

Letter From The President

The start of a new year is usually the time to set goals and look to the future. This is especially true for the year 2000, which is commonly thought of as the beginning of a new century and a new millennium. It would seem a contradiction for the Antiquarian and Historical Society of Culver to be dealing with visions of the future. Nevertheless, as an organization we must set goals if we are to be successful. I have often quoted Fred Karst's editorial in the Culver Citizen when he wrote: "...isn't it strange that the Antiquarian and Historical Society is probably the most forward thinking organization in Culver".

First, though, I would like to review some of the organization's highlights from the past year. The Ice Cream Social and the dedication of the Maxinkuckee Country Club as part of a National Record of Historic Places District was a great success. It was also an occasion for members to volunteer their time and to just get together with other members to share in a wonderful event. Other projects included: The expansion of the newsletter to include photographs and feature articles, the placing of Bronze Plaques at both ends of the Lake Maxinkuckee "East Shore" Historic District, the work done on putting the application together to place the Forest Place "Bungalow" District on the National Register (designation should take place some time this summer), the sale of polo shirts and sweat shirts with the "Historic Lake Maxinkuckee" logo as well as other memorabilia", a successful fund drive, the expansion of the Society's board to 12 members and the interim appointment of Jennifer Shea, Robert Hartman and Agnes Bramfeld to the board, a beautifully maintained and enhanced Heritage Park, and, of course, the great meetings during the summer months.

The library renovation and expansion at the site of the old Carnegie Building remains an on-going project. Our attempts to renew the entire Osborn Square block ran into financial feasibility problems and we are now assisting the library to acquire land for the expansion at the present site. Another

project started last year was to develop a musical about the boyhood of Cole Porter and how Lake Maxinkuckee influenced him during his formative years. Richard Coven, theater director at the Academy, has expressed interest in producing the play at the academy.

Now for the President's vision of the Society's future, a long range goal is to establish a Culver-Lake Maxinkuckee history museum. While we are currently doing wonderful things with all of our volunteer help, having a museum with staff would better organize and enhance our activities. Once a museum is in place, there are many grants for which we can apply to help staff the museum. Currently, the interest on our reserve account, which is held by the Marshall County Community Foundation, is being used to help finance the maintenance costs of Heritage Park. Clearly, we would have to increase our funding to establish and maintain a historical museum in the town of Culver. The benefits, however, would be substantial: 1) an enhanced reputation as a historical area, 2) more tourists and tourism dollars for Culver, and 3) a center for the Society's activities. That is my vision and I hope we will be discussing its implementation during the coming year.

Finally, we know it is the members who have made this Society one of the most successful history groups in the State of Indiana. If you are interested in knowing who makes the society run, just look at the directory; it is an honor roll of volunteers. As we move into the new century, the leadership of this organization will evolve from these volunteers, bringing fresh ideas and projects to our group. I know that everyone in this area is grateful for the contributions that you have made to our community. I hope you look with pride on our Society and that you will continue to make it grow.

Happy New Year
Jim Peterson

The Black Horse Troop Comes to CMA

Robert Hartman has been a part of the Culver Military Academy for many years. He has been given the opportunity to compile and write of it's history which has resulted in several informative books. Therefore, the Antiquarian and Historical Society felt fortunate that Bob agreed to share with us the history of the Black Horse Troop at the October meeting. Bob finds that history is as a soap-opera with several events going on in various places which will have an effect on the eventual outcome of the story.

He began the history of the Black Horse Troop with events which happened in Pennsylvania. In 1859 oil was discovered there and the oil boom was underway. A man in Cleveland, Ohio named John D. Rockefeller decided he would corner the market. He created Standard Oil. Because of the success of this company many people were drawn to Cleveland to start businesses. Soon there were more millionaires in Cleveland than any other city in the country.

Another piece of this puzzle has to do with a fellow named Henry Harrison Culver from southern Ohio. He left that part of the country when he was 15 years old and moved to Springfield, Illinois to sell stoves with his brother. They marketed stoves off the back of a wagon. Mr. Culver came into Marshall County and in due time met and married Emily Jane Hand of Wolf Creek, located six miles from Culver. The couple eventually went to St. Louis, Missouri. It was there that the three Culver brothers started the Wrought Iron Range Company. The brothers did not get along well and finally over differences in sales policy Henry Harrison Culver was forced out of the company in 1882. It was at this time that Mr. and Mrs. Culver came to Lake Maxinkuckee and built the cottage now called the Founders Cottage.

Mr. Culver began his reclamation program on the north shore of the lake. He cleared and drained land in what is now the athletic area and he purchased more land. He had heard of the successful Chautauqua in New York and decided this could be done on his land. It was not financially successful so he dropped the idea after the first year. For a brief period he turned his property into a township fair grounds. This was also not a financial success so he closed that as well.

In 1894 he decided to change the hotel he had built for Chautauqua into class rooms and a mess hall and he called it a military academy. It almost failed. As a soap opera would have it a military school in Mexico, Missouri burned down. The primary stockholder was Alexander Fleet, a confederate veteran. He was left with no investment. Henry Harrison Culver knew him and recognizing an opportunity sent him the message "You have the boys. I have the buildings. Let's get together." Two weeks later 72 boys were met at the train, they off loaded, were taken to the north shore and marched to the Main Barracks which had recently been built. This transfusion saved the school. Mr. Culver was a brilliant promoter.

His brothers in St. Louis had run the company into the ground and so he was called back. He took over the company and made a fortune.

The soap opera returns to Cleveland. There was much unrest in the country between 1870 - 1890 and the wealthy people of Cleveland felt the police force would not be able to protect them if trouble developed. It was decided an independent militia would be formed. Forty-one young men from the best families were recruited with the goal of perfecting their horsemanship and their use of arms. The first order of business was to buy custom made uniforms from Brooks Brothers in New York.

After a ten year period of military exercise the state of Ohio outlawed private militias and the Cleveland militia was incorporated into the National Guard. The National Guard was used in public ceremonies, including President McKinley's inaugural parade in 1897. For this event 81 identical black horses were purchased at a cost of \$10,000. Following the inauguration the horses were to be sold. Mr. Cook, of the Culver Military Academy, went to Cleveland with a check of \$2,000 and purchased 16 of the best mounts.

The 125 cadets in full uniform greeted the horses as the train pulled onto the Academy spur. In celebration of the event the cannons were fired and the band played. After the bugle call the cadets were given a half day away from their classes. It was a wonderful day of enthusiasm for the beginning of the Black Horse Troop and the culmination of this particular soap opera.

Lt. Col. Gignilliat and his party are reviewing the Black Horse Troop circa 1911. Gignilliat is second from right in the front row and is accompanied by Capt. Robert Rossow, head of the troop, in the second row. Guests in the reviewing party include Indiana Gov. Thomas Marshall, Dr. Meredith Nicholson, President of Purdue, and Hillary Gobin, Vice President of Depaw.





Chicago Girls Make Hit at Indiana Summer Resort **Some of the Society Belles at the Popular Indiana Summer Resort**

**Louise Otis and
Anna Rogers are Favorites**

**Liven up Society Features at
Lake Maxinkuckee, Where Many of the
Elite of Indiana and Illinois are gathered**

It isn't every community that objects to receiving the cream of Chicago society as summer guests. Perhaps such is not really the case with that very small spot in Northern Indiana that bears the very large name of Lake Maxinkuckee. Still her own little colony of the state's "smart set" were so ultra exclusive that at one time they deemed it quite a bore to be intruded upon by Chicago's very best people.

That they have decided to receive the outsiders, however, is an established fact, and is also a subject for congratulations to both sides and to the world at large. For the distinguished galaxy that now meets on the shores of this miniature body of water is pleasant to reflect upon.

Arms Open to Chicago Belles

No one could seriously think that the cottagers at Lake Maxinkuckee ever for a moment hesitated to extend the glad hand to Louise Otis in any of her short visits to the place in years past, nor could they be unimpressed by distinction as to even assume indifference to Anna Rogers, daughter of Rufus Rogers of Washington Avenue, and niece of H. Rogers of Standard Oil Company and Frenzied Finance.

Certainly neither of these young women received a doubtful reception during this summer, all of which they have spent there in a cottage that the families have taken together. And as for exclusiveness - what could be more so than their own little week and house parties of, and for, Chicago people only?

Mrs. Shirk a Favorite

Certainly, Mrs. Shirk, sister of Mrs. Zack Stuart of the Virginia Hotel, has been graciously received since she has come to take her place as one of the grand ladies of the resort. The wooing of her alone, if nothing else, would make Mrs. Elbert Shirk distinguished. She it was who, as Miss Kirtland, Elbert Shirk of Yale and incidentally of Peru, Ind., pursued about the country in his automobile, and on one occasion chartered a private car in order to be exactly on time to keep an engagement with her.

Then Mrs. Zack Stuart herself, who makes frequent visits to the place, has always commanded a welcome for many reasons - because for instance, she is Mrs. Zack Stuart and very charming, and because of her decorative value.

Long ago the array of fair women and brave men from Hoosierdom that assembled here each year to laugh, to sail and to chase the errant golf ball over the ravines and natural bunkers, had won for the spot the name of the Newport of Indiana.

Many Festive Scenes

There, also, on its wide veranda, Mrs. Stoughton Fletcher, Jr., of Indianapolis, flirted away many a pleasant summer afternoon - when she was May Henley and had not yet married the richest bachelor in Indiana.

From the pier of this cottage the Parrott children of Indianapolis, Mary and Josephine learned to dive. And their father, who was once a partner of Mr. Taggart in the cracker business, on a certain evening, draped in a woman's downy lounging robe and adorned with a crown improvised by turning a chafing dish up side down on his head, impersonated in some charades the queen of Sheba. Thus arrayed he did not look so much like the stern man of business nor the magnate of the great trust (the National Biscuit Company), though, both of these he is.

(Continued on page 4)

Mr. & Mrs. Richard Dugger
P.O. Box 232
Culver IN 46511

February, 2000
NEWSLETTER

Antiquarian and Historical Society
P.O. Box 125
Culver, Indiana 46511-0125

(Chicago Girls - Continued from page 3)

Pretty Muffy Winters and Mrs. William L. Elder, both of prominence in Indianapolis society, have spent many an hour at this cottage. The one was there as house guest and the other on informal visits to a neighbor, Mrs. Elder having taken a cottage there one summer before she begun going East each season.

Taggart and Daughters There

The Taggart girls, daughters of Indiana's own Tom Taggart, insist upon spending at least two weeks of each season at this very festive little watering place and Mr. Taggart himself has wiled away vacations by fishing in its waters. Indeed he had all but completed arrangements to buy a cottage here when the unfortunate death one of his daughters by drowning gave Mrs. Taggart such a terror of water that she cannot bear to come to the place.

George Ade, John McCutcheon, Lieutenant Hobson and Vice President Fairbanks have visited this dainty little lake.

"Most Beautiful", Said Lew Wallace

"The most beautiful place in the world" Lew Wallace pronounced it. And in an old tavern, sitting back from the roadside and looking as if it had stepped out of an English novel, he wrote the chariot race and other chapters of "Ben Hur."

Booth Tarkington chose it not only as the fitting place in which to put the finishing touches to the "Gentleman From Indiana", but as the spot of all others for his honeymoon. After a hurried trip through the East he and Louisa Fletcher Tarkington spent the lovely month of October there alone, the long, purple, silent days they gave to rowing, sailing, driving, walking. Then at sundown they donned evening dress (Louisa and decollete creations of the country's best artists) and dined in splendor alone.

(This article appeared in the Sunday edition, July 16, 1905, of the Chicago American Newspaper.)

**SOCIETY'S ANNUAL FUND DRIVE
TOPS 1998 CONTRIBUTIONS**

Last year's Annual Fund Drive, spearheaded by Richard Ford, Anne Greenleaf, Lynn Overmyer and John Cleveland, has raised over \$17,500 from 88 donors. This is more money than was raised in the previous year and we thank all of you who donated to the Society and also the four members who organized and implemented the fund-raising effort.

Most of our money is on deposit with the Marshall County Community Foundation, where it earned 10% in the fiscal year ending June 30, 1999. Donors will receive a letter acknowledging their gift to the Society for tax purposes. Anyone who would still like to contribute to the fund should send the check to the Marshall County Community Foundation, Inc., P.O. Box 716, Plymouth, IN 46563. It should be noted on the check that the donation is for the benefit of the Antiquarian and Historical Society of Culver.

YEARLY DUES STILL \$10.00

If you haven't already sent your check for 2000 family dues, please do it soon. Send dues to The Antiquarian and Historical Society, P.O. Box 125, Culver, IN 46511-0125.

Name _____
Summer Address _____
_____ Phone _____
Winter Address _____
_____ Phone _____
Make checks payable to the Antiquarian and Historical Society, P.O. Box 125, Culver, IN 46511