

METAMORA ASSOCIATION FOR HISTORIC PRESERVATION

NEWSLETTER

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A Long History of Metamora Bands



EARLY 1900 BAND GROUP
Front Row..... unknown, Silvers, Bill Meister
Back Row..... unknown, Harry Martin, Carl Hindson,
Gerich, Roy Wagner, Ed Gerich, H. Parker, unknown,
Bill Broenle, Robert Martin, Pomp Martin.

Early Military Band



1900's Band



1938 German Band

The 1966 edition of the "Old Settler's Association Souvenir Book" features a piece written by Mae Walden, daughter of T. D. Walden, an early local businessman in Metamora. She writes, "Many of the pleasantest recollections of my childhood clustered around the old bandstand. What good times we used to have on the Fourth of July, political rallies, and days of the County Fair." Remember, Metamora at one time was the county seat for Woodford County. Mae continues, "Circuses and medicine shows pitched their tents here until the 1890s. There ought to be in some of the old albums in Metamora a picture of the Metamora Cornet Band. It was taken by photographer Sam Powell and when I was a child almost every .house had this (post) card photograph. There were no uniforms worn except some caps.

Members of this band listed by name include the leader Joseph Ellis, Nick Portman, Charlie Crain, Newt Fordyce, Gord Wilson, Tom Causey, snare drum player Cass Irving, Harvey Kuhl, Joseph Lineweber, Bob Moreland and Ed Neve. You will note many of these names appeared in the 1866 band roster. Mae writes on, "But the band -wagon! Never shall I forget its red and gold splendor, shaped like a galley boat, and drawn by four white horses with red harness and red plumes at their ears. The whole outfit was driven by a wonderful man by the name of Saul Allen. He was employed in the livery stable, run by George Kern, and he ran the bandwagon as a bus to and from the fairgrounds several times a day. The fare was five cents."

"It is not known when this band was discontinued. The Metamora Military Band (above left) was organized in 1889. They played for all occasions including the First Communion at St. Mary's Church that year."

"We now know that a brass band was established as early as 1866, and the tradition has been carried on up to our time, with band music flourishing into the 1900s. Many of us have seen interest in band music evolve over the decades, up to the introduction of what we know as the Metamora Municipal Band and the Attig Concert Band. This must have occurred about the same time or slightly later than the Metamora Military Band.

"My recollection of one of the earliest leaders was Glenwood Tanton. His sons, Bill and Henry "Bud" Tanton, told me Glenwood played solo clarinet with the famous John Philip Sousa Band for about one year in 1918, while serving in the U.S. Navy. Sousa, though much over age for military service during World War I, was commissioned as a Lt. Commander in the U.S. Navy, and conducted the Great Lakes Naval Training Station Band. Many fine musicians and entertainers performed in that Special Services Group.

"Almost as important as the leader of the band were the business managers. Starting very early on was Carl Hindson, who also played clarinet. Then came Graydon Parker, who played baritone. A special treat was Graydon often singing at the end of a concert in that beautiful tenor voice "Till We Meet Again" with band accompaniment. Many lovely summer night concerts in the park were finished that way.

For Civil War Buffs... -

Metamorans in the Vicksburg Siege

The victory at Vicksburg, along with the victory the same week at Gettysburg, proved to be a turning point in the Civil War. Did you know that six soldiers from Metamora gave the ultimate sacrifice in that campaign? John Kindig, Cicero Ormsby, Jerry Plank, Lewellen Stoddard, Franz Weischaup, and Fredrick Wiles – all assigned to Company E, 108th Illinois Infantry - all lost their lives at Young's Point, Louisiana, which is opposite Vicksburg from January 31 to March 9, 1863. Stoddard's brother, Daniel, had died two weeks earlier in St. Louis. In addition, 2 boys from Eureka, one from Roanoke, and one from Secor also lost their lives there.

What's New...

- Lora Lea Hawk donated several quilts. One is 100 years old.

Contact Us

Questions, ideas...

We would love to hear from you. Laure Adams, President, 369-2353 or jrfarmer@mtco.com; Kenneth Willman, Vice President, 367-4426; Shirley Adams, Secretary, 367-2289; Jack Weddle, Treasurer, 645-0963 or jweddle@mtco.com; Board members: Dave Pohlman, 369-3290; pohlman46@yahoo.com; Lee Summer, 367-4059, 635-0259, lsummer@mtco.com; Mary Curry, 367-2185