

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.

A Quarterly Newsletter

Issue # 2 Spring 2010

An Enrietta Story

The Enrietta's go back a long way in our Carbon Hill history. Come add your memories to their family album on June 27, at 5 pm in the museum.

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Springtime Scene

We all have a photo or two that looks just like this one. Besides the person/people in the photo check out the background for a glimpse of the past.

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Before Don't Drive and Text -----

Every community is planning its own big festival about this time. But here's one activity that I doubt we'll see occur in 2010!

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Modern Times

What do you "see" on our main streets and our business places?

It just depends on your age, and your memory!

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Homecoming 2010

Remember to come see old friends June 23-27.

Still need volunteers for the food stand for any day, and any time!

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About our Society

Your membership in the Society keeps the school museum thriving.

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An Enrietta Story

In 1879 "Giac" Enrietto with his parents Battisa Enrietto & Maria Berta left their home in the foothills of the Alps, Prascorsano, Italy, and came to Braidwood, IL, where Battista mined coal. The family moved to Carbon Hill at its start ; Jack became the town marshall, lighting street lamps & reminding young children not to race on the wooden sidewalks.

Michael Rolando-Perino and his wife Maria Teresa Perona arrived in Braidwood in 1880. They lived near Monkey's Corner but also ran a second hand store and saloon in Carbon Hill. Their Maggie, eleven years younger than Jack Enrietto,



and chided by him for racing those sidewalks, later became his wife in 1904.

Jack & Maggie's children -- Mary, Genevieve, John, Evelyn, Louis, Elsie, and Verna, all attended the Carbon Hill School. Jack served

on the school board, was a great reader, and ran a saloon (or during prohibition, a "soft drinks parlor").

Daughter Mary taught at Carbon Hill School. John Jr. (Big Bum) served as county sheriff. Louie (Little Bum) made his home in Carbon Hill and with wife Dell ran the family saloon for a generation. Beginning in 1974, their son Dennis owned and ran the saloon through another generation, until 1994.

Homecoming Sunday, June 27. at 5 pm at the museum, we will honor this family with a slide show and conversation. We hope you are there to add your stories and photos of the Enrietta family in Carbon Hill.

READING THE COAL CITY COURANT'S "CATCH-ALL"

In 1948 one Charlie Stevens of Oak Park sent Mr. Ross, Editor, an early Courant-printed handbill advertising a Fourth of July celebration for 1907. In addition to the big band parade and the traditional fireworks were a shooting match at the Coal City Gun Club, bocci ball in front of the Anderson Lumber Yard, a horseshoe pitching contest along side the Bohemian Hall, several foot-races, a buggy race, and baseball in Maroon Park. But the most impressive event was the Auto Race starting at the corner of Division and Broadway and finishing at the post office bandstand located at the time on the south side of the tracks on Broadway.

The total number registered was "not more than eight". Norman Campbell supplied the story. His dad's number was 4 and the mine superintendent Wm Campbell's number was 3. License tags were leather deals with metal numerals on them. The two Campbell cars were Ramblers, Surrey Type No 1, delivered in a two day trip from the plant in Kenosha. And Robert Trotter bought himself a White Steamer. After having owned factory built automobiles, Billy Someville built a car for himself --- which came to an untimely end on the Santa Fe crossing near the Club Saloon (a place owned by Dick Hill which was located north of the tracks on First Ave). Andrew McKean's car started in the 1907 race but didn't finish the grueling 7 1/2 mile course.

7 1/2 miles through and around the town! How cool is that?! Imagine drivers in their long linen dusters, leather caps, goggles, and gauntlets that reached about to the elbow. Overalls, a full set of tools, and a hank of bailing wire were along for repairs. The tires were guaranteed for 500 miles and took an hour and a quarter to change "if you were lucky".

Before Dick Hill opened his garage in town on Broadway, each owner was his own mechanic. So Saturdays saw parts strewn all over the yards of the car owners. In 1907, besides the two Campbells, Bob Trotter, Andrew McKean, Somerville, and Dick Hill, car owners were Frank Berta and Dr. Brock. Wish we had a photo !!!!!

Modern Times:

The new Berkot's store prompts a look at change----

1939 began a new era in Coal City's history with the modernization of many commercial buildings in town. This was when the Piagno's Royal Blue Store on Division Street, (Queen's Corner, "the 4 way stop", now the site of the BP Amoco) got a redesign by their grandson, George Smith, Jr. (Connie Somerville Smith's son) George's design replaced the three double doors formerly used with two new single doors, one leading into the food market, the other into the dry goods department. The new cement floors were inlaid with battleship gray marbelized flooring and boasted a large black circle centered by a red and white four point star overlapping another star like a compass, with two red lines leading to each doorway making a pathway enclosed by small black stars. George designed the store front as well. Stunning with marbelized blue vitrolite covering, typical of the Deco period, the big new plate glass windows, and royal blue awnings were a sight to behold. But George, a promising young artist and a U of I student, died too young to fulfill his career in architecture and design.

Another colorful establishment enlarged and remodeled in 1939 was built by a pioneering Goose Alley family-- Chada's Greenhouse on West Division (you can still see part of that there today). They added a workshop of 10' by 16' with a 3' by 8' display window and covered the workshop in rainbow shingling to match the adjoining building. The greenhouse annexation was 44' long, 16' wide, & 12' high. (over the years this height became inadequate to house the banana tree and out through the glass roof it grew).

A third 1939 renovation happened when the Ulivi Brothers enlarged their thriving business. Originally this was the site of the Forrester's Hall, on Broadway's east across from today's Berkot's parking lot. The modern two story addition was built to display and sell both furniture and appliances. A cement block building once

covered in light grey shingles, it now contains a hair/ beauty business as well as other businesses.

Also there was B.O. Mill's Hardware Store on the corner of S. Broadway and Park Streets (currently the north end of Terry's building) which was decked out with a black and tan vitrolite storefront with very large aluminum framed plate glass windows with frosted glass at the top.

Out here in Carbon Hill we managed to get by with Mrs. Bonucci's old grocery store and Porky's new La Spagnola for dinners, drinks, and dancing.

Notes: "MANY IMPROVEMENTS HAVE BEEN MADE (CCC: June 1, 1939)

A Spring Scene

In a coal mining village some things are just identifiable. Ubiquitous RR tracks in view moving coal to the main lines of the EJE, the Santa Fe, the Chicago and Alton. The necessary outhouse is situated as far away from the house as possible, with a path worn in the dirt, or made of planks to avoid mud, or made fancy with bricks. A posing young child sits on a homemade patchwork quilt. A clothesline and pole with a worn lawn along the line. (Photo: submitted by Jarrod VanKirk)



See you at Homecoming!

June 23-27, 2010

During this year's Carbon Hill Homecoming, June 23-27, 2010, the Carbon Hill Historical Society will celebrate its 15th anniversary. Serving as Grand Marshall at this year's Sunday parade will be Michele Enrietta Micetich, current president of the society and lifelong citizen of the village of Carbon Hill. Mayor Ed Pacchetti surprised her with a Studs Terkel Humanitarian Award and informed her it is tradition to honor an "old timer" at Homecoming. While not admitting to this status, Michele welcomes you to our annual Homecoming festivities and to the museum during that week, which will showcase photos of earlier Homecomings, her family and their establishment, and expects many "old timers" to visit and reminisce.

If you are wondering about Homecoming week's events, please check the local papers and listen to your radio for a complete schedule of ball games, entertainment and programs. Do be sure to come out Sunday for the parade and the great concert in the park following the parade, given by Joliet American Legion Band. There will be shuttle service provided to the grounds for those of you needing that. Park by the village hall or the museum and you will be picked up and dropped off throughout the day and evenings.

Carbon Hill Historical Society Officers, 2010

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

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Membership application & information at:

www.coalcity.lib.il.us/museum.htm

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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!



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630 Judson Street
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