



SUGAR GROVE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Founded 1984

Newsletter Spring 2022

259 Main St.—P.O. Box 102

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www.sugargrovehistory.org

The quilt for our December raffle is here and it is stunning!
Sugar Grove quilter, Vickie Frantz, has created a French Braid design and measures 89" X 80.5".

You can purchase tickets by either stopping by Bliss house on Tuesday from 1-4, buying through PayPal on our website at sugargrovehistory.org or by mailing a check.

\$5 for one ticket or \$20 for five tickets

Sugar Grove lost three pillars of our community this past winter. Former SGHS president, William Wulff, passed away on 12-11-21. SGHS member and long-time supporter, Audrey Claesson, passed away on 1-3-22. SGHS member, Karen McCannon aka JoJo the Clown, on 1-11-22. The three of them did so much for Sugar Grove over the years and will be greatly missed.



More info on the above boulder to follow...





Fishermen's Inn

Restaurant

Open Daily 5 p.m. Sunday 12 noon
Closed Monday

Steaks—Sea Foods



Fishing will open all Winter

Open daily at
7 a.m. till dark
Closed Monday
Limit 5 Trout
and 5 Perch



For Reservations 365-6263

Route 47 and Main St. Rd.
5 Miles North of Sugar Grove

Mid March Opening

D.J. COFFEE SHOP - BAKERY

52 Cross St.

Open Daily 7 a.m. 11 p.m.

Breakfast Lunches Fresh Bakery Goods

Phone 466-4080

Bring the whole FAMILY to

S. G. C. C.

Chicken Bar-B-Q

June 7th 12:00 to 2:00 p.m.

Sugar Grove Community House



Tickets available from club members or at the door

Sugar Grove News 1970

Skating Rink



The Village of Sugar Grove has an ice skating rink on land donated to the Village by Edgar Snow.

The rink, approximately 100 feet square, is behind the Sugar Grove Community House. Lights have been provided for evening skating and there will be a shelter house with lights and heat.

As soon as the temperature permits, the area will be flooded and ready for use. Rules and regulations will be posted.

The rink was made possible by Dan Nagel, bulldozing; Jack Huggins, grading and leveling; Ray Fox, digging water main trench; Art Brummel, digging water hook-up trench; Rich Runkle, light poles; Dick Massier, shelter house; Sugar Grove Water District, water service; DeGraff Loos Assc., rink layout; and the Sugar Grove Community Club, manpower.

Thanks again, ice rink committee,

Ron Pearsall and Bob Schwarz

Grove Restaurant
Route 47
Sugar Grove 466-9712

Hours

6 a.m. - 10 p.m.
Daily

All orders on
menu are available
for carry out..

Fresh Donuts

Welcome
to



Bill's

restaurant



Rich's Texaco Service

Lubrication Tune-ups

Mechanical Repairs

Phone 466-9703

Starlight Motel

Coffee Shop - Grill
Dinning Room

Rts 30-47 Sugar Grove

Specializing in:

SEAFOOD - STEAKS

Above orders available for carry out

Phone 466-4505

Under new management

Albert Keithly - owner

Corn Boil Huge Success !!!

The Recreation '70 Corn Boil was held in July at the park behind the Community House. This was the first attempt at what is hoped to be an annual family, community event. An estimated 600 people sampled the fresh sweet corn, hot dogs, and pop. Also in the offering was a clown selling balloons, an art exhibit, several antique automobiles and carriages, an antique barbed wire display, and a '17 steam engine. Steam from the latter was used to cook the corn and hot dogs.

A special note of thanks goes to the Community Club for running a clown dunk and games for all of the kids. Most of the time, one could hear shouts in the background as another "clown" was thrown into the drink!

Background music was supplied by two live bands--a local teenage group the "Operation Combination" and The Toni Benade Trio, headliners at Pheasant Run, played for most of the afternoon.

The profit of this fund raising event totaled \$204.53, and was given to the Recreation '70 program.

Hats off to Bob Frohlich, Recreation Committee member and Corn Boil chairman for an excellent job of organization. He, along with very few men and women of the community put on what is being heralded as the Best Community Get Together ever in Sugar Grove.

Sugar Grove's down on Main Street

contributed by The Sugar Grove Historical Society and The Preservation Society of Sugar Grove

Sugar Grove residents need to learn about the past of their village before they plan for their future. It is being said over and over again by elected officials and village committee people that Sugar Grove never had a downtown. This is NOT TRUE!! Sugar Grove's written and photographed past shows a very prosperous, social and busy downtown.

Webster's Dictionary defines Downtown as "city business area". In the August 1995 issue of Historic Illinois Magazine, Downtown means "the place where everyone congregates to shop, eat, attend church and conduct business." The magazine also states, "Historically, downtown has been the economic heart and soul of a community, offering a wide variety of retail and service businesses to both local and area residents. Almost anything anybody needed could be found on MAIN STREET...But downtown was more than a collection of retailers. In most communities, downtown also served as the governmental and social center. City Hall was usually located along MAIN STREET, and many county-seat cities situated their downtowns around the county courthouse. People were also drawn downtown to the post office, library and even to church on Sunday. During holidays and special events, downtown was transformed into a festive arena."

In the past, around the 1870's,

Sugar Grove Main Street met the definition of the above. This was the beginning of Sugar Grove's Downtown, which included:

- The Normal and Industrial School was built on MAIN STREET, but burned down. Another school was built on the site, which still stands today as an apartment building. The citizens of Sugar Grove today, must be made aware of the important fact that Sugar Grove had a school that was the first of its kind anywhere in the area. Students who graduated from this school, left with teaching degrees. One of the founders and the first professor of the school, later developed the braille typewriter.

- A Town Hall was put up just north of the school on MAIN STREET, for community meetings, voting and social gatherings.

- Across the street from the school and town hall was the Methodist Church.

- Farther south on MAIN STREET was the Sugar Grove Supply Co. (Keck's Store) where people could purchase everything from hardware to food. Today two businesses occupy the bottom level and an apartment is upstairs.

- South of the former Keck's Store, on MAIN STREET, was built a hotel which was used as a dormitory to house the students who attended the Normal and Industrial School. Traveling guests and workers who were building barns and working on the railroad would sleep and eat here, as the hotel housed our first restaurant. In addition to these

function, the hotel also served as the post office, depot, a telegraph and express office and a store. This multifunctional building was the busiest in town on MAIN STREET.

- Across from the hotel on MAIN STREET was a new train depot, built for the expanding needs of the community, which is no longer on the site.

- Miller's Store was on MAIN STREET north of the depot and provided the people with general store shopping, an ice cream parlor and pool hall. This building also, has been destroyed.

- Continuing north of MAIN STREET was a building housing a blacksmith shop, a saw mill and a barber shop on the lower level and a big hall upstairs used for school functions, such as plays, basketball games, graduations and social gatherings. This building is now a residence upstairs with a workshop downstairs.

All of the above mention were located on the north side of the railroad tracks on MAIN STREET. The south side of the tracks, where MAIN STREET continued, encompassed all of the agricultural business for which Sugar Grove was noted:

- A grain mill and elevator, a creamery and cheese factory, stock yards, livery service, a stable and a business which sold feed, lumber, coal and farm machinery. Several businesses occupy this area today.

MAIN STREET SUGAR GROVE, is today, as in the past, where people do business, attend

church, use the library, use volunteer park for sports activities, Corn Boil Festival, Easter Egg Hung, and a pavilion for family gatherings and other community events.

The Town Hall had become too small for the growing community's needs, so it was moved from MAIN STREET and the Community House was constructed on the site of the former Town Hall.

- The Community House is one of MAIN STREET'S most multifunctional-use buildings. It is used for sporting events, a meeting place for adults and children, parties and dinners of all kinds, Sugar Grove's annual Christmas program and other functions too numerous to mention.

- The former elementary school on MAIN STREET, is a gathering place for bussing students to Kaneland, sporting activities and plan for expanded uses in the future.

- A most essential part of MAIN STREET contains the Volunteer Fire Department, serving the Sugar Grove area.

- There are still small businesses located on MAIN STREET, which provide needed services to the community.

- Sugar Grove today, has expanded its businesses off MAIN STREET to Cross Street and east of Il. Rt. 47, which keeps Sugar Grove in the area of its historical origin.

In summary, Sugar Grove still has a DOWNTOWN whose area CAN be revitalized to recapture businesses which create economic vitality and a "sense of place."

(Following are excerpts from the column "Now and Then" written by Charles Pierce Burton and published in the Aurora Beacon News sometime in the early 1940's)

There was nothing small about Sugar Grove even in those far-off days. There were four postoffices in the township. Thomas Judd (Uncle Tom) was postmaster at the village office; Eldad M. Calkins, at Jericho; S. S. Ingham at Winthrop, and William Thompson at Grouse.

What's that? Never heard of Grouse? Well, the directory admits that Grouse was "a very small village of only about six families, with one school house and a few workshops."

One of those six families furnished this columnist, when he was a boy, with a pet Brahma rooster, that forthwith was named Grouse in honor of the community that bore him.

The "very small village" of Grouse is on the blacktop Kaneville road that leads off from Route 47. Jericho evidently was even smaller, for the directory says

"Jericho is not claimed as a village but there is a postoffice; a church occupied jointly by the Methodists and Congregationalists; there is also a district school, a mechanic's shop and a public house." (Typist's note--the public house was destroyed by fire but there is a picture of it at the Sugar Grove Library)

"Jericho corners" perpetuates the name. It is west of Route 47 on the Jericho black-top that leads west from South Lake street, Aurora.

"Winthrop is a postoffice, no village but there are two school houses and a considerable population," the directory tells us. The Winthrop postoffice apparently was in or near the old Ingham homestead on the Galena road, east of Route 47.

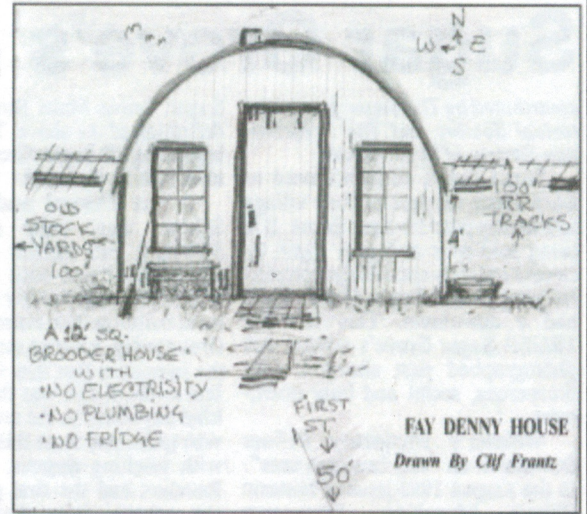


Cliff Frantz Memories of Faye Denny

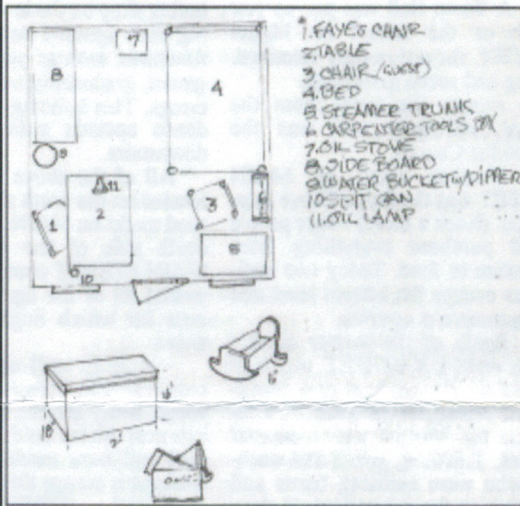
This 12' sq. chicken brooder house with no electricity, no plumbing, and no fridge was where my old friend Faye Denny lived when I was a boy in the mid 1940s (I was 5). With just two windows it was dimly lit & with little ventilation. There was a strong mingling odor of tobacco juice and kerosene. He fed himself & 100s of wild birds with the "day olds" cakes & pies gotten free from Keck's Store. He washed 'em down with warm pop or water from the stock yard pump next door. As far as I know he never cooked. Until 1950s Faye lived here on First St. on the east side of the stock yards. Sometime then about mid '50s he moved directly north across the tracks. In 1959 late

on a cold winters night his oil stove exploded. It lit up the whole south end of town. Fay's little house burnt down but he managed to escape in his "long johns" never to return to the Grove again. He spent the next (4) years at the Kane Co. Home (Old Peoples). My dear old friend, Clearance Faye Denny died 1963.

Faye always set behind the table (#2) by the light of an oil lamp. He read strictly Field & Stream and Sports a Field. His bed (#4) was



Services will be held at the Healy chapel Saturday afternoon at 1:30 for Warren G. Dugan, 27, above, son of Mr. and Mrs. Ralph Dugan of Sugar Grove, who died Sunday in the New Haven, Conn., hospital from poliomyelitis (infantile paralysis) contracted while doing research work on the dread disease in one of the Yale university laboratories. He had volunteered for the work.



always made neat, the blankets were very dirty. I am almost sure under the grime the bed was brass. In his trunk (#5) among other things was a cigar box with an arrow head and a rattle from a rattlesnake. In his open tool box (#6) were his old but sharp chisels, plane, saw etc. Faye's spittoon (#10) was a coffee can along side the table leg. He chewed Red Man and gave me the cards "Great Indian Chiefs" that came in the tobacco.

From orange crate wood Faye made doll cradles for the little girls in town & toy boxes & box traps for the boys. Whittle (wit'l) to cut aimlessly with a knife. On

summer days Faye would set & whittle, either on the front steps of the Mill or on a roll of fence wire in front of Keck's Hardware, evidence by "baccie" juice & woodchips.

Stories about Kitty Lorah and Faye Denny are from Sin-Qua-Sip Sugar Grove A History of Sugar Grove Township Kane County, IL by Patsy Mighell Paxton.



Kitty

Kitty Lorah owned Uncle Tom's Cabin during the first half of the 1900s. It was then known as West Hotel, and Sundays found automobiles with license plates from as far away as Wisconsin and Iowa parked in front of the hotel, where Kitty served



West Hotel

family style meals, all of which were cooked on two gigantic cast iron cook stoves in the basement kitchen. Her dining room was filled with families on Sundays and railroad personnel at noon during the week. Kitty continued to operate her restaurant and manage the apartments in the hotel, well into her later years. She could be found seated outside early on summer mornings, shelling a bushel of peas or stringing a like amount of beans, which were headed for her huge kettles and the dinner plates of diners. Kitty was never without her ample apron and her stockings rolled below her knees. She wore her hair in a twist at the back of her head, and never seemed to mind the long strands of hair that worked their way loose as she worked. Kitty was forever surrounded by her colony of cats, who followed her wherever she went around the hotel grounds.

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SU

SUGAR GROVE

HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Individual _____
Family \$15 _____
Student (17 & under) \$ 1 _____
Business/Organizations \$25 _____
Supporting \$50 _____
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Donation _____

Date _____

Names _____

Address _____

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MAIL TO:

SUGAR GROVE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

P.O. BOX 102

SUGAR GROVE, IL 60554

THANK YOU!!!

Memorials

Dorothy Bourdeau in memory of W.A. & Marie Johnson

Douglas & Dianne Frantz in memory of Thomas T. & Emily (Ravlin) Frantz

Joan Perrin in memory of William Wulff

Ed & Sue Shulkin, Mary Claesson, Sue Jacobson, Beth Morris, James & Kelly Wituk, Barbara Landis, Brent Wilson, John & Rhonda Stefanski, Charles & Esther Fuller in memory of Audrey Claesson

Marcia & Joe Miles in memory of Frances Sauer Porter, Verna & Leigh Sauer, Sr. and Phyllis & Leigh Sauer, Jr.

Donations

Tom Frantz

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Susan & Jim Martin

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Liz Chalberg

Sugar Grove Alumni Assoc.

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Bill Durrenberger

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Kristine Smets & Michael Booth

We would like to once again thank the Liu family for helping us with our ongoing digitizing project. On March 3rd & 4th the Lius along with members of the Kaneland National Honor Society volunteered by scanning and uploading documents. We would like to acknowledge the following volunteers:

Sean Liu	Scott Remrey
Kai Liu	Ryan Bicker
Sean Liu	Joshua Stover
Marisa Urban	Matt Manugas
Sofia Watson	Samuel Regelbrugge
Avery Erickson	Camille Roethemeier
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