

# SUGAR GROVE HISTORICAL SOCIETY-BLISS HOUSE MUSEUM

259 MAIN STREET, SUGAR GROVE PH (630) 999-3620

PORTAL TO OUR PAST

SPRING 2024



Here is our stunning *Fair Isle* pattern quilt to be raffled as our 2024 fundraiser. Last year, our sales were down, and we hope to recoup as all sales go directly into the running and upkeep of the Sugar Grove Historical Society. If you don't personally need a quilt, this would make an amazing gift for someone you love.

The quilt measures 79" X 80" and was created by our very own Sugar Grove resident and Historical Society member, Vickie Frantz. Thank you, Vickie, for your generous heart and your beautiful work.

You may purchase tickets online at [Sugargrovehistory.org](http://Sugargrovehistory.org) or by mailing a check to: SGHS PO Box 102, Sugar Grove, IL 60554. Or better yet, stop by 259 Main Street, Sugar Grove, IL

**1 ticket for \$5.00 or 5 Tickets for \$20.00**

**Last year's quilt was won by Jennifer Felde**

## Sugar Grove Notable Neighbors



Notable people from Sugar Grove's past are often overlooked or forgotten. Carl Wayne Hayes is one of those courageous, notable men in Sugar Grove history.

Carl, born in Lola, Illinois, on February 20, 1920, was the son of Fay and Lula (Wacker) Hayes. The family, including younger sister Fayola, moved to Sugar Grove in 1927 with the express purpose of helping Carl get the best education he could because Carl was born with Cerebral Palsy.

Cerebral Palsy has a unique combination of strengths and challenges. Challenges for Carl were evident as it left him wheelchair-bound. His strengths included a remarkable determination, patience, and a desire to communicate in the best methods available. And because of this combination, Carl was able to gift his Sugar Grove family with his remarkable talent.

As a founding member and newsletter editor of the *Not Too Limited Club*, created for those with physical handicaps, Carl leaned into his strengths by typing the club's newsletter on an electric typewriter, striking the keys with a pencil to steady his hand. From there, Carl developed his technique and skills as an artist. Finding it too challenging to hold a paintbrush, he learned to lie on the floor over his canvas and use a T-Square to steady his hand and brush to paint. Two of his art pieces are on loan by his nephew Doug Musser of Sugar Grove and are displayed at SGHS.

**Continue page 2**

**Don't forget to renew your membership!**



## Officers and Board

### President

Dave Frantz  
(630) 999-3620

### Vice President

Rick Johnson  
(630) 383-6394

### Treasurer

Lori McCaffrey  
(630) 881-4426

### Secretary

Karen Elifson  
(630) 567-3818

### Historian

Joan Perrin  
(630) 917-4435

### Advisory Board

Ted Koch  
Cliff Frantz  
Dennis Panagopoulos

## Board Meetings

### Next QUARTERLY Board Meeting:

### May 7, 2024 SGHS

The Sugar Grove Historical Society Newsletter is published three times annually. Society Members receive each newsletter issue as part of their membership benefits.

Editor: Janie Panagopoulos  
[pandex1600@aol.com](mailto:pandex1600@aol.com)

## From the President's Desk — Dave Frantz

### Greetings and Salutations!

Our SGHS Board Meeting this year was delayed because of the weather. We were finally able to conduct the meeting on January 23rd. At that time, it was agreed to open SGHS one Saturday a month, starting May 4th, from 1:00 to 4:00. We will continue to be open Tuesday from 1:00 to 4:00. This change is to accommodate requests made by our Sugar Grove residents. We will keep this schedule until July when we will revisit the policy. By adding hours, we hope to increase our facilities use and increase membership.

On April 6th at 2 pm, we will join the Sugar Grove Library to host a historical program, *The CB&Q Railroad in Sugar Grove* presented by Leo Phillipp. Forming a partnership with the library will enable us to share any financial burdens for the program while introducing the Historical Society to possible new members. It's a *win-win*, especially for the community. Please put us on your calendar to attend this interesting presentation.

We hope to have a *History Box* program available for our local 3rd-5th grade classrooms by March. Historian Janie Panagopoulos will visit your classrooms with a box of objects that helps to tell the story of Sugar Grove. Teachers may contact Janie at [pandex1600@aol.com](mailto:pandex1600@aol.com) to set up a program at no cost.

Special thanks go to Vickie Frantz for creating the stunning new, hand-quilted quilt for our fundraising raffle to be held in December. And to my niece Carrie Frantz, owner of *Raised Expectations*, for supplying the SGHS with a fantastic furniture piece raffled off at the Corn Boil. These two items are an essential funding source for the SGHS. We can't thank them enough!

I would also like to thank Christine Edison of the Sugar Grove Library for welcoming us; she is the epitome of what Sugar Grove is all about! Thanks, Christine.

Continued from Front Page

### Carl Wayne Hayes

With these new tasks in life, Carl knew he needed physical strength and endurance to continue, and he did all he could to develop his strength. Being able to pull himself up off the floor after painting and into a sitting position in his wheelchair with limited effort. With all his limitations and talents, Carl became physically strong.

Carl Wayne Hayes passed away on July 4, 1989, at 69 years of age. He is missed by family and friends, leaving behind a legacy of his artwork to help those who knew him remember and those of us who did not know him be inspired.

Thank you, Doug Musser, for sharing your family story.





**FIRST BORROWER** — Miss Minnie Dugan (right), who has resided in Big Rock Township all of her 80 years, is shown receiving the first library pass card to Sugar Grove's new library. The presentation was made Friday afternoon by Mrs. Grace McCannon (left) head librarian. Looking on is Mrs. Verr Graham, assistant librarian and a member of the library board of trustees. The book Miss Dugan selected was "The Desert." (Boston-News Photo)

**Grace McCannon librarian of Sugar Grove Library.**

The library was established in 1962 in a 12-by-18-foot room on the second floor of the Community House. The room was once referred to as the *men's smoking room*. It began as a local lending library with Grace at the helm. She started the library with 446 books and was open Fridays and Saturdays from 1:00 to 5:00. The library was supported by donations until 1964, when the township held a referendum to support the library by taxes.

By 1971, the library outgrew the *smoking room*, and a house at 129 Main St. was purchased. This location housed the library for nine years until a brick building was built in 1980 on the corner of Main and Snow Streets with a collection of 29,240 books.

Grace McCannon, who pushed to develop the modern library in Sugar Grove, left her legacy by the inspiration she gave to others. Grace loved her library and created it out of love for her community.

Sugar Grove Farmers Institute created the first library for Agricultural needs and families in 1843; by 1851, there were 264 books in the collection housed at the Paull house at the corner of Bliss and 47.

In 1983, Sugar Grove Public Library joined the Public Library District.

Our Beautiful new Public Library was built at 125 South Municipal Drive in 2009.

Thank you, Grace McCannon, for keeping the flame alive!

**Proposed Railroad Discussion-Late 1860s**

"Gentlemen, I don't favor building this 'ere railroad. Our fathers and grandfathers got along with ox teams and horses and prospered. Why can't we? Don't you know if that railroad passed through our farms, the engine of the train would scare all the hens off the nest, and they wouldn't lay any eggs and we wouldn't have any chickens in a little while? No, sir, gentlemen, I don't favor the railroad."

The discussion continued after the unnamed Sugar Grover farmer listened to the arguments, and the fair-minded man spoke again.

"I guess you are right," he admitted. "We don't want to work as hard as our fathers and grandfathers did. So I will sign up, and Martha will have to take her chances with the chickens."

And so it began!

**Thank you**

**MEMORIALS**

Joan Perrin in memory of Clarence Bolander

Marcia & Joe Miles in memory of Delmar Kriegbaum

Marlene Shields in memory of John E. Shields, Sr.

John E. Shields, Jr., Daniel R. Shields and Sue Jacobson

Joan Perrin in memory of Bill Keck

Rick Johnson in memory of Bill Keck

**DONATIONS**

Doug and Carol Musser

Michael Chmelik

Lois & Joseph Yoches and also matching funds through Caterpillar

John McEnroe

Kathy Walz

Jennifer & Eric Konen

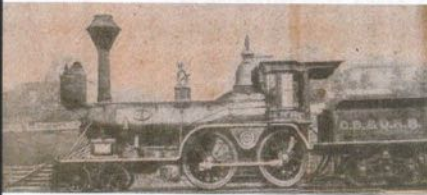
Doug and Dianne Frantz

Tom and Donna Frantz



## THE RAILROAD IN SUGAR GROVE

When the first settlers arrived in our area in 1834, they drove their ox carts along trails carved out by the Indigenous people or followed the waterways. As our settlement grew by 1860, dirt roads were carved out of the wilderness to allow farmers and new settlers access to our area. But in 1871, the settlement began to grow when the Chicago and Iowa Railroad platted their route.



**Burlington passenger locomotive No. 9 was built in Aurora in 1865.**

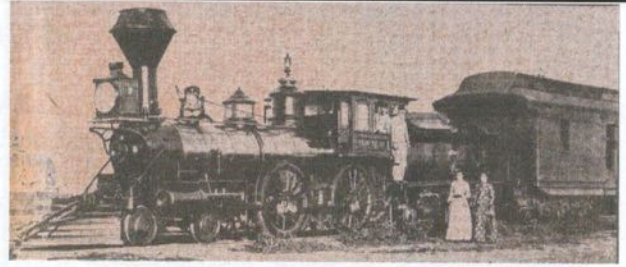
The first depot was located in the Old Hotel (Uncle Tom's Cabin) until the railroad provided a depot. The new depot was built in 1874 and provided a hub for the community's transportation and development. In 1876, the Village of Sugar Grove was plotted, and the railroad became an essential link for farmers and their agricultural businesses.



**Sugar Grove, Illinois depot stood on Main St. from 1874-1970**

In 1881, a stockyard was built south of the tracks to hold and load cattle. A lumber, grain, and coal storage business was also located south of the tracks. J.S. Miller's store, north of the tracks, housed an ice cream parlor, a pool hall, a barber shop, and the Post Office. By 1893, Will Keck and others formed the Sugar Grove Supply Co., selling items from hardware to food supplies.

The business remained in the Keck family until 1980.



**Burlington Locomotive 1870s**

The Chicago, Burlington and Quincy Railroad bought the Chicago and Iowa Railroad in 1881. Passenger travel grew, bringing salesmen, students, and people into the area to settle and creating a link for those traveling or relocating.

By 1970, Burlington Northern Railroad was formed when the CB&Q merged with several western railroads. When Amtrak took over passenger service, they discontinued passenger trains on the tracks that ran through Sugar Grove. In 1996, Burlington Northern merged with the Santa Fe, and the railroad became known as the Burlington Northern Santa Fe Railroad (BNSF).

The story of the Railroad through Sugar Grove sounds simple and calm, but one incident in 1918 reminded us of the dangers of train travel.

On November 10, 1918 (Just before the end of WWI), a train trip was arranged for soldiers at Camp Grant, Rockford, to attend a football game in Chicago. The route took the train on the CB&Q line through Sugar Grove. On that day, the excursion train from Camp Grant collided head-on with another train near the Sugar Grove Depot. The soldiers were lucky as there was only one fatality.





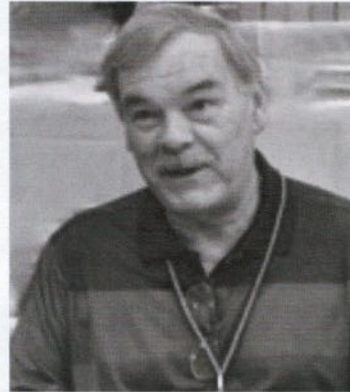
**Excerpt from a Report For the Sugar Grove Farmer's Institute  
On the benefits of a Public Library in Sugar Grove 1842 - John Norris**

First report concerning an interest in a library in Sugar Grove.

"It certainly is in our highest interest to use everything in our power to promote the intelligence of the community.

"Knowledge is power" before it, *Ignorance* and vice vanishes, as morning fog, before the rising sun. Tyrants tremble on their thrones, and all the train of followers ill that follow on the path of Poverty vanishes in their native right, and there is no place for them."

And what can promote the intelligence of the community than a well-selected library of standard works take, for instance, *Harpers Family Library*, as general reading, where literary works of the greatest merit, novels of the most importance and interest, and biographies of the most distinguished men, are introduced."



**Please join the Sugar Grove Historical Society and Sugar Grove Public Library as we host**

**Leo Phillipp**

**Presentation on the CB&Q Railroad**

**and Sugar Grove History**

**Saturday, April 6 at 2:00, Sugar Grove Public Library**

**SUGAR GROVE HISTORICAL SOCIETY**

**MEMBERSHIP**

- Individual Membership.....\$15.00
- Family Membership.....\$20.00
- Business/Organization.....\$30.00
- Supporting.....\$50.00
- Individual/Family Life Member...\$225.00

Donation \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Name(s) \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

Are you interested in Email Newsletter?

Yes

No

**Mail: Sugar Grove Historical Society,  
PO Box 102, Sugar Grove, IL 60554**



**Easter Sunday**

1954 Children's Easter Egg Hunt at Hartmans; Left to Right Standing Mary Stanton, Stella Meyer, Marian Lambert, Lillian Damon. Photo was taken behind (west) of the Sugar Grove Community Building.

"The introduction of so powerful an agent as steam to a carriage on wheels will make a great change in the situation of man." — Thomas Jefferson, 1802





**Sugar Grove Elementary School, 2nd Grade, November 18, 1954**

**Students First Row Front to Back:** Mary Lou Propst, Donald Eskew, John Nickels, Jeff Bliss, Cheryl Bliss

**Second Row:** Judy Hoepner, Ricky Johnson, Ray Hankes, Ronnie Ames, David Johnson, Jimmy Martin

**Third Row:** Arlinda Davidson, Karla Bolly, David Frantz, Barbra Larsen, Jeff Williams, Susan Cornell(?), David Elfred (?)

**Fourth Row:** Marlene Jagla, Marla Armantrout, Janice Wright, Dennis Harker, Charles Norris, Sharon Keisler

Are you in this picture? Corrections are appreciated for our records.

**SUGAR GROVE HISTORICAL SOCIETY**

**P.O. BOX 102**

**SUGAR GROVE, IL 60554**

CAROL STREAM, IL 601

5 MAR 2024 PM 9 L

