



# MCHS News

July 2013

Opening Doors to Madison County History

Vol. 1, No. 4

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, the 1836 Weir House Museum and the Helms Collection Center, is owned and operated by the non-profit Madison County Historical Society with assistance from Madison County.

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

## THE EDWARDS TRACE “Old Tales and New Discoveries”

“Old Tales and New Discoveries” about the Edwards Trace, an old Indian trail and migration path that began in Kaskaskia and led to present-day Peoria, will be the topic of discussion, by historian David Brady on Sunday, August 25 at 2 PM at the MCHS Archival Library.

Brady and other historians and archeologists have spent years documenting evidence of the “trace” which ran through Madison County. The location of the “trace,” an early word for road, influenced where early pioneers settled as well as the location of early forts such as Fort Russell.

The road was named after Territorial Governor Ninian Edwards after he led a contingent of rangers along the trace to Fort Clark (Peoria) while pursuing a band of Kickapoo during the War of 1812. Edwards later became the third governor of Illinois and is the namesake of the City of Edwardsville.

The Edwards Trace served as the mainland route north for early pioneers who were not using the Mississippi and Illinois Rivers for travel.

The illustrated presentation will cover the historical background of the trace along with images of known locations on the trace today. The program is free and open to the general public.

## JULY - AUGUST CALENDAR

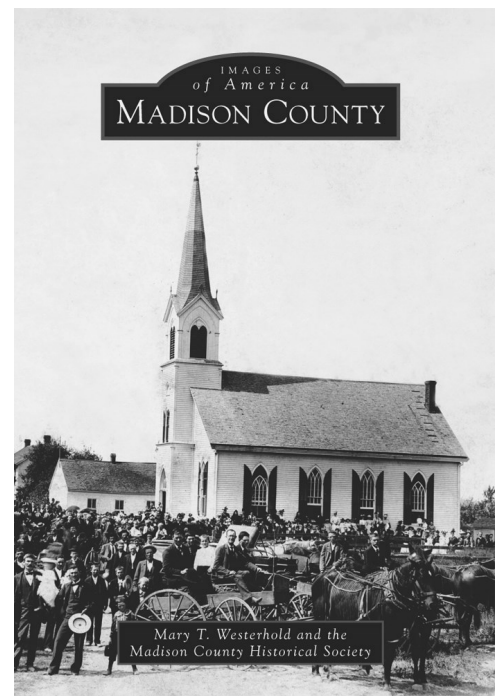
Sunday, August 25,  
2 PM - MCHS Archival Library  
*Old Tales and New Discoveries*  
*The Edwards Trace*

Presenter: Historian David Brady

*Continuing Exhibit*  
“If I Fall, My Grave Shall Be Made in Alton”  
Lovejoy’s Journey from Minister to Martyr

## NINETEENTH CENTURY MADISON COUNTY RESORTS

Madison County summers may be getting warmer, but one hundred years ago, residents still found it necessary to escape the heat. Those who could afford it, moved north during the hottest weeks of summer to resorts in Wisconsin or Michigan. Others went to Europe for the summer.  
*Continued on page 4*



This wonderful new pictorial of Madison County, authored by MCHS Archival Library Research Manager Mary Westerhold, has just arrived. A 10% member discount is available at the MCHS gift shop. Although the book is available elsewhere, the historical society receives the greatest benefit when the book is purchased from us. We appreciate your patronage!

## MCHS BOARD

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Archival Research Asst.  
Carol Frisse  
Archival Research Asst.  
Karen Stoeber  
Archival Research Asst.  
Jenn Walta  
Curator

## 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 website, at the MCHS Museum or at the Archival Library.

## PUBLICATIONS

### MCHS NEWS

6 issues annually  
Cindy Reinhardt, Editor

### WEB SITE

[MadCoHistory.org](http://MadCoHistory.org)

# ARCHIVAL LIBRARY SPOTLIGHT

By Mary Westerhold, Archival Research Manager

One of the more interesting donations we have received recently is a collection of material relating to the BRANDES family of Marine, IL. The material came from estates of Esther and Edna BRANDES, two daughters of John and Mathilda ADLER BRANDES. Esther and Edna never married and after their deaths, the family material came into the possession of a cousin, who donated it to the Archival Library. The cousin felt the information should be where others could access it. Because the BRANDES family owned a store in Marine for many years, there were

many photos of their business and other scenes in Marine included in the donation, along with family photos and family information.

## EDITOR'S NOTE

Researching local history is always interesting but can also be challenging. Beginning with this edition, you will find "Mary's Research Tip" on page 8.

But here's a tip from me. You can always count on the knowledgeable employees of the MCHS Archival Library and Museum for generous assistance. They will embrace your project and provide incredible insight into where to look next. The archival library has many great resources, but their best resource is the staff. Stop by sometime!

# MUSEUM SPOTLIGHT

By Jenn Walta, Curator

A shaving horse discovered in the basement of the museum is this month's spotlight item. According to 1840 Census information, 2,855 coopers worked within the confines of Madison County. Coopers provided a valuable service to county residents, especially agricultural workers, since the baskets and barrels that they made were used to store and haul harvested goods.

These men made tubs, casks, barrels, and similar items on this artifact known as a "coopers' bench." The word "cooper" was derived from "kuper," the lower Saxon word for tub. The bench, also known as a shaving horse, was a three in one tool for coopers. It functioned as a seat, work bench, and vice.

Coopers used froes as well as wooden mallets to shave and form pieces of wood. In order to make a barrel, basket, or cask, the cut staves (the individual pieces of wood that eventually form objects such as barrels) were soaked in water until the

wood became pliable.

On this particular bench, the cooper sat on the flat end of the bench with his legs extended forward under the bench. In order to secure a piece of wood, the cooper brought the pegs under the bench toward him. This

would lift the large block of wood up away from the bench and open the "vice." The cooper then placed a piece of wood to be worked on between the large block and pushed the pegs back towards the end of the bench to lock the piece of wood in place.



*This wooden cooper's bench or shaving horse was donated to the museum by Mrs. Goddard in 1964. Make sure to stop by the museum and check out this wonderful piece of Madison County agricultural and industrial history.*



# RECENT MCHS NEWS

## ROUTE 66 FESTIVAL

Thanks to everyone who volunteered at Edwardsville's Route 66 Festival June 8-9 at City Park. The MCHS Route 66 map, shown below, was again a popular feature where festival visitors could add notes of their favorite sights along the historic Mother Road.



A MCHS program on Route 66 in Madison County, scheduled for June 2, was cancelled when a severe storm knocked out power to MCHS facilities and most of Edwardsville.

## VOLUNTEERS NEEDED FOR PROBATE PROJECT

We have started a new project at the Archival Library and we are **SEEKING VOLUNTEERS!** Working with the Madison County Circuit Clerk's Office, we are examining probate files from the early 1900s and extracting the wills for retention in the Madison County Circuit Clerk's Office.

The work is interesting as you discover history in the various documents and receipts of Madison County businesses nearly a century ago. Would you like to help preserve Madison County Probate Records? Are you able to volunteer a few hours a week on Wednesday, Thursday, or Friday in a comfortable, friendly environment? (Hours are flexible!) For information or to volunteer, contact Mary Westerhold at the Madison County Archival Library (618) 656-7569 or at [mtwesterhold@co.madison.il.us](mailto:mtwesterhold@co.madison.il.us)

**NOTE: If you have dust or mold allergies this is NOT the volunteer project for you. However, if you are interested in volunteering at the Archival Library, we can find a project for you!**

## COMING EVENTS

### A LOOK AHEAD: PROGRAMMING, NEWSLETTERS & EXHIBITS

In November the newsletter will feature nationally known individuals of Madison County a century ago, especially those with names that might not be recognized today. The MCHS Museum has artifacts related to many of these individuals and welcomes suggestions of people to include in this issue.

The focus in January 2014 will be the three generation Kane family of architects whose work can be found throughout Madison County. If you can identify a building designed by Michael Kane, Edward Kane, Sr., or Edward Kane, Jr. please contact Cindy Reinhardt at 618-656-1294.



### FIRST SATURDAYS

#### LAND OF GOSHEN COMMUNITY MARKET

MCHS has signed on as hosts of a community table at the Land of Goshen Community Market in downtown Edwardsville. Representatives from the society will be at the popular farmers market on the first Saturday of each month through October.

The Land of Goshen Community Market is open 8 a.m. - Noon every Saturday from the second week in May through the third Saturday in October. It is located on the 100 block of St. Louis Street on the south side of the Madison County Courthouse. Produce, plants, organic meat and artisan products are available at the market.

Stop by the MCHS tent to purchase MCHS publications, including our new pictorial history of Madison County. Volunteers will be happy to answer questions about the Society and its collections.

***Coming in September - History of Surveying***

*Continued from page 1*

But for the vast majority, in the days before air conditioning, local resorts and parks were the solution. The cool breezes at country resorts provided relief from the heat, as well as entertainment.

Illinois resorts, especially those accessible by trolley or train, were popular with both Missouri and Illinois residents. The following pages will focus on the larger resorts that because of accessibility by mass transit attracted enormous crowds on warm summer days.

East of Granite City were two resorts on the northern shores of Horseshoe Lake that were also popular fishing camps. Four miles north of Alton visitors flocked to Clifton Terrace on the Mississippi River and in the eastern part of the county, Diamond Mineral Springs Hotel and Health Resort in Grantfork was a popular destination.



Almost all Horseshoe Lake resorts sponsored a Friday night Fish Fry, but if you wanted to cook your own, there were numerous places that sold fresh fish along the road to the resorts.

## MOELLENBROCK'S RESORT

There were many resorts over the years at Horseshoe Lake, but the most popular and longest lasting, were Moellenbrock's, at the northeast corner of the lake, and Bricker and Young's Horseshoe Lake Park, later called Stemmer's. Stemmer's was located a few miles west of Moellenbrock's on the north end of the lake.

Founded by William Moellenbrock in 1875, Moellenbrock's Resort was one of the best known gathering places along the shore of Horseshoe Lake. After an earlier building was destroyed by fire in



1880, a new and larger one was constructed. The new Moellenbrock's provided a ballroom for dances on the third floor, five guest rooms on the second floor and a bowling alley in the basement. The

tavern and restaurant were on the ground floor. Most guests came for the day, and didn't need over-night accommodations.



*Moellenbrock's Hotel and Resort  
Courtesy of Six Mile Regional Library Distr.*

"Uncle Bill" Moellenbrock's resort encompassed more than 180 acres and accommodated thousands of guests on any given weekend afternoon in summer. On one end of the resort was located the Moellenbrock Rod and Gun Club for fishing and hunting year round. Fishing was always good at Horseshoe Lake in those days, especially bass,



*Postcard of Moellenbrock's beach area*

crappie and perch. The resort provided 75 rental boats for anglers looking for a productive morning, but the boats were also used by gentlemen offering their lady friends a romantic trip onto the lake. A large boating dock was in front of the hotel.

Church and school groups, union picnics and other organizations often met on the grounds that included landscaped trails and shaded picnic grounds. Next to the picnic area was an open air dance floor where dances led by local orchestras were held in the summer. There was also an area for rides and organized games such as horseshoes, fat man races (participants had to weigh over 200 pounds) and watermelon eating contests. Rose Marie Walker Bauer, who grew up on Walker Island, remembers looking across the lake at the ferris wheel and merry-go-round at Moellenbrock's.

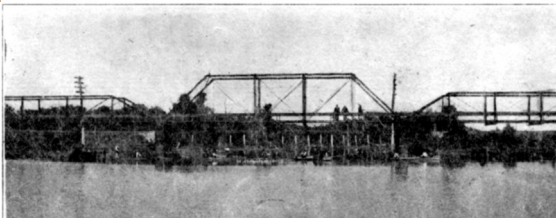
Farther along the eastern and southern shore of the lake were club houses owned by prominent St. Louis professional men. There were a dozen or more of these houses at one time, including the Diamond Hunting and Fishing Club owned by the August Busch family located along the south side of the lake.

The "electric" car known as the "Yellow Hammer" brought residents from St. Louis, Granite City and other destinations, directly to Horseshoe Lake. For special events that would attract larger crowds, special trains were hired to bring the visitors out to the resorts. In the early years, a ferry then took visitors across the slough to Moellenbrock's. Later, a one-lane bridge allowed Moellenbrock's to send a bus for them.

Moellenbrock and his wife operated



# HORSESHOE LAKE RESORTS



*The bridge to Moellenbrock's Resort*

the resort until 1889, after which on-site managers were hired for a few years

when the family was living in Venice, IL. The business returned to family management by the early 1920s. The last of the Moellenbrocks to operate the business died in 1947. The resort was sold and reopened as the Pioneer House, which did not have the reputation enjoyed by the Moellenbrocks. Several older residents reported that the Pioneer House was a "cat house."

## BRICKER & YOUNG'S HORSESHOE LAKE PARK

Another popular resort on Horseshoe Lake was known under several names. It began as Bricker and Young's "Horse Shoe Lake Park," in the 1880s then became Stemmer's at the turn of the century. Like Moellenbrock's, this resort also had a hotel, restaurant and tavern, outdoor dance pavilion and facilities for fishermen. Both resorts were also often referred to as Moellenbrock's Grove or Stemmer's Grove.

Stemmer's had the advantage of being right next to the trolley stop and early newspapers reported the sight of the train passing by on the way to Horseshoe Lake with fishing poles sticking out many of the windows. Visitors to the other resorts knew they had to be back to Stemmer's by 7 p.m. or they would miss their ride home unless a special excursion train had been hired. Although it seems early, a 7 o'clock train allowed for visitors to be home before dark in the days before

many had electricity.

It is unknown how many acres encompassed Stemmer's Lake Side Park, but the facility was able to accommodate thousands of people. One report in 1928 said

there were 5,000 guests for "Hungarian Day out at Stemmer's Grove." The event was a Republican political rally sponsored by the United Hungarian Society. Other stories tell of rowing contests and other athletic events drawing huge crowds to the resort in addition to the usual group

picnics and individuals looking for a day in the country.

Picnics were an annual event for most churches, schools and many other organizations in the heyday of these resorts (1880s-1930s) and their demise is surely one of the many reasons the popularity of these resorts began to wane.

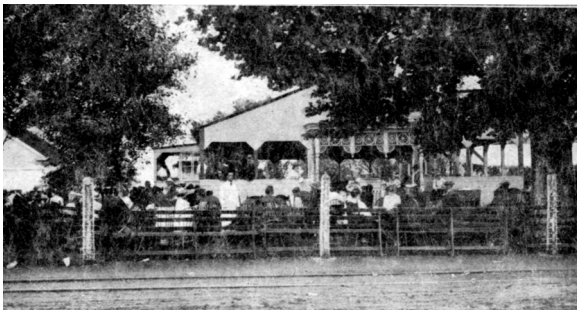


*Horseshoe Lake Side Park  
Also known as Bricker and Young's or Stemmer's*



### Swivel Gun

Before state laws restricting hunting were enacted in 1918, William Moellenbrock and other commercial hunters at Horseshoe Lake would use a swivel gun to shoot ducks and geese on the lake. Anchored in the bow of a duck boat, the gun could kill or injure a hundred birds with one shot. The birds provided feathers that could be sold as well as meat for St. Louis restaurants. The gun was eight feet long and if mounted incorrectly would turn the boat over. Moellenbrock hung the gun on the wall of his tavern where it remained long after his death in 1924. Here an unidentified man is holding Moellenbrock's gun in this photograph published in the November 13, 1937 Edwardsville Intelligencer



*Dance pavilion (left) and entrance to Bricker and Young's Horseshoe Lake Resort  
Photos courtesy of Six Mile Regional Library District*

Moellenbrock's was the setting for a short novel in the late 1880s called "On Both Sides of the Ocean" by Mr. H. Hartmann of St. Louis, a son-in-law of Henry C. Gerke of Edwardsville. Copies of the book are difficult to obtain today.



# DIAMOND MINERAL SPRINGS

## Horseshoe Lake Today

According to Ferd Strackeljahn whose family has lived in the Horseshoe Lake area for several generations, Moellenbrock's hotel and restaurant, which became the Pioneer House, was destroyed by fire in late fall of 1949. A Frito Lay facility on Route 111 is now on some of the Moellenbrock property.

Stemmer's complex of resort buildings was eventually reduced to simply a tavern and restaurant in later years known as Spuddy's. That too is gone now as well as most of the old clubhouses that used to line the lake. The state began purchasing property around the lake in the mid-1970s for a State Park that now encompasses nearly 2,000 acres, including the lake itself, Walker Island and most of the shoreline property.

◆ ◆ ◆

### TRIVIA NOTES

In the early years of the last century, it should be noted that the owners of the resorts and fishing camps were regularly fined for selling liquor without a license, but since they were outside city limits and the county at the time did not sell liquor licenses, there was no legal provision for them to sell liquor. It became customary for them to be indicted at periodic intervals, and there was no negative connotation attached to the indictment.

The Diamond Mineral Springs Health and Summer Resort was located in Grantfork, IL, 6 miles north of Highland. The mineral content of the waters was discovered in 1886 by Stephen Bardill, who first established a crude system of baths heated by the sun. By 1888 he had added the Windsor Hotel, a deluxe 40 room facility. Anton Kraft, originally hired



as the hotel's proprietor, purchased the Diamond Mineral Springs from Bardill in 1892. Three generations of the Kraft family would own the resort before selling it in 1954.

Advertisements in the early 1890s claimed the mineral waters would cure "rheumatism, paralysis, nervous debility, skin diseases, dyspepsia, kidney and bladder problems, etc." An idea of the popularity of the baths can be seen from an advertisement in 1889 that said "over one thousand MORE baths have been taken this season than last. Baths were given on the second floor of the hotel where guests could modestly prepare and take the baths without leaving the hotel.

West of the hotel was Diamond Mineral Springs Park which consisted of 40 acres of landscaped grounds with flower gardens and fountains, shaded gravel walkways and a "reader's glen." Chairs, swings, benches and tables for picnics were provided as well as a lake for boating, fishing and swimming.

Although the Diamond Mineral Springs began as a health spa, the Kraft family expanded the facility to include much more, some of which can still be visited today. A dance pavilion was added in 1892 and a restaurant/tavern five years later in 1897. A hall for bowling and billiards was built, and a baseball diamond and camp-ground added.

Guests were often taken on evening hayrides, to neighboring farms for barn dances or, on moonlit evenings, for a drive through the countryside.

The complex raised its own vegetables and had a grist mill and cider press in addition to a creamery for fresh milk and butter. Two ice houses, a windmill, and waterworks also contributed to the comfort of their guests.

The restaurant was known for its picnic lunches, providing thousands of them per year as



*Diamond Mineral Springs Hotel (top) and the entrance to the Diamond Mineral Springs from the intersection of Route 160 and Pocahontas Road*

school and church groups, as well as many businesses made use of the grounds.

Visitors from afar, as well as local residents, often arrived by train. The Clover Leaf railroad offered a round trip excursion rate of \$1.25 from Edwardsville to Alhambra where a "hack" from the hotel would meet every train to transport visitors to the Springs. Locals made day



# DIAMOND MINERAL SPRINGS

trips for picnics or spent summer vacations at the resort. The business was not open during winter months in the early days of the resort.

Today the restaurant and dance pavilion at Diamond Mineral Springs offer visitors a good meal in a historic setting where they have served their famous chicken dinner for over a century. They are

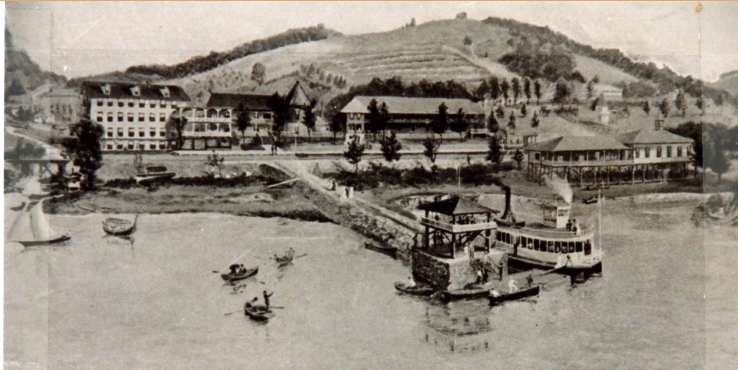
also known for their "foot-high" pies. Entrees are ordered individually but meals are served family style with mashed potatoes and milk gravy, green beans, slaw, pickled beets and fresh biscuits served with homemade apple butter. They also have a newer building (1981) called The Back Porch with fine dining and space for wedding receptions and other gatherings.

## CLIFTON TERRACE

From the time the railroad built their platform at Clifton Terrace in 1889, the countryside location along the Mississippi River became accessible to great numbers of visitors. The Bluff Line railroad

was the owner of the wooded grounds in the immediate vicinity of the railroad platform. They expanded their facility, adding a dance pavilion and eventually a restaurant/tavern.

The line sold excursions to "the woods" in early advertisements, but those soon changed as the popularity of the resort grew. The railroad hosted events to draw additional crowds to their picnics included



*Clifton Terrace hotels, restaurants, the 25 acre wooded picnic grounds and the terraced hillside are all visible in this picture.*

regattas that could be seen from the windows of the train and steam boat excursions from the Clifton dock. Orchestras were hired for the regularly scheduled dances in ad-

dition to other entertainment, similar to the resorts at Horseshoe Lake, i.e. dining, picnicking, boating, bowling, and billiards.

Louis Stiritz's adjoining property on Clifton Terrace had a hotel that could accommodate more than a hundred guests who, before the Bluff Line, had to arrive by carriage along rough roads or by boat. Stiritz moved to the area in the early 1850s

*Continued on page 8*



*The Stiritz family, Louis and his wife second and third from left, at Clifton Terrace. Photo courtesy of the Alton Museum of History and Art*

Alton Evening Telegraph  
June 1, 1929

*(excerpt)*

"Louis Stiritz, the builder of the Clifton Terrace Hotel came to the United States in 1848 to avoid serving in the German Army. He was educated as a travelling salesman and spoke four languages. He travelled through the East, South and middle West seeking a spot which resembled his old home...and in 1852 he bought the old homestead.

He at once set to work building the terraces of stone up the steep incline back of his home and started a vineyard. It took years of strenuous labor to quarry the stone, grade and build the terrace.

In 1852 he started to blast out a wine cellar under the hill near his home, 30 feet long and 16 feet wide. It was blasted from solid rock and arched with rocks, chiseled by hand into wedges. The cellar was completed in 1856. A year later he dug a well blasting out 21 feet of solid rock to get to a spring he knew he could depend upon.

In the year 1874 the St. Louis Cement and Lime Co. built a plant at Clifton Terrace, Ill. making a cement that rivaled Portland cement. It was at this time Mr. Stiritz started the hotel business, boarding the men employed at the cement mill and serving

*Continued on page 8*



## Madison County Historical Society

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*Continued from page 7*  
lunches and wine. He was noted as a wine maker for many miles around.

In 1889 the long hoped for railroad was built and Mr. Stiritz gave them the right of way through his property. In return they wanted to name the town after him, but he suggested naming it for the cliffs and terraces.”

♦ ♦ ♦

### MCHS Members

#### New & Renewing

#### April

Philip M. Corlew, Edw  
Rebecca Pinkas, Edw  
Joanne Reitz, St. Louis  
Shirley Ritchie, Savanna, IL

#### May

Imogene Beck, Edw.  
Dr. Joseph Helms, Edw.

### Thank You!

♦ ♦ ♦

Photos in this issue are from the MCHS collections unless otherwise indicated.

## CLIFTON TERRACE *(continued from p 7)*

and established a large farm. After purchasing the property he developed the hillsides along the Mississippi River into



*The Stiritz sisters. Photo courtesy of Alton Museum of History and Art.*

vineyards similar to those he remembered from his youth along the Rhine River in Germany. His wines became very popular, even beyond local markets.

Recognizing the potential of the beautiful setting, he built the hotel for tourists and quarry workers. When the railroad came through, he renovated the hotel, painting it white and expanding the facility to include a dance pavilion in 1891.

By the early 1900s the resort was beginning to get a rundown appearance, but as new people arrived to build lavish summer cottages along the river, the Stiritz Hotel was refurbished, and the resort business restored.

Soon after the turn of the century, the Bluff Line's tavern and restaurant, Clifton Terrace Inn, was purchased by Stiritz who operated both the hotel and restaurant until his death in 1909. His daughters, pictured at left, ran the businesses until 1929. New owners in the late 1930s tore down the old hotel and ran the Clifton Terrace Inn, a dining room/tavern for 30 years until it burned to the ground in 1968.

## MARY'S RESEARCH TIP

Searching for your ancestors in a town or city? Have you ever used a city directory in your research?

City directories existed before phone books, and have an alphabetical listing of residents. However, it is not JUST a listing of residents. While the information varies from year to year, the listing frequently includes name of spouse, number of children, occupation, where

employed, and whether the individual owns the home. In addition, there is a separate street by street listing. Every address in town is listed by street with a notation of the resident/business located at each address.

The MCHS Archival Library has many of these directories on their shelves. They can also often be found at your local public library.