Morris Ferguson, had located. Unfortunately, by this time his brother Conrad, who had moved to California in the 1880s, was no longer living.



Pictured above is the 1874 home of John Bardill as it appears today on John Street in Grantfork. The house was purchased by the Raeber family in 1909 who resided there for several generations. Roland Harris's wife, Lorna, a Raeber descendent, along with her sister Ellen, told Roland they remembered Christmases there and "the big rooms with the tall high ceilings, the player piano, the beautiful red love seats and matching chairs, the feather Christmas tree standing on the table in front of the south window and the hand-blown German ornaments, with candles on the tree, but never lighted." A member of the Michael family, current owners of Diamond Mineral Springs, restored and lives in the historic home today. (Reinhardt)

EARLY BUSINESSES

The earliest recorded store in Grantfork was opened on the north side of Main Street by John Duncan in 1840. He also kept a sort of tavern called the Fitz James Hotel. The buildings occupied by these businesses are no longer in existence, having been destroyed by fire some years after Duncan's death. R. D. Legitt put up the second store, but soon sold out to William Schum, who in 1858 sold to the Bardill brothers. The first blacksmith shop was started by a Mr. Herin. There would be numerous stores and blacksmith shops over the years, but an early industry that is of special note is the creamery.

Grantfork had a number of creameries over the years, but one that stands out was a cooperative built by farmers in the 1890s. The Grantfork Creamery

specialized in producing butter. Butter from the plant was shipped to St. Louis and New York in iced-down tubs and boxes. The work was all done without the benefit of electricity. The company had a 20-horsepower boiler that was used to run a small engine which in turn pulled the churn. Cold spring water and ice kept the product from spoiling. The creamery closed in 1917 when it was merged with the Highland Condensary (Dairy).

The most noted business though was the Diamond Mineral Springs which brought people and jobs to the small community. There is more about the Diamond Mineral Springs and the Windsor Hotel in the essays on the Bardill and Kraft families included in this issue of the *MCHS News*.

This postcard (left) shows the Grantfork Creamery. The building is no longer in existence. (MCHS)



THE KRAFT FAMILY AT DIAMOND MINERAL SPRINGS

In 1855, the Kraft family moved from St. Louis to Leef Township where they purchased a farm near the village of Fitz James. One of their sons, Anthony "Anton" Kraft (1842-1913) was running the old hotel in Grantfork in 1892 when he purchased the Diamond Mineral Springs in a trade with Stephen Bardill. Kraft's entrepreneurial spirit would bring many changes to what became one of Grantfork's most important businesses.

Under Kraft's management the Windsor Hotel at the Diamond Mineral Springs was expanded to include 30 large airy rooms with wide views of the surrounding countryside. Electric lights and indoor plumbing were added to provide a taste of luxury at a time when many did not have these features in their homes and an electric call button was available to call for service at any time. Private cottages were also available near Windsor Lake.

The hotel had hot and cold mineral baths on the second floor where travelers could experience the baths without having to leave the building. The baths could be followed with a massage by one of the expert staff. Thousands came during the season, May through September, to take the waters. Many were expecting cures or relief from various ailments that the rich mineral water was purported to cure.

The grounds were also developed so that visitors could enjoy 40 acres of walking trails, reading glens, formal gardens, a lake for boating and fishing and many other amenities. These provided extras for the guests who came for a mineral bath, but also made the Mineral Springs a vacation package that was appropriate for a day, a week or even a month-long stay.

Kraft was a master at promotion and provided regular "articles" as well as advertisements to the local newspa-

pers that included lists of visitors who had enjoyed the hotel in the past week and their special activities, i.e. birthday celebrations, dancing, hay rides, etc.

The restaurant became famous for its fried chicken dinners that could be eaten "in" or on the grounds as a picnic. Much of the food served was raised on the premises where there was a cider press, grist mill, ice houses, a creamery and more in the complex that was all part of the Diamond Mineral Springs.

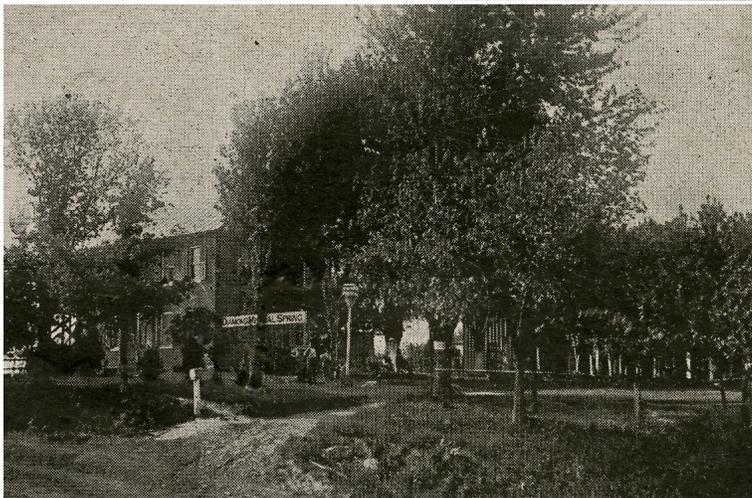
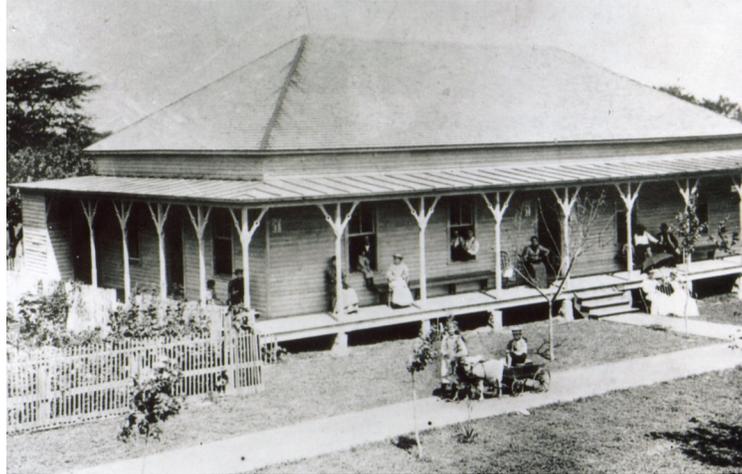
Kraft and his second wife, Anna (nee Gross) had eleven children and most helped run the Mineral Springs complex. Sons Alvin and Arthur, especially Alvin, ran the business after the death of their father in 1913, but many in the family went into hotel or restaurant professions later in life. Today, the restaurant is still going strong, but the spa business was nearly over by the time the Great Depression came to an end. Only a few faithful customers still

remained. The Kraft family was associated with the Diamond Mineral Springs until they sold it to the Hanser family in 1954. The big hotel was torn down in 1957. By that time it was filled with chickens and other birds. Two generations of the Hanser family ran the restaurant before it was sold to the current owners, Brad and Vanessa Michael, in

1979. There have been just four owners since the Windsor Hotel was built in 1888.

The restaurant is still a place to go for a "home-cooked" meal served family style with a chaser of its famous "Foot-Hi Pie" in your choice of flavors. The dining room (1897) and dance hall (1892) look much the way they did when built more than a century ago, making the Diamond Mineral Springs Madison County's oldest restaurant in continuous operation.

Pictured in these photographs taken more than a century ago are (from the top): The Windsor Hotel at the Diamond Mineral



Springs, built in 1888 but expanded in the 1890s to accommodate more guests; The Diamond Mineral Springs Ballroom where MCHS will hold their Dining in History event on November 6; The residence of A. J. Kraft as shown on a postcard sent in 1911 to Emma Schaaque of Edwardsville by her sister Anna. Anna described the resort to Emma saying, "It is so nice down here, can't imagine I am not a bit lonesome. Am taking it easy. Tell the rest hello. Your sister, Anna." (MCHS)

GRANTFORK CHURCHES

Grantfork has two churches, both with roots dating back to 1872 and both built on property donated by the Bardill family. The Catholic Church was given a full block to allow room for a school, and the Evangelical Church was given a half block.

The 1872 St. Gertrude's Catholic Church was a simple brick building. The interior walls were exposed brick and it was scantily furnished. In 1881 a sanctuary was added to the church that greatly enhanced services, but later caused problems when the sanctuary began to separate from the old church. A new church, using materials salvaged from the old building, opened its doors in 1905. The new church with its classic architecture and beautifully appointed interior was refurbished in 1996 when the congregation celebrated the 125th anniversary of the St. Gertrude parish.

Grantfork's Protestant church was organized in 1872 by a group of twelve men that included John and Stephen Bardill along with many names that can be found in their family tree. Construction of the Universal Christian Church began in 1872 and was completed in 1873. In 1929 the congregation built a new church at a cost of \$19,000 on the same property and changed the name of the church to the Grantfork Evangelical Church (Lutheran). A few years later, with the merger of the Evangelical and Reformed denominations, it became the Grantfork Evangelical and Reformed Church, and with another merger in 1962, the name changed once again to the Grantfork United Church of Christ.

Cemeteries were established by both Grantfork churches, the Protestant cemetery in 1878 and the Catholic cemetery in 1874.



Grantfork's first churches, both established in 1872, were the Lutheran Evangelical Church shown above (1872 building) and a vintage photo of St. Gertrude's Catholic Church's 1904 edifice. (Roland Harris and MCHS)



EDUCATION

Grantfork's first schools were constructed in 1872, the same year that the churches were established. The Catholic school was first held in part of the church building, then in the new parsonage built in 1878. In 1880 a two-room frame school house was built at a cost of \$580. The school struggled, having a combination of lay instructors or nuns, when available, and closing completely during construction of the new church in 1903-1904. In 1915 the school closed its doors permanently.

The two-room brick public school (at right) was built in 1872 and used until 1948 when a new building with four classrooms, a gymnasium and cafeteria was built immediately behind the old school. The old school was razed as soon as the new school was completed. That school today serves area third and fourth grade students.





Madison County Historical Society

Opening Doors to Madison County History

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THE VILLAGE HALL AND JAIL

WHERE ARE THEY?

Looking for Director Suzanne Dietrich and the museum staff during renovation? Staff at the Archival Library have carved out a number of work stations for them at the library, but some of them will also be working at the Helms Collection Center preparing exhibits and continuing with the work of inventory and documentation of artifacts. MCHS collected artifacts of Madison County for about 85 years before the purchase of a museum computer inventory system. It's a big job.

CHRISTMAS IS COMING!

Know someone who would enjoy the MCHS News? All memberships begin and renew on January 1, making Christmas the perfect time to give an MCHS membership to friends or family that love Madison County history. (No wrapping or shipping involved!) Gift certificates are available. Call 618-656-7569.

In March 1866 a village government was organized with John Leef as the first president, but so far as is known, didn't hold regular elections until 1899. Meetings were held in the school house until the David Trautner home was purchased in 1915. The home was built by carpenter/architect Fridolin Oswald in 1868 with a distinctive trough at the end of the eaves. This architectural detail was a hallmark of Oswald buildings and is easily recognized in other village buildings.

The board approved an expense of \$300 to convert part of this new village hall into a jail. The building, which still exists today, was used as a seat of government until 1996



The old Village Hall as it appears today. Notice the unusual eaves. (Reinhardt)

when meetings were moved to the new Senior Citizen Center.

MARY'S RESEARCH TIP

How many of you have seen these codes and wondered about them? According to www.qrstuff.com, "A QR Code (it stands for "Quick Response") is a mobile phone readable barcode that can store website URL's, plain text, phone numbers, email addresses and pretty much any other alphanumeric data." To use a QR code, you need an app on your smartphone or iPhone which can be downloaded free from your app store. While they have been around for several years on various products and brochures, museums and libraries also use them to enhance the visitor experience. Check out the link below for how the Missouri History Museum is currently using QR codes to enhance its Route 66 exhibit.

<http://www.historyhappenshere.org/archives/7792>





Madison County Historical Society

Opening Doors to Madison County History

2017 MCHS MEMBERSHIP BENEFITS

- ◆ Six issues of MCHS News full of interesting, informative stories of Madison County’s Heritage.
- ◆ Access to *Time Travelers*, a reciprocal membership network of over 200 historic sites and museums throughout the United States. These benefits may include free or reduced admission, gift shop Invitations to receptions and special programs throughout the year.
- ◆ Invitations to receptions and special programs throughout the year.
- ◆ 10% discount at the MCHS events and at the MCHS gift shop
- ◆ Join now and enjoy benefits beginning NOW and continuing through December, 2017.

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- \$1,000 John Weir Membership
- \$ 500 Elijah Lovejoy Membership
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The Madison County Historical Society is a 501(c)(3) organization. Membership contributions are tax deductible to the extent permitted by law

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