



# MCHS News

May 2014

Opening Doors to Madison County History

Vol. 12 No. 3

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.

## MURDER AND MAYHEM IN MADISON COUNTY

Some folks long for “the good ole days” with a sense of nostalgia, but not everything about the old days was good. Four crime stories, all sensational in their time, are the inspiration for this month’s feature articles by historian Cheryl Eichar Jett.

The stories include that of Emil Fricker, the “dairy baron” who lived near Highland, and his obsession with a milk maid. Next, from Collinsville is the intriguing tale of the Genetti murders in 1907. Edwardsville’s story of two brothers who commit suicide rather than face social disgrace is revisited. And from the legendary Mother Road comes the story of the murder of Martin Drenovac on Route 66, part of a cross-country crime spree that captured the interest of the whole country. These four historic crime stories by Cheryl Jett begin on page four.

## MAY-JUNE CALENDAR

**Program**

Sunday, June 8 - 2 p.m.

### ***Route 66 in Illinois***

With Cheryl Eichar Jett and Joe Sonderman  
MCHS Archival Library

New Exhibit Opening June 8

### ***Old, New, Borrowed, and Blue***

*Wedding Traditions and Customs in Madison County*  
MCHS Museum

June 7 and June 21, 1-3 p.m.

### ***Voices From the Past***

Woodlawn Cemetery

Tickets available at MCHS or at the event

Saturday, June 28 - 1 p.m.

### ***Voices From the Past***

MCHS Library

Tickets sold in advance at MCHS

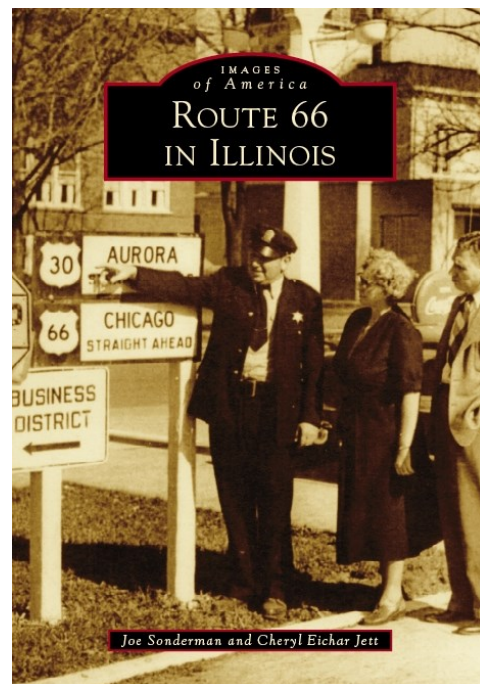
Continuing Exhibit

### ***Kane Family of Architects***

MCHS Museum & Archival Library

Coming July 27

### ***Preserving Family Documents***



## ROUTE 66 PROGRAM

Joe Sonderman and Cheryl Eichar Jett will launch their book tour for *Route 66 in Illinois* at the MCHS Archival Library on June 8th at 2 p.m.

The result of a year's worth of research and travel, the book traces the famous highway from its starting point in Chicago through cities and cornfields to its exit from Illinois across the Mississippi River. Over 200 vintage photographs from museums, libraries,

*Continued on page 8*

## MCHS BOARD

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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 web site, at the MCHS Museum or at the Archival Library.

## PUBLICATIONS

### MCHS NEWS

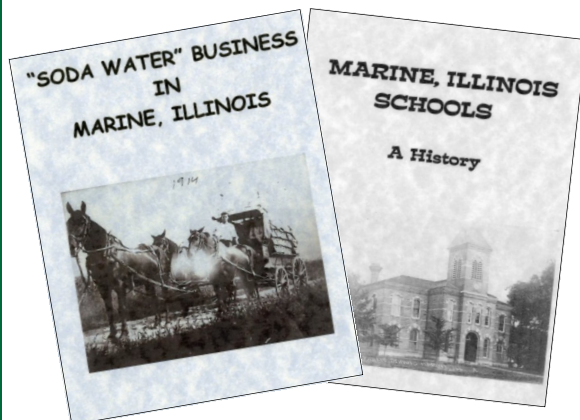
6 issues annually  
Cindy Reinhardt, Editor

## WEB SITE

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

# ARCHIVAL LIBRARY SPOTLIGHT

By Mary Westerhold, Archival Research Manager



The collections of both the museum and archival library depend on donations of items from individuals, families, businesses, organizations, government entities, churches, etc., throughout the county. We would not exist if it were not for the generosity of those who donate these items and, most importantly, tell us their stories.

Many of our researchers at the library are also our donors. They might send us the finished product of their research,

their source material, a family photo, a family tree, a useful book, etc.

One of our frequent researchers and donors, Shirley Daiber, has helped us build our collection of information on Marine. Shirley has donated nearly twenty books on Marine that she has compiled, including *Marine, Illinois Schools - A History*, *Nike Missile Base Near Marine, Illinois (Then & Now)*, *Banks of Marine, Illinois*, and *Soda Water Business in Marine, Illinois*. Each of these books is an in-depth look at a particular aspect of Marine history. In addition, Shirley keeps us updated on the activities of the Marine Historical Society ([www.marinehistoricalsociety.org](http://www.marinehistoricalsociety.org)) and any new research or interesting material she comes across.

Do you have a story to tell us? We invite you to stop in for a visit or send us a letter or email to let us know about your business, family, or community. While we are located in Edwardsville, we preserve the history of all of Madison County and would love to hear from you.

# MUSEUM SPOTLIGHT

By Jenn Walta, Curator

Every city, town, or village struggles with the war between good and bad. In the comic book world, superheroes battle evil villains for supremacy, but in the real world, everyday heroes like law enforcement officers war with the criminal element on a daily basis without the aid of The Flash's enhanced speed or Superman's super strength.

The museum collection includes a number of artifacts related to Madison

County's legacy of law enforcement. Along with numerous photographs of the old county jail in Edwardsville, we also have a nightstick, leg irons, and brass knuckles. The three

objects belonged to David Jones, Madison County Sheriff from 1906-1910. Jones mined for coal with his father while the family lived in Troy, Illinois, until May of 1898 when he

moved to Venice and joined the police force. Jones held the position of sheriff for only one term. Jones was the maternal grandfather of the donor, Mrs. Paula Wykoff.

Good cannot exist without evil in the comic book universe or in

reality. These objects, along with photos and newspaper articles help to tell the story of crime and punishment in Madison County.



## CURRENT MCHS NEWS

### OLD, NEW... BORROWED, AND BLUE

#### Wedding Traditions and Customs in Madison County

Beginning June 8, a selection of wedding dresses, photographs, and other artifacts will be on display at the Madison County Historical Museum. The new exhibit will allow visitors to explore the origins of some popular wedding traditions and customs as they discover the history of the wedding dress and the origins of the traditional wedding cake. The exhibit will continue through mid-October.

The next issue of this newsletter will feature the same topic in a coordinating issue on Madison County wedding traditions.

### KANE EXHIBIT OPENING

An exhibit featuring drawings and artifacts from the Kane architectural offices, a fixture in Edwardsville for nearly a century, opened on March 16 in the Archival Library and Museum. The Kane family, who generously donated the materials in the MCHS Kane Collection, were well represented at the opening for the exhibit which will continue through the month of August.

### MCHS AT ROUTE 66 FESTIVAL

Visit the MCHS table in the Route 66 Festival History Tent on June 13-14 in Edwardsville's City Park. We'd love to hear your memories of Route 66!

### VOICES FROM THE PAST

In June, the Society will partner with the Woodlawn Cemetery Association for the first of what is hoped will become an annual event to bring history alive for area residents. Costumed guides representing early settlers interred at the cemetery, will provide tours of the grounds in a program similar to that given at Alton Cemetery for many years.

The historic cemetery is well maintained, but suffered major damage from storms last June that brought down many mature trees and damaged numerous monuments. Funds from this ticketed event will help complete restoration.

Woodlawn Cemetery was chartered in 1871, with the first burials in 1872. It was established after Edwardsville's Lusk Cemetery fell into disrepair. With the newly-established cemetery, those that could afford it moved the bodies of their loved ones to Woodlawn. As a result, some tombstones in Woodlawn Cemetery pre-date the establishment of the graveyard.

Tours will be given between 1 p.m. and 3 p.m. on Saturday, June 7, and Saturday, June 21, at Woodlawn Cemetery. Tickets will be available beginning May 15 at the MCHS Archival Library or at the cemetery on the day of the event. Tickets for the outdoor programs are \$12 for adults and \$6 for children ages 6-12.

An indoor program will be given on June 28 at the Society's Archival Library at 1 p.m. Tickets will be sold in advance for \$15 and can be purchased at MCHS or at the cemetery's Memorial Day observance on Monday, May 26.

## MEMBERSHIP NEWS

### New and Renewing Memberships

February through March 2014 ♦ Thank You for Your Support!

#### East Alton, IL

Carolyn Dawson

#### Edwardsville, IL

Tom & Donna Bardon

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Sid & Jane Denny

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#### Mascoutah, IL

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#### Troy, IL

Mary Grapperhaus

#### Carmichael, CA

Roberta Mueller

#### New London, CT

Marion Richards

#### Jacksonville, FL

Mary Byron

#### Belmont, MA

Genevieve Cutler

Fisher

#### St. Louis, MO

Daniel McGuire



## Murdered for Love Collinsville

In 1907, the Genetti family lived near the electric car line on the north side of Collinsville. August Genetti Sr., his wife, their son August, their daughter Kate, and several cousins occupied the newly-built home. The men were miners, and August Genetti Sr. was said to be well-to-do.

Joseph Genetti, one of the cousins, became infatuated with Kate. When she refused to marry him, he showed her a revolver he'd purchased and suggested that he might use it to kill them both. Then he gave Kate a bottle of liquor that he told her contained poison. Kate's brother August did not approve of the match and kicked Joseph out of the Genetti household. Joseph moved to Glen Carbon. He was furious and focused on August, who stood between him and Kate, and another cousin, Louis Cologna, who may also have been interested in Kate.

Joseph poured out his woes to a friend, Joseph Zadra. Zadra promised to help, for \$500. According to an account in the *Edwardsville Intelligencer*, Zadra stated that he would "raise a spirit that would compel August Genetti Jr. to consent to the marriage of his sister Kate and his cousin, Joseph Genetti." Apparently, this plan did not work.

On Monday morning, July 1, August Genetti Jr. and Louis Cologna went to work in the No. 17 Consolidated Coal Mine. Once inside, they opened their tool box, ready to begin their work day. Instead, the act of opening the tool box lid,

*Continued on page 5*

## MURDER AND MAYHEM - HIGHLAND

### Dairy Farmer Kills Two

Minnie Schlicht knew hard times at a young age. Born in 1895 in Highland, Minnie was just a baby when something, now lost to time, happened to her father, Paul Meller. Minnie's mother, Anna Keller Meller, remarried in 1897, to George Ackermann. This marriage was tragic as well, because authorities removed Ackermann from the household and sent him to the Jacksonville (IL) State Hospital. Anna had to find work and find homes for her children. Minnie was taken in by the Jacob Schlicht family of Highland in 1897.

When old enough to work, Minnie was hired as a milk maid on the Emil Fricker dairy farm east of Highland. He employed several people to assist him in the operation and was said to be well-off.

Although married with three children, Fricker found young Minnie attractive and forced her into an intimate relationship with him. Another employee on the dairy farm, young Robert Kehrli, was also interested in Minnie. Minnie and Robert married in Edwardsville on April 13, 1920, and stayed in Edwardsville with in-laws Albert and Emma Rutz. Having decided it was in their best interests to get away from Fricker, Kehrli obtained a job in Edwardsville. But Fricker convinced the couple to return to his employ.

Just a few weeks later, on May 7, 1920, the new groom apparently committed suicide. His boss, Emil Fricker, found Robert's body with a .38 caliber revolver lying next to him. The community was shocked that this young man had taken his own life, when the young couple seemed so happy together.

Two years later, on October 2, 1922,

Nungesser. Since Fricker still owed Minnie \$1,500 in wages, an arrangement was made for Minnie to come to the Fricker home to collect the money in payments. But when she arrived for the second payment, Fricker held her against her will for two days until relatives came to get her. Minnie later revealed that Fricker said to her, "I got one man and can get another."

Two years later, on November 15, 1928, 24-year-old John Nungesser was found dead north of Highland, near the wagon and team of horses he'd been driving. When he was found, it was at first thought that he'd been thrown from the wagon, causing his death. But upon investigation, he had clearly been murdered. A dozen bullet holes riddled his body, from at least two different weapons – one a .32 caliber and one a .25 caliber.

An automobile with a connection to Emil Fricker had been seen in the vicinity during that afternoon, and authorities followed up on the tip. By the next day, Eldo Wernle, Jacob Landert Jr., and Emil Fricker were lodged in the Madison County Jail in Edwardsville.

Wernle and Landert talked. They told of their lives being threatened by Fricker if



*Minnie Meller Schlicht. The Schlicht name was taken from a foster family that took her in after her stepfather was committed. Photo courtesy of Gladys Scheifer.*



*Robert Kehrli (left) and John Nungesser, husbands of Minnie Schlicht, who were killed by Emil Fricker. Photos courtesy of Gladys Scheifer.*



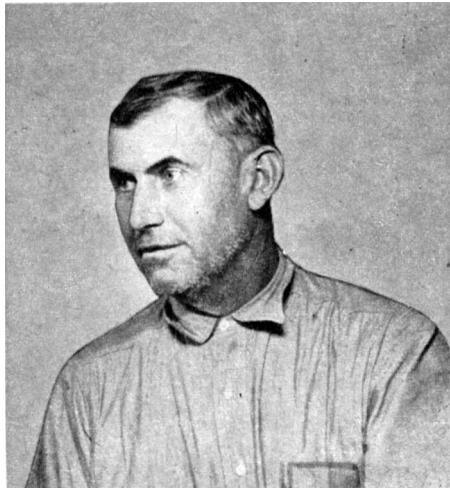
# MURDER AND MAYHEM - HIGHLAND

Genetti

Continued from page 4

they did not kill Nungesser. The crime and the trial were covered in dozens of detailed articles in local newspapers. Reporters not only relayed the details of the Nungesser murder, but speculated about the re-opening of the Kehrli case.

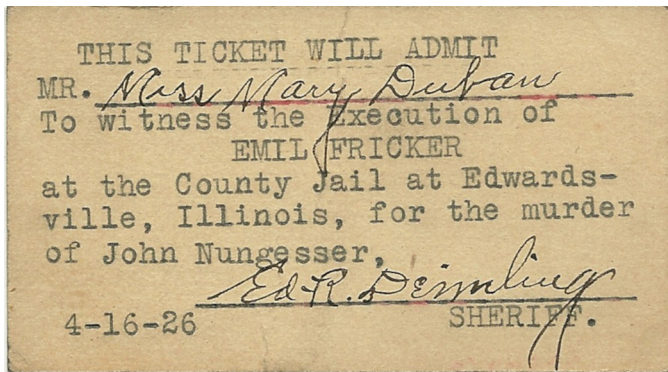
After Fricker was safely lodged in jail, Rudolph Kamuf, another former Fricker employee, came forward with yet another confession. Kamuf was ill, knew he did not have long to live, and wished to make peace with



*Emil Fricker, although thought to be a wealthy dairy farmer, was actually "land poor," having invested too heavily in acreage. He was declared bankrupt in 1924 while still in jail.*

himself. While Kamuf was an employee on the dairy farm, Fricker had approached him about killing Robert Kehrli, but Kamuf had refused. Kehrli had not committed suicide after all.

On April 16, 1926, Emil Fricker, the "dairy baron" of Highland, was hanged from a gallows constructed behind the sheriff's residence on Main Street in Edwardsville. Over the years, witnesses to the hanging were interviewed and various accounts were written. But the facts remain the same: Fricker was found guilty of causing two deaths and paid with his own



*Only about 200 persons were invited into the enclosed area near the scaffolding to witness the hanging, although it was reported that thousands came to town. Tickets like this one were printed on the back of the sheriff's business card. It is unknown whether this ticket still exists because Mary Duban chose not to attend the hanging, or if it was returned to her. Image courtesy of Jay Kelleher.*

life. He was the last man of seven to be hanged in Madison County.

Fricker's two minions, Eldo Wernle and Jacob Landert, also paid. They received life sentences and were sent to the penitentiary at Chester. Rudolph

Kamuf, who Fricker had attempted to coerce into killing Kehrli, died on November 28, 1924, a week after testifying at Fricker's trial.

When John Nungesser was killed in 1924, he and Minnie had a daughter, Opal, and Minnie was pregnant with their second child. Wanedith Nungesser was born January 28, 1925, two months after her father's murder. In 1926, Minnie was married for the third time to Charles Lang, a farmer from Saline Township.



*At 29, Minnie was still a young woman when she married for the third time. By all accounts, Charles Lang proved to be a good husband and father to her children, and with Emil Fricker gone, Charles lived to an old age. In this wedding portrait, (front) Charles and Minnie Lang; (back) Louis and Rose Kehrli. Photo courtesy of Gladys Schiefer*

which had been rigged, set off a blast. The explosion burned the men extensively and injured two other nearby miners as well. Both August and Louis were taken to St. Mary's Hospital in East St. Louis, but by Thursday, both men had died from their injuries.

The explosion was initially viewed as an accident, but Mine Superintendent Fred Hauck and his inspectors began an investigation. They found that a revolver had been arranged in the toolbox. When the tool box lid was raised, a wire would trip the trigger on the revolver, firing into a small keg of gun powder and setting off a blast. On July 5, Joseph Genetti was arrested and lodged in the Collinsville jail. On July 10, the accomplice, Joseph Zadra, was also taken into custody. A couple weeks later, Joseph Genetti confessed.

What was left of the Genetti family – father August Sr. and daughter Kate - mourned their losses. Their grief was overwhelming. Just a few months previous, Kate's mother had been lost to illness. And her brother Frank had been shot and killed in a child custody scuffle and shoot-out several years earlier.

Two years later, the *Edwardsville Intelligencer* revisited the story in their June 22, 1909, edition. "Finally Finds Happiness," read the headline. Kate Genetti was marrying a Collinsville merchant, Isaac Wilshire. The couple had a son together, and Kate lived to the age of 73, passing away in 1954.



## McKee Brothers' Double Suicide Edwardsville

Dr. Albert B. McKee was a popular and well-respected Edwardsville physician at the turn of the last century. In 1903, he was living in a large home at the corner of Second and Purcell Streets with his wife Agnes (Keown), young son, and brother Charles when an accusation by a patient shattered the family's world.

Miss Emma Roewekamp, a young maid working in a West End home, filed a formal complaint against Dr. McKee, charging him with criminal assault during a medical appointment.

McKee posted bond of \$1,500 and the trial was set for March 21. The accusation was the subject of much local speculation. The doctor asserted his innocence, but he and his devoted brother were clearly worried about the threat of disgrace. Charles was working as an assistant in the medical office. A newspaper account later described him as "not as able as his brother the doctor."

On March 16, Dr. McKee took the local train to Worden to care for a patient. Later, Jacob Klein, the McKees' hired hand, overheard the brothers in an intense conversation.

The next morning, Klein entered the barn behind the house. There he found the brothers, apparently lifeless. Klein could not rouse the doctor, but he found Charles barely breathing. The scene in the barn around the two men told the story.

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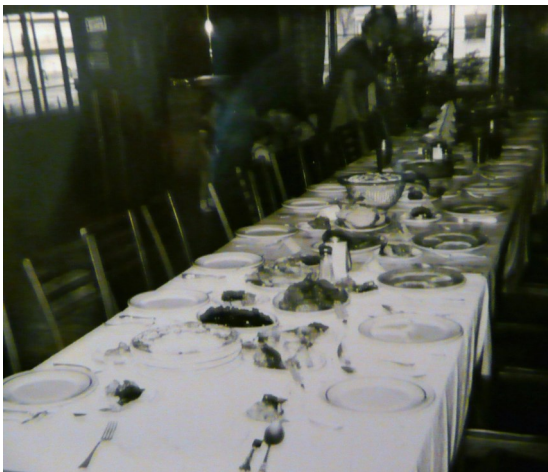
## MURDER AND MAYHEM - MITCHELL

### Twin Oaks Station Owner 5th Victim of National Killing Spree

On the morning of Thursday, June 8, 1961, Martin Drenovac was at work at his Twin Oaks Gas for Less service station on US Bypass 66 in Mitchell. The station, along with a restaurant and motel, were all owned by the Drenovac family and were located just before the entrance to the Chain of Rocks Canal Bridge. Martin, wife Ethel, son Sam, daughter Anne, and two grandchildren lived in a large two-story house west of the station. Martin was 69 years old, but was still working; he had spent decades building up businesses. Life was good.

A native of Croatia, Martin Drenovac had come to the U.S. in 1905. In nearby Hartford and Wood River, he operated grocery stores for 27 years before moving to Mitchell in 1947. Granddaughter Denise remembers her grandfather as a kind man with a big heart. During the Great Depression, he provided housing for a family who had nowhere to live. In the age of segregation, he allowed blacks to eat in his restaurant; if whites complained, he told them that they were welcome to take their food outside.

But on June 8, 1961, the family's peaceful existence was shattered.



*The Drenovac family always ate their meals in the Twin Oaks Restaurant, including this 1950s Christmas dinner. Courtesy of Denise Madrid.*

Two AWOL soldiers, George Latham and Ronald York, started their day with a brutal murder – their fourth in a rampage of terror across the country. That morning Latham and York had killed Albert Eugene "Gene" Reed of Litchfield, took over his late -model Dodge, and dumped his body southwest of Edwardsville. From there it was only seven miles to Twin Oaks.



*Martin Drenovac with his grandson Richard and granddaughter Denise about 1959. Business signs can be seen to the right. Courtesy of Denise Madrid.*

Martin was watching over the service station that morning, while his wife Ethel and son Sam were at work in the restaurant. York and Latham pulled into the service station driving Reed's red Dodge. Meanwhile, Martin's grandchildren, nine-year-old Denise Madrid and six-year-old Richard Madrid, were playing a game on the living room floor. It was about 10:00 a.m.

A few minutes later, Ethel looked out the restaurant window and saw a car at the gas station waiting for service. She saw the customers sitting in their car, but as she watched, her husband Martin did not come out to greet them. Son Sam went over to the service station and found his father lying in a pool of blood in the service bay.

The parking lot was soon jammed with emergency vehicles. Police investigations concluded that Martin had been hit on the head at least seven times. The family believed that the killers used the poker out of Martin's wood stove. Although Gene Reed already lay dead a few miles east, Drenovac's murder was reported first, and it would still be several hours before Reed's body would be found and reported.

# MURDER AND MAYHEM - MITCHELL

After their escape across the Mississippi River, the crime spree was not yet over. In Kansas, they robbed and shot to death Otto Zeigler, a 63-year-old railroad worker. In Colorado, they killed a teen-aged motel maid named Rachel Moyer.

The pair was finally apprehended in Salt Lake City, where they were still driving Gene Reed's red Dodge. York and Latham confessed to seven murders, two assaults, and six auto thefts. Madison County authorities went to Salt Lake City in an attempt to bring the killers back to Illinois to stand trial. "We feel that since the pair was arrested in the car taken from one of the Madison County victims that we have the best case against them," State's Attorney Dick H. Mudge was quoted in the *Granite City Press-Record*. However, Kansas was



given first chance to prosecute due to "witnesses, physical evidence, and evidence independent of the youths," according to a later quote from Mudge in the *Edwardsville Intelligencer*. York and Latham were convicted in Kansas of shooting the Kansas man. They sat on death row with Perry Smith and Dick Hickock, another pair of murderers who were the subject of Truman Capote's book, *In Cold Blood*. After numerous appeals, the pair was finally executed by hanging in 1965.

Martin Drenovac's funeral was held on the Monday after his death. He left behind his wife Ethel, son Sam, daughter Anne, and the two grandchildren.

*The photo of the Twin Oaks sign (above) is courtesy of Joe Sonderman.*

McKee  
Continued from page 6

Syringes on the ground near the doctor matched the number of injection spots on his legs. Water glasses had been used to dissolve morphine tablets. Both men had partially chewed morphine tablets still remaining in their mouths. When Dr. H. T. Wharff and Dr. Edward W. Fiegenbaum arrived on the scene, Dr. McKee was pronounced dead. Charles died about 15 minutes after being carried into his brother's office.



*Dr. Albert McKee as pictured in an 1895 edition of the Edwardsville Intelligencer. At his death in 1903 the newspapers reported he took his life in "a state of mental anguish bordering on frenzy," although it was thought he would have been found innocent of the charges. The deaths of Dr. McKee and his brother shocked the entire community.*

Each man had composed a suicide note. Dr. McKee's was reported in the *Troy Weekly Call* as saying:

"Good by my darling wife, baby, mother and sister. I feel innocent of the charge, but can't stand the suspense. I'm only losing a few years of hard work, but the agony and the shadow cast over my relatives is

*Continued on page 8*

## MURDER AND MAYHEM—MADISON COUNTY

### Seven Men Hanged

By Cindy Reinhardt

There were seven legal hangings in Madison County between 1824 and 1926. Besides Emil Fricker whose story is told by Cheryl Jett on pages 4-5, there were six others, all men, and all executed for taking the life of another.

The first was Eliphalet Green. Convicted of murdering William Wright after a fight at a Wood River distillery on Christmas Eve, 1823, Green was hanged from a tree along Cahokia Creek by Sheriff W. Buckmaster on February 12, 1824.

The next execution was more than thirty years later when George Gibson and Edward Barber were hanged for the murder of a peddler on Troy Road between St. Jacob and Troy. The hanging took place on the grounds of the County Home in Edwardsville on June 19, 1857. The newspapers reported that the execution was witnessed by hundreds of area residents. Although George Gibson's young brother, Robert, stood guard during the crime and was originally convicted, he was later pardoned, perhaps because of his age as well as the appeal of local residents.

William Bell was executed on November 12, 1869, after being convicted of murdering Herman Wessel west of Edwardsville. His

execution was private, on the grounds of the old court house which stood on Main Street in Edwardsville where the old Lincoln School is now located.

William "Felix" Henry was the only African American to hang in Madison County. He was convicted of the murder of an elderly couple in Rocky Fork near Alton in 1883. He was hanged on January 16, 1885.

The sixth hanging took place exactly seven years later, on January 16, 1892 when Patrick Boyle was hanged for the murder of "a tramp" near Mitchell. The victim was never identified.

A scaffold was constructed in 1914, for the purpose of executing Nikola Gavrilovich for the murder of his wife, but the sentence was reduced. Since the scaffold was there, the sheriff put it to use for a different purpose. He converted the platform of the gallows to a sleeping tent for prisoner Elijah Minneweather, who had tuberculosis. Fresh air was reported to be the best treatment for the disease.

Emil Fricker was the only man hanged who was able to appeal his case to the Illinois Supreme Court and the second to be executed in the jail yard behind the sheriff's residence in Edwardsville. His execution on April 16, 1926, was the last hanging in Madison County.





## Madison County Historical Society

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McKee  
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too much for me. I have always tried to be upright and straight. Don't worry about us, we are going cheerfully. I have the best wife on earth and I want for her to see many happy days, and hope the boy will become a useful man. Please don't publish. A. B. McKee."

Charles' note was reported as saying:

"I am going with Albert, I can't stand it either. Albert and I have always tried to do what was right and feel we have. Good by. Charley."

Deputy Coroner Hoskins held an inquest, and the jury's verdict for both men was "death through morphine poison, self-administered and with suicidal intent."

While the inquest was going on, the suicide notes were discovered in the doctor's desk and were taken and read to the jury before they disbanded. The next morning, the brothers' funeral was held from the residence. They were buried in Oak Lawn Cemetery.

## ROUTE 66 PROGRAM *(cont. from page 1)*

historical societies, private collections, and author/collector Joe Sonderman's own collection capture the life and times along the "Main Street of America."

Joe Sonderman is the author of a dozen other books on Route 66 and/or St. Louis history, a regular contributor for several magazines, and editor of *Show Me Route 66*, the Route 66 Association of Missouri's quarterly publication. Joe's online archive of Route 66 images is at [www.66postcards.com](http://www.66postcards.com) and his *Vintage St. Louis* Facebook page featuring the day in history is enjoyed by thousands of visitors each day.

Cheryl Eichar Jett has been an Arcadia

Publishing author since 2009, and "Route 66 in Illinois" is her fifth book. She is a regular contributor to several magazines and writes a monthly column, *Along Route 66*, for the *Prairie Land Buzz*, a local publication online at [www.thebuzzmonthly.com](http://www.thebuzzmonthly.com). Her blog, [www.route66chick.blogspot.com](http://www.route66chick.blogspot.com), shares her travels and research. This issue of the MCHS News marks the second time she has agreed to serve as guest author for the MCHS News.

Join us Sunday, June 8, at 2 p.m. at the Madison County Historical Archival Library for an illustrated program on the Illinois portion of the Mother Road by two of the country's foremost authorities on the legends and characters of Route 66.

## MARY'S RESEARCH TIP

By Mary Westerhold, Archival Research Manager

Are you stuck on your family history research? Every researcher will hit a brick wall at some point. One of my favorite tools to help me get past the brick wall is a timeline.

The idea of a timeline is to arrange your information in chronological order to see what might be missing or to notice a clue that you had missed. While I like to use Microsoft Excel or a similar spreadsheet program when I do a timeline, you can use anything you are comfortable using, including pen and paper or notecards. Simply record the date and event - birth, marriage, death, relocation, etc. - for a family or individual and then arrange the dates in chronological order.

The first time I tried this, I realized that my grandmother was still a minor living at home when her father (a widower) moved to Missouri with another daughter and son-in-law. While the local newspapers carried a great deal of information about the father, daughter, and son-in-law moving, there was no mention of my grandmother.

This sent me on a new search which required me to look at different sources. While I have not determined where my grandmother was during that time, I did find the answer to a few other questions I had and a few more pieces were added to the puzzle. So, try a timeline and see what you discover!