



Madison County Historical Society

MCHS News

September 2015

Opening Doors to Madison County History

Vol. 3 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.



MADISON COUNTY COURT HOUSE CELEBRATING 100 YEARS

Mayors throughout Madison County declared it a holiday. Businesses and schools were closed. Trains added extra cars to the lines running from Granite City and Alton to Edwardsville. The occasion was the dedication of Madison County's new house of government on October 18, 1915, which drew an enthusiastic crowd estimated at over 20,000 people.

The Belleville Record called it "not only a

dedication, but an occasion for the promotion of good fellowship."

In Edwardsville most businesses were decorated with American flags and bunting contributing to an air of excitement. But the exterior of the new court house, except for the speaker's platform, was left unadorned so the public could admire the beautiful symmetry of Robert Kirsch's design.

Continued on page 5

MCHS FALL CALENDAR

Program

FORM FOLLOWS FUNTION

HOW TO STRUCTURE A NON-FICTION BOOK

Presenter: Cheryl Eichar Jett

Thursday, October 1

7 p.m.

Madison County Archival Library

Continuing Exhibit

FIRST DO NO HARM

MEDICINE AND MEDICAL PRATICES
BETWEEN 1830 AND 1955

Madison County Historical Museum

Annual Event

DINING IN HISTORY

Madison County Courthouse

Sunday, November 8

(see article for details)

Special Saturday Hours

FAMILY HISTORY SATURDAYS

October 3

November 7

1 p.m. - 4 p.m.

Madison County Archival Library

ABOUT US

MCHS BOARD

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Archival Research Asst.
Carol Frisse
Archival Research Asst.
Jenn Walta
Curator
Casey Weeks
Asst. 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

ARCHIVAL LIBRARY SPOTLIGHT

By Mary Westerhold, Archival Research Manager

VOLUNTEERS

Are you interested in volunteering at the Madison County Archival Library but wondering what a volunteer actually does? Our biggest project, which involves several volunteers, is our probate project. We are working with the Circuit Clerk's office processing and rehousing older probate files. This involves several hours each Thursday and usually 4-6 volunteers. We estimate that we have a year remaining on the probate project.

Betty Byrd is one of our newest additions to our volunteers, and is currently working on our probate project.

Gary Forshaw has been a volunteer for several years and has helped on many projects including the Poor Farm Records Indexing Project, scanning, and many more. Currently, he is working on the probate project and assists researchers when needed. Also, since he is a retired railroad engineer, he is our "go-to guy" for all things involving railroads.

Judy Goebel is another member of our probate project. She is also indexing

newsletters from Owen Illinois Glass Company, works on other indexing and sorting projects, and assists researchers as needed.

Marty Lane began as a volunteer shortly after we started our probate project and continues working on that project. In addition, she clips articles from the newspapers and catalogs them, helps with various indexing projects, and assists researchers when needed.

JoAnn Nabe recently completed our Poor Farm Records Indexing Project and has now moved to our probate project and also assists researchers when needed.

Mary Rottmann is indexing vital records (births, deaths, and marriages) from the Edwardsville Democrat. The Democrat was a weekly newspaper published between 1881 and 1924. She also assists researchers as needed.

Pat Rudloff is currently combining and organizing our card catalog for our books to ensure that all of the information has been

Continued on page 8

MUSEUM SPOTLIGHT

By Jenn Walta, Curator

SCHOOL DAYS

Since many area children, teens, and adults started the new school year last month, I thought

I would write about the old slate boards, chalk dust, and terribly uncomfortable wooden desks that used to be prominent in Madison County schools. At the museum, a bell from Center Grove School is displayed in an upstairs room along with a

number of slates and older desks. One such desk came from Room 204 (Study Hall) at Edwardsville Senior High School. According to the donor, the E.H. Manufacturing

Company desk was first used in the building sometime between 1923 and 1925, and it was used until the summer of 1970 when the old wooden floor of the room was tiled and the desks replaced with student chairs.

♦ ♦ ♦

Are you looking for something to keep you occupied this fall and winter? The museum has openings for volunteers who are interested in leading tours,

researching objects, and other creative tasks. Send us an e-mail or contact us via Facebook to learn more.

♦ ♦ ♦

Correction:

The donor of the Civil War cot shown in the July issue was Grace Hanser, not Grace Hansen. We apologize for the error.



Gift of Mrs. Paul Lawson.



COMING EVENTS

PROGRAM FOR WRITERS OR WANT-TO-BE WRITERS!

FORM FOLLOWS FUNCTION

HOW TO STRUCTURE A NON-FICTION BOOK

Local writer Cheryl Eichar Jett will offer a free program on Thurs, Oct 1 at 7 p.m. at the Madison County Archival Library to inspire those who have gathered nonfiction material they would like to turn into a book, but don't know where to begin.

Jett, the author of six nonfiction books, borrows design principles from the discipline of architecture to help guide writers in structuring their nonfiction books. This combined visual/text method helps authors to organize their material effectively and logically according to the intended purpose of the book.

Jett uses the steps in creating a building design, which are not so different from producing the structure of a nonfiction book. A list of a variety of approaches to your organizational structure, handouts, and a list of useful websites give attendees take-home resources to work on their books. Whether a history, a how-to, a memoir, an inspirational book, a travel guide, a family history, or some other type of nonfiction book, *Form Follows Function* offers a logical method of structuring your book.

FAMILY HISTORY SATURDAYS CONTINUE

Oct 3 and Nov 7 have been announced as Fall dates for Family History Saturdays when staff and volunteers at the Archival Library will provide individual assistance from 1-4 p.m. to patrons starting or continuing work on their family trees. After the November date, the program will be evaluated to see if it should be continued next year.

SAVE THE DATE - NOVEMBER 8!



The Third Annual Dining in History event will be held Sun, Nov 8, beginning at 5:30 p.m. under the rotunda in the Madison County Court House.

The evening will include a delicious meal catered by Bella Milano, live music, and an entertaining program by Circuit Clerk Mark Von Nida. Join us in celebrating the 100th birthday of the Madison County Court House!

Tickets are \$45 for members of MCHS and \$50 for non-members. For reservations, call 656-7569 during regular hours or 656-3493 after hours. A reservation form is also available at madcohistory.org.

Tickets may be purchased at the Archival Library, during regular hours: Wed-Fri 9-4, and Sun 1-4.

RECENT NEWS

WI-FI AT THE LIBRARY

The Archival Library now has wi-fi available for patrons during working hours. This will prove especially helpful for those doing genealogy who also have on-line family trees. Funding for the wi-fi installation was through a grant from the Edwardsville Community Foundation.

NEW STAFF MEMBER

Casey Weeks was recently hired to work two days per week as an assistant to Curator Jenn Walta in the museum.

NOVEMBER NEWSLETTER

The November newsletter will profile Madison County residents who were famous across the country in their lifetime, but forgotten today. Suggestions are welcome. Call 618-656-1294.

DINING IN HISTORY MENU

Just planning this year's Dining in History event was a mouth-watering experience. The meal will include Chicken Milano, prime beef, Milano salad, oven-roasted potatoes, Cavatelli pasta with meat sauce, green beans with bacon and onions and baby carrots with brown sugar and maple glaze. All that and dessert, too! Many thanks to Candace Ladd and the committee for their work on this year's dinner.

MCHS MEMBERSHIPS

Autumn is the time of year when new members can join the society with an extension of several months. Annual memberships in the society run on the calendar year but Fall memberships won't expire until Dec 31, 2016.

This is also the time of year that we encourage our regular members to renew for 2016 (save us a stamp in January!) or consider giving Madison County Historical Society memberships as gifts for the holidays.

Your support makes it possible for MCHS to do the work of "Opening Doors to Madison County History." Thank you.

MILLER RESIGNS FROM BOARD

Jean Miller has regretfully tendered her resignation from the MCHS Board of Directors due to changing business responsibilities. Jean was last year's chair of the Dining in History event. MCHS thanks her for her service to the society.

LINCOLN PLACE HERITAGE FESTIVAL

MCHS will have an informational booth at the Lincoln Place Heritage Festival on Sat, Sept 19 from 11 a.m. - 5 p.m. at the Lincoln Place Community Center at 822 Niedringhaus Avenue in Granite City.

EARLIER MADISON COUNTY COURT HOUSES

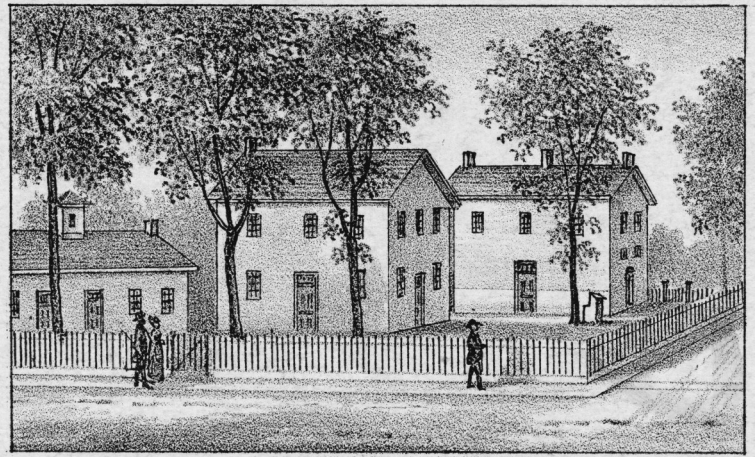
Court was held in a number of Edwardsville buildings, but there have been just four structures specifically built to serve as permanent quarters for the court.

When the Illinois Territory was established in 1809, Ninian Edwards was appointed as Territorial Governor. Three years later, when Madison County was established, he designated the home of his friend Thomas Kirkpatrick, as the County Seat. Kirkpatrick was also appointed as a judge. In 1814, Kirkpatrick platted the town of Edwardsville, naming the new village for his political patron, Ninian Edwards.

The first court was held at Kirkpatrick's, but perhaps due to space considerations, over the next five years the location of the court rotated among local taverns. By 1817 a Court Square had been established at what is now the 1200 block of North Main Street and county officials contracted for the first official court house, a humble log structure that would be replaced after only a few years. A log jail-house completed in 1814 was also moved to the site.

By 1819, just two years later, complaints were made that the public buildings of Madison County were "wholly unfit for the purposes intended." A small group of men, including Col. Benjamin Stephenson, offered in 1820 to not only provide land for a new court house, but to have buildings for a court house and jail constructed. But the location was several blocks south of "Lower Town" where the court house was then located bringing protests from area residents and business interests around the Court Square. Instead, after a petition by a group of businessmen pledging to donate to the cause, a plan for a "Donation Court House" was accepted.

Although construction began in 1821, the Donation Court House was not far enough along to be used until 1825, and even then it was not complete. The building was brick, an improvement over the previous log cabin, but for many years it still had a dirt floor except near the judge's bench and the second floor had to be accessed by ladder. A visiting minister, Lorenzo Dow, refused to preach in it, saying "it was only fit for a hog pen." In 1831, ten years after the



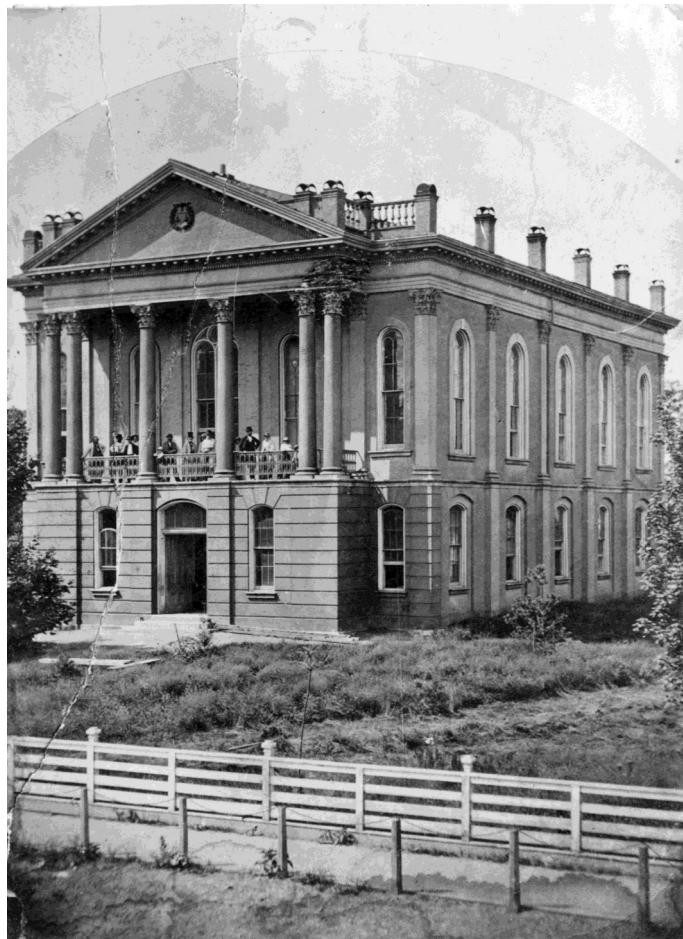
Above are the Madison County public buildings as depicted in the 1882 History of Madison County. Beginning at left is the County Clerk's office built in the 1833, the Donation Court House completed in 1831 and the county jail completed in 1846. (MCHS)

cornerstone was laid, public moneys were used to complete the building, ending the county's embarrassment over the condition of their public buildings.

After the financial struggle to complete a court house with donations, when the need for a larger court building arose in the 1850s, tax money was appropriated.

Although the earlier offer of a donated court house in "Upper Town," had been dismissed, this building would be built there on a new Court House Square bounded by Main, St. Louis, Second and Purcell Streets a mile south of the original court location. The third Madison County Court House featured an elegant Renaissance design with Romanesque styling and took five years to complete. When it opened in 1857, the county finally had a building which it could point to with pride. A large addition was made on the north side of the building in 1890, but both structures were torn down to make room for the present court house.

It is interesting to note that the early court houses were used for more than just court business. The 1857 court house was often the site for public dances, concerts, church services, political rallies or other entertainments when the courts were not in session.



The 1857 Madison County Court House soon after completion. (MCHS)

♦ ♦ ♦

CELEBRATING 100 YEARS (CONT FROM PAGE 1)

The day began with a band concert at Edwardsville's City Park, followed by a 2-mile long parade with thousands of participants. The parade had eight divisions including dignitaries, schools, Madison County municipalities, labor, farming interests, business and industry, commercial clubs and automobiles. Nine bands performed in the parade among decorated floats and vehicles. Near the front of the parade nearly eighty Civil War veterans, each wearing their Union uniform and carrying a musket, marched in unison.

That afternoon the crowd gathered again on the north side of the court house at 2 p.m. for a lengthy program of music and orators, most notably Congressman Joseph "Uncle Joe" Cannon, former Speaker of the U. S. House of Representatives (pictured at right).

The visitors were all celebrating a day that was a long time coming. A new court house had been suggested more than a decade earlier, but twice it was voted down. In 1913 the County Board felt the time was finally right. Edwardsville had helped Alton in its bid for a new State Hospital and Granite City in their bid for a new Federal Building. The voters went to the polls in June, 1913 where they "endorsed the building of a new court house for Madison County, and provided for the expense of the same."

The County made certain that the public was informed throughout the construction process. One local contractor complained that if he had known bids were going to be legitimate, he would have bid lower. Bids were published in county newspapers and in the end, the total dollar amount came in close to the \$250,000 approved. A St. Louis architect, Robert Kirsch, was hired on December 10, 1913, and England Brothers, a Champaign, Illinois contractor, won the bid as general contractors.

The City of Edwardsville was also an important partner in the construction. At no cost to the county, the city and its business leaders built a temporary court house nearby on Vandalia Street to house county offices as the old court house was dismantled and the new one built.

The last order in the old court house was made on March 10, 1914 by Judge J. F. Streuber, after which he adjourned court to move to the temporary court house. The other court house staff had already moved.

After demolition of the 1857 court house and its annex, work on the new building could commence. The cornerstone for the court house was laid on June 17, 1914.

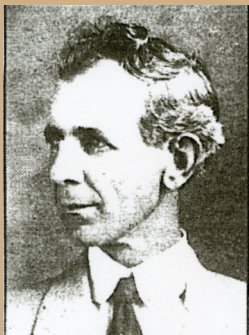
Construction of Kirsch's Classic Revival building influenced by French design could finally begin. The modern three-story building was made of Georgian marble and every consideration then available was included in the plans. Four grand entrances at the center of each side of the building provided access. Matching ranks of windows and a center skylight provided natural light supplemented by illumination from beautiful chandeliers purchased in St. Louis. Two elevators, still rare in Madison County at the time, were included.



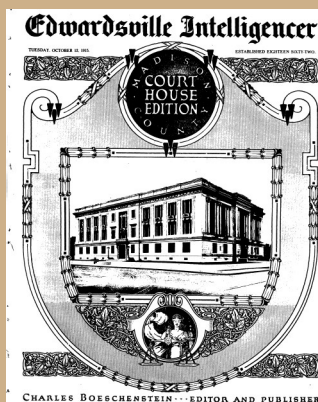
Scenes from the dedication of the Madison County Court House on October 18, 1915: Joseph "Uncle Joe" Cannon of Danville, one of the featured speakers for the afternoon program, is pictured in the top photograph riding in a car in the parade. At center is a float featuring Le-claire kindergarten students. Louis Lawnin, vice-president of the N. O. Nelson Manufacturing Company, is the man on horseback at right. The third photo shows part of the crowd during the afternoon program on the north side of the court house. (MCHS)

FIRST WEDDING IN COURT HOUSE

The first marriage to take place in the new court house occurred almost a year before the building was completed.



The work of a hoisting engineer, John Daech, was complete. He was moving on to the next job in another city and wanted to take his fiancé with him. On a cold Christmas morning in 1914, John Daech, Edwardsville, and Daisy Hendricks, East Alton, stood among the construction debris near the opening through which John had hoisted materials and joined hands as they were pronounced man and wife by Justice William Daech.



SPECIAL EDITION

The above special edition of the *Edwardsville Intelligencer* included 32 pages dedicated to the history of the Madison County Court House and construction of the new building.

CELEBRATING 100 YEARS (CONT FROM PAGE 5)

The ceiling of the rotunda at the center of the building extended three floors above the ground floor to the skylight. Also visible from below were beautiful balustrades on the second and third floors.

Offices on the first floor of the building included the Recorder of Deeds, Coroner, Board of Review, Sheriff, Treasurer, Public Administrator, Surveyor and Circuit Clerk as well as a telephone exchange. The Sheriff's and Treasurer's Offices both included vaults.

On the second floor were the County Board of Supervisors, County Clerk, a county courtroom, jury room, committee meeting rooms, probate courtroom and offices for the Auditor and Commissioner of Highways.

The third floor held the majority of courtrooms, judge's offices, the State's Attorney's office, Master in Chancery, County Superintendent of Schools office and the County Museum.

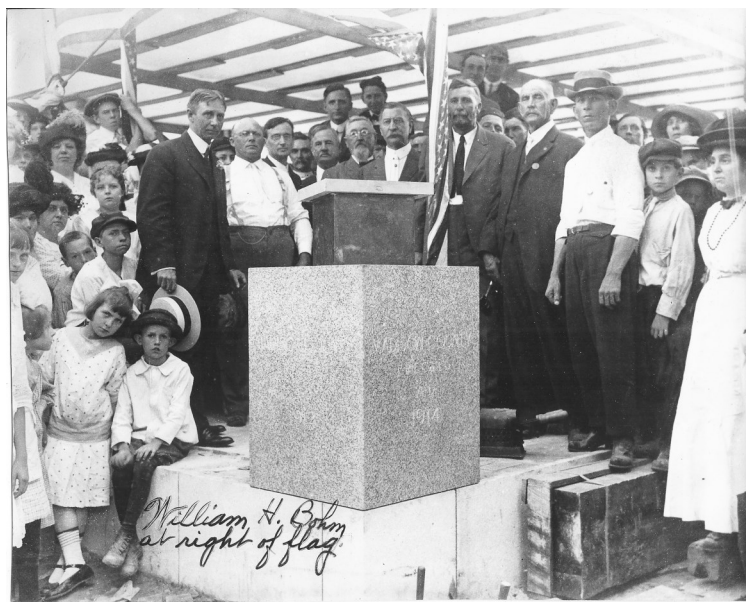
The west side of the building had a concealed fourth floor to provide "palatial" quarters for jurists, including sleeping quarters, shower and tub baths, and lounging rooms.

There was an unfinished basement under the building with a tunnel leading to a boiler plant on the other side of Main Street near the jail. Over the years it was often speculated that the tunnel was built to transport prisoners from the court house to the jail which was then located where the MCT Station stands today. But that was not the case. It was simply a conductor for steam pipes leading to the boiler. Having the boiler plant located across the street was part of the design to make the building as fireproof as possible.

Restrooms were conveniently located on every floor for men, but there was only one, on the second floor, for women. When the court house was built, most staff were male, women

still did not have the right to vote, and Madison County would not see its first female attorney until Esther Funke was accepted to the bar in 1928.

Construction was completed on time with the cooperation of all the trade unions. Most importantly, there were no fatal accidents during construction. *The Edwardsville Intelligencer* reported "...four mishaps. A workman fell into a vat of plaster and emerged as white as an alabaster statute but uninjured." A steelworker fell a story and sprained his ankle and a curious St. Louisan wandered into the construction



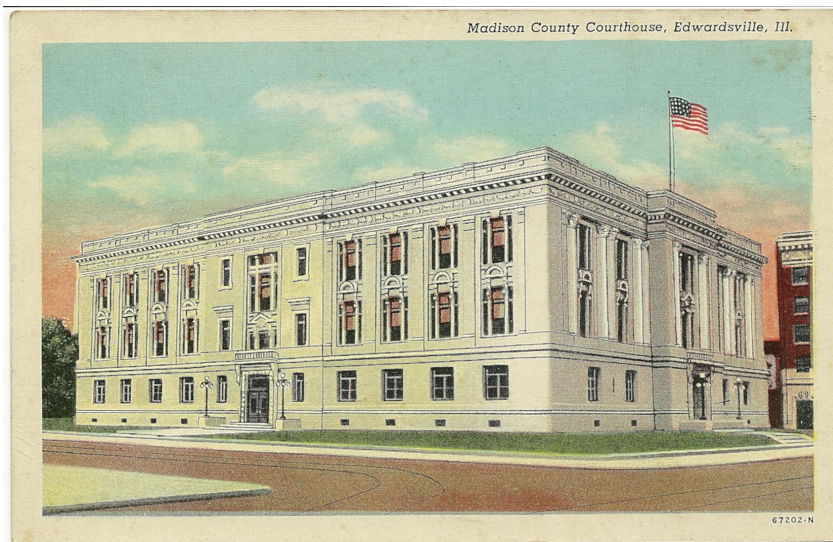
The above photograph was taken when the cornerstone for the court house was laid on June 17, 1914. This image was donated by the Bohm family who identified William Bohm, Township Supervisor. Below is a view of the building under construction. (MCHS)



CELEBRATING 100 YEARS

zone to look around and was hit by a board. Although it lacerated his scalp, the injury was minor. The only serious incident came early in construction when a strong wind blew down the scaffolding. Two young men working near the top fell into the wreckage, one, Charles Thompson, was badly bruised and had his teeth knocked out. The other, Joseph Barnett, broke his left leg in two places, a break that when healed left him with a limp.

The classically designed Madison County Court House will soon begin its second century. As the county has grown, the needs of the county have also increased and by the 1950s the county was already scouting for



Postcard view of the Madison County Court House

additional office and storage space. A former Post Office on Hillsboro was purchased in 1966 with other properties added later. In 1992 the "new" Madison County Administration Building was completed, bringing the majority of Madison County offices together in one attractive complex.

SPECIAL OCCASIONS

Before present-day security concerns made events at the Court House a rare occasion, the public often gathered there for a variety of events. In the early years, WW I recruits and draftees lined up on the Court House steps before being sent off to war, and the county's first fatality of the war, Henry Ostendorf, was laid in state in the rotunda. In 1934 Santa Claus arrived by dirigible, landing on the court house roof (photo below shows children waiting). And many area residents remember caroling in the rotunda as school children or members of local church choirs (lower right 1957).



Henry Ostendorf was believed to be the first Madison County soldier killed in WW I. He died in 1917 but his body wasn't returned for burial until 1921.



THE HOTZ FAMILY

In 1922 Joseph Hotz, a popular Edwardsville businessman, was elected to the office of County Clerk. But the election was challenged, going all the way to the Illinois Supreme Court before he was declared the winner. He finally took office in 1924. He remained in office until his sudden death in 1933, at which time his son, Norbert Hotz, was elected Clerk Pro Tem until the next election when the former Deputy County Clerk and war veteran was elected in his own right.

After nine years, Norbert decided to step down before the 1942 election. His sister, Eulalia, who had been working in the clerk's office since 1926, successfully ran as a candidate for County Clerk in 1942 becoming the first female elected official in Madison County history.

By the time she retired in 1974, she had worked for the County Clerk's office for 48 years, 31 of them as County Clerk. Along the way she was innovative in making improvements and won awards on the state and national level.

Upon retiring, she endorsed her Deputy County Clerk Evelyn Bowles, to succeed her.

During the 1966 political campaign, Eulalia said, "I am not a politician, but I am a public servant. I think there is a distinction...I stay strictly to my own office, take as good a care of it as I can, and I don't interfere with other offices."

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MADISON COUNTY COURT HOUSE



"The building and completion of this splendid temple is the best possible testimonial to the progressive spirit of your people" William M. Farmer, Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of Illinois, Oct 1915.



MARY'S RESEARCH TIP

BE PREPARED!

Have you ever looked forward to visiting a new research facility (library, archives, historical society) and then been overwhelmed by what they have and leave without finding anything? A little preparation can help make your research trips more productive, and it is especially important if you are traveling a long distance. Use the internet or make a phone call prior to your visit to inquire about the facility's holdings, hours, policy on copying, policy on what you can bring into

the research area, etc. For example, some research facilities only allow you to use a pencil and single sheets of paper - no pens or notebooks. Are you looking for a specific date, record, event, or person? Make that your focus, but be ready with other inquiries. While you do not need to bring all of your research with you, be sure to have some critical names, dates, and relationships. We enjoy helping researchers at the Madison County Archival Library and so come visit us and see how we can help you!

LIBRARY SPOTLIGHT (CONT. FROM PAGE 2)

entered in our collection database. Her previous project was indexing scrapbooks.

Virginia Schlueter has a strong music background and is helping us organize our music collection.

Marilyn Sulc, a former MCHS board member, has been a volunteer for many years both in the library and the museum. Currently she is working on our probate project and helps with museum tours as needed.

These are just our current volunteers and a few of their projects.

Volunteers also work on sorting new accessions, organizing photos and magazine collections, and of course, helping researchers. Computers skills are helpful but not necessary. And, as an added bonus, we love to celebrate birthdays and we appreciate all of our volunteers who allow us to have a reason to celebrate and an opportunity to eat cake!

If you would like to volunteer at the Archival library, contact Mary Westerhold at (618) 656-7569 or mtwesterhold@co.madison.il.us.