

Carbon Hill School Museum

Welcome to the old Carbon Hill School, now a public museum, owned and operated by the Carbon Hill Historical Society, a registered not-for-profit Illinois organization, dedicated to collecting, preserving, and displaying our local history.

Fall, 2013

Tornado Alley

There have been at least three tornado disasters with local impact.

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Reunion Palooza

It only works with all of your help. A Reunion Palooza tent goes up!



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Streets of Carbon Hill

The Joliet papers of long ago published articles on each of the local coal mining villages. Carbon Hill was no exception.

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A Joliet reporter goes down into the shaft of our mine and prowls around in January of 1893.

Simply amazing!

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Calendar

On November 4 the Carbon Hill Historical Society held its annual meeting. Upcoming programs and ideas are listed here. Contact us with more ideas!

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About our Society

Your membership in the Society keeps the school museum thriving.

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History Repeats Itself: Tornado!!

It was a calm Sunday on April 21, 1912 when Carbon Hill saw a "cyclone" wreak havoc up close and personal. Our last working coal mine was destroyed. Brick and wooden buildings, the mine smokestack, several railroad cars and the tipple were all ruined. The cyclone tore through the village, twisting young catalpa trees and knocking out glass windows in businesses while moving houses off foundations by four feet!

On another April day -- April 7, 1948 -- the south side of Coal City along Spring Road saw a tornado take out farm buildings, equipment



and homes along the path. Many of us have heard the stories, saw the photos or experienced that day ourselves. At least five farms met the disaster head on and suffered huge losses; most of the ground was farm field in 1948 and no life was lost.

This time history repeated itself in fields now turned subdivisions. On November 17, 2013 Spring Road was once again tornado alley. The homes and businesses in the path through Diamond were destroyed or damaged badly. In minutes all modern conveniences were gone. Possessions were lost but, unlike Diamond's 1883 mine disaster, no lives were lost. So in spite of it all, we are grateful our families and friends were spared.

Carbon Hill Museum's files of old tornado photos, newspaper accounts and maps now have new material, of course. Come share your stories and add photos to the collection. We'll be talking about this for years to come. We are truly living history!

JOLIET DAILY NEWS--

JANUARY 27, 1893

“ Carbon Hill is “feeling very well, thank you.” Old shafts and new are in full operation. Robert Fleming, postmaster and president of the town board gives much valuable information. The same company that dug the artesian well in Coal City is to dig one at the Hill. The well is to be at the southwest corner of the new park. There will be a substantial trough there for watering horses. The overflow will go into a natural depression in the park and form a pond there 300 feet square, which will serve to beautify the park and act as a reservoir in case of fire.

A hook and ladder truck, at a cost of \$300, has been bought. As soon as the Wilmington Light and Power Company can connect to the town they will erect in the middle of the park a double arc light of 44,000 volts on a high tower. This will give a full light on all sides for a quarter of a mile and furnish much illumination to the new shat half a mile away.

Eight hundred dollars worth of clay sewer pipe has been laid in the town and \$1,000 worth of plank sidewalk is in process of laying. It is intended to make this twelve feet wide all around the park, which will be the business center. The south side of the park is now rapidly filling with business structures.

Carbon Hill has 800 inhabitants and expects to double that soon. On the west side toward the new shaft improvement is rapid. The new part of town stops at the big osage hedge on the west but the lines will soon be extended further. A big two story house has been moved there from Braceville.

A large attempt at tree planting has been made and a \$10 reward has been offered for the discovery of those foolish children who mutilate them. Those in the park are pretty well preserved. But the young vandals delight in stripping the trees of bark and branches. So different are the sources of pleasure for different human creatures. Unless the parents take the matter up at home

authorities cannot

prevent this mischief. “



Joliet Daily News:

January 31, 1893

A REPORTER GOES DOWN INTO THE SHAFT
AND PROWLs AROUND

So much has been said about No. 3 shaft of Carbon Hill by people who have visited that place, about the amount of coal they were producing for the length of time they have been running, their good work, etc, that a NEWS reporter visited that place the first of the week. Arriving there about noon he inquired of the weigh boss were Mr. Guiney could be found. Incidentally remarking that it was his purpose to give the shaft a little write up.

James Guiney, coming up on the next cage, agreed to pilot your news gatherer around. The first place visited was the engine and boiler room, which is a substantial brick building. There are two boilers, one sixty and the other 100 horse power, and plenty of room for more when needed.

The air shaft, Mr. Guiney said, is one of the best on the prairie. Its dimensions are 8 feet by 6 feet 6. The next place to visit had to be reached by getting in a box, and then someone let the box drop, and your body goes down in the shaft at a Nancy Hanks gait, while your head stays on top, till you get your bearings. Then your head will come after a while.

In answer to my questions, Mr. Guiney said: “We started to sink this shaft on the 17th day of July (1892) and are now taking out 200 tons of coal a day and are making place for men at the rate of eight and ten a week. In two more weeks there will be an output of 300 tons a all day.” The guide was kind enough to show the visitor around where the men were at work. The coal was found to run three foot to three foot four and good digging. Mr. Guiney said the men that had their place opened up were making from three and a half to four dollars a day.

It is very nearly a perfectly dry shaft. There is only one plae where there is any

water. It is very fortunate for them as they can secure it for their boilers. The Suffern shafts have to haul water from the artesian well in Coal City. There is only one pump in the shaft and Mr. Guiney says it is used mostly for washing the mules’ feet.

The bottom of the shaft extends 100 feet back each way and is very roomy; in fact one of the boys said the very first dance given by the Carbon Hill baseball club would be held there. The journey to daylight was one of more secure feeling. The Star Coal Company ought to feel proud of No. 3 and of its pit boss as he seems to be a man with the right kind of ability and his work shows it. for the present, and hope for the future.

THANKS TO ALL THE VOLUNTEERS who made the CCHS Reunion Palooza come alive -----

How spectacular to see the Carbon Hill Park filled with thousands of CC alumni and their guests and friends. Some of the most common phrases heard throughout the day:

1. Is that you?
2. This is awesome!
3. What a perfect day!
4. Todd did an incredible job here!

THANK YOU, TODD!!



Calendar Events

2013 has been another very full and successful year which included Spring Open House in April, Carbon Hill Homecoming bus tour and programs in June and July's Reunion Palooza. We also hosted several family and group visits which kept us really hopping.

The final open house of 2013 at the museum will be:

14th Annual Holiday Open House

Sunday, Dec 22

Noon to five pm. Refreshments served.

At the annual Carbon Hill Historical Society meeting held Nov. 4 members discussed calendar dates for 2014. We will continue to host a Spring Open House, a bus tour and various programs during Homecoming, as well as our 15th Holiday Open House. Meetings of CHHS are necessary to fulfill our not for profit status, but it is programs which draw more interest. We would like to consider more bus tours, speakers, and programs during 2014. Suggestions for topics of interest are needed. Contact 815-634-4213 or mmicetich@comcast.net with ideas.

Thank you for contributing to our effort to make the Carbon Hill School Museum a treasure for all to enjoy. History is made every day --



Carbon Hill Historical Society Officers, 2013

Michele Micetich --- President
Linda Bradley ---Vice President
Louise Jensen ---Secretary-Treasurer

Public Relations

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630 Judson Street
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Come Visit Us at the Museum!

The Carbon Hill Historical Society is dedicated to the collection, preservation and display of local history. The Society is a registered not-for-profit organization and is the sole owner of the Carbon Hill School Museum. The museum is open Mondays, noon to four p.m. --- or by appointment. We are located at 875 Second Street in Carbon Hill. Dues for membership in the Society is \$15.00 annually. Thank you!



Carbon Hill Historical Society & School Museum
630 Judson Street
Carbon Hill, Illinois 60416-7018