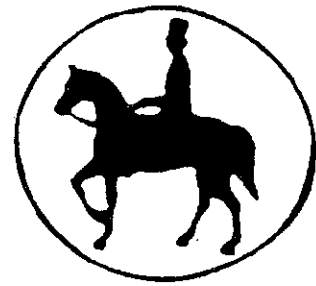


THE COLES COUNTY COURIER



AN OCCASIONAL NEWSLETTER
PUBLISHED BY THE COLES
COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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SOCIETY'S UPCOMING EVENTS

- December 12, 1999 Christmas Formal Tea with music presented by Sigma Alpha Iota Women's International Music Fraternity, Charleston Alumnae and Patroness Chapter - Dudley House - 1:30 p.m.
- January 9, 2000 Society's Annual Meeting - Dudley House - 1:30 p.m.

YOUR MEMBERSHIP IS IMPORTANT!

The annual membership drive is underway. You will receive your renewal notice soon. The membership committee invites you to continue your support of the Society through your membership renewal. With the continued support of its members, the Society provides monthly programs, the annual Founders Day dinner and awards program, and the annual Garden Ramble. The Board of Trustees asks for continued support to expand the services of the Society as it works to establish a permanent historical museum in Coles County and studies the feasibility of hiring a professional staff to manage and promote events of the Society. Several membership levels are available:

\$15.00	Individual.
\$25.00	Family
\$50.00	Sustaining
\$100.00	Patron
\$200.00	Benefactor

Please assist us in expanding our Society by inviting family members, business associates, and friends to become members of the Coles County Historical Society. Send membership renewal and dues to the Society at 800 Hayes Avenue, Charleston, IL 61920.

SOCIETY PROGRAMS

At the Mitchell-Doak Genealogy. At the Society's July 25th meeting, Ken Bidle presented a lecture which traced the routes of the Adam Mitchell family during its journey from Lancaster in Chester County, Pennsylvania to the Coles County area. A

book, *The Mitchell-Doak Group: History, Biography, Genealogy* by Harry E. Mitchell, Capt. U.S.A., Ret., includes a map showing the Mitchell-Doak group's trip westward and delineating the many stops along the way. According to Capt. Mitchell, the Mitchells first arrived in the Coles County area along with William Collum. Collum is credited with building the first house in Charleston, a log cabin for himself and his wife, Elizabeth Mitchell. Collum's sister married James Mitchell and his daughter married James A. Mitchell. The Mitchells were active in developing the city of Charleston. Many of their literally hundreds of descendants have played prominent roles during the city's history.

Mr. Bidle's lecture featured a video tape created by James Alvin Wright. In 1992, Mr. Wright whose grandmother was Rhoda Mitchell Wright (1867-1932) made a six week trip along the route which his Mitchell ancestors traveled on their way to Charleston. He departed from the Charleston Square and ultimately arrived in the area near Tinkling Spring, Virginia. Along the way he videotaped locales in which the Mitchells had settled and the churches and colleges they founded in their devout Presbyterian traditions. Wright's tape includes some sixty different segments in which he narrates the relationships of the subjects on the tape to the Mitchell family. Several descendants of the Mitchell-Doak group attended the July meeting and participated in the discussion which followed the formal presentation.

The Charleston Public Library has a copy of the book, *The Mitchell-Doak Group: History, Biography, Genealogy*, and the Library will soon have a copy of James Wright's video which Mr. Bidle used in the presentation.



SOCIETY PROGRAMS

Mt. Tabor Church. On September 26, 1999, the Coles County Historical Society meeting was held at Mt. Tabor Church which is located about 4 miles south of Charleston on Lincoln Highway Road. Cathy Babbs presented a lecture concerning the history of Mt. Tabor Church and Cemetery. She researched the history by interviewing former church members and reviewing the minutes from Sunday School, Mt. Tabor trustee, and Mt. Tabor Ladies Aid meetings to compile a detailed chronological report about the church. The congregation was organized in 1858 by Rev. John Adams, a Methodist minister. Rev. Adams organized and served a circuit of other churches in the surrounding counties. The original church at the Mt. Tabor site was a log cabin which was raised just east of the present building. Services were held in the log church for 28 years. For a time after the log cabin was used, church meetings were held in the Leitch School House. Land for the present church and cemetery was donated March 16, 1891 by Sarah "Sallie" Shaver, her daughter Emma P. Morrison, and son-in-law John W. Morrison. Ms. Babbs has identified a list of former ministers at Mt. Tabor. According to the records, Sunday School was last held on July 10, 1967 and the last recorded date for a Mt. Tabor Ladies Aid meeting was October 14, 1998.

The cemetery was originally known as the Shaver Graveyard. However, the cemetery has been known by three names: Shaver, Shafer, and Shaffer. The earliest marked grave is dated September 28, 1847. There are about 600 known burials recorded in the cemetery which include a number of war veterans from the the Black Hawk War, Mexican War, Civil War, World War I, and World War II. The cemetery is closed for burials. A number of descendants and friends of church members and of those buried in the cemetery attended the meeting. They enjoyed visiting, taking photographs, and viewing the church exhibit.

A copy of Mrs. Babbs presentation has been placed at the Charleston Public Library.



SOCIETY RECEIVES DONATIONS

When **Robert and Paula Snyder** retired to Aiken, South Carolina this past summer, they gave a Victrola (patented in 1913) and 79 old records in the original books to the Society. The working Victrola stands in the front parlor of Dudley House which is quite fitting since it is believed that the Dudleys had a similar machine when they lived there. If an old upright piano like the one which once also stood in the front parlor could be found, the Society could present musical events more frequently than is now possible.



MORE GIFTS...

Alexander Summers of San Diego, California donated the nine-volume Collected Works of Abraham Lincoln edited by Ray Basler. Mr. Summers also sent the two-volume Lincoln Biography compiled by Jay Nonag and Grant as Military Commander by James Marshall-Cornwall. In addition, he sent a yellow banner distributed by the Chicago Tribune commemorating the Lincoln-Douglas debates. These gifts are at the Dudley House which is particularly appropriate considering Mrs. Dudley's life-long devotion to the memory of President Lincoln.

Jacqueline Record recently gave the Society a silver creamer and sugar set for use at Dudley House functions.

The Society is indebted to **Nancy Owen** who donated a computer and monitor. The computer is programmed with Windows 98 and will be very useful to the volunteers working at the Dudley House. The Society is looking for a benefactor who would add a printer to this gift.

The Society sends forth a sincere "Thanks" to all our benefactors!

WALL-RAISING CEREMONY

The City of Charleston and the Charleston "Looking for Lincoln" Committee invites Society members to attend a wall-raising ceremony for the Coles County Lincoln-Douglas Debate Historic Site. This special ceremony will celebrate Charleston's commitment toward the tourism growth of Coles County. The ceremony will be held on Saturday, November 13, 1999 at 1:30 p.m at the Coles County Lincoln-Douglas Debate Historic Site located on the Coles County Fair Grounds, 416 West Madison Avenue, Charleston. Light refreshments will be served. Call 217/348-0490 or 217/3457041 for additional information.

Our generous members are the keys to our success! A list of 1999 members is included in this edition of the *Coles County Courier*. Some

members have asked to remain anonymous, however, we honor them nevertheless!. We hope our records are accurate but if we have made an error, please call Mary Anne Hanner, 217/346-2140.

