

CHERRY VALLEY HISTORICAL SOCIETY NEWSLETTER
Spring 2019



It was one of those spring days when the sun shines hot and the wind blows cold: When it is summer in the light and winter in the shade. ~Charles Dickens, Great Expectations



The following have passed away since our last newsletter:

Sally Baeverstaad

April 2019



Washington Park



Long before people were able to relax at home with their TV, Halls and social gatherings were the way to meet, mingle and enjoy yourself. There were many dances held and attendance was high. Brownell's Hall, Howe's Hall, Farley's Hall, Adams Restaurant, Woodman Hall, Oberg/ Legion Hall, the Valley Hotel and Washington Park Hall all hosted dances, festivals, and masquerade balls. Dances were held in honor of New Years, Washington's Birthday, harvest, Christmas, Thanksgiving, the Broom Corn Dance, along with benefits for the firemen and needy soldier relief. Needless to say, our early citizens enjoyed their social time together!

The property of the Rodney Stacy family at 120 North Ulster and West State was once known as Washington Park. This was a favorite gathering place in the early 1900's and depending on your point of view, was either a very fun place or a very sinful nuisance. The inter-urban brought people from miles

around to convene at the dance hall built on the property. A 1908 article in the Rockford Republic describes it as follows:

“This park was beautified by Professor Kirby Fosgate about twelve years ago, and was first called Berlin. It is now owned by the Free Methodist Campmeeting Association, but is leased by the interurban railway. It comprises about four acres and on its premises are found swings, tables and a large dancing pavilion. Dances have been held here by Rockford clubs about three times a week thus far this season.”

In 1910 the village was a dry one, and we do not refer to the weather. There were no saloons in Cherry Valley as the anti-saloon faction, which outnumbered the wets, voted two years previously to close the saloons. The news article continues,

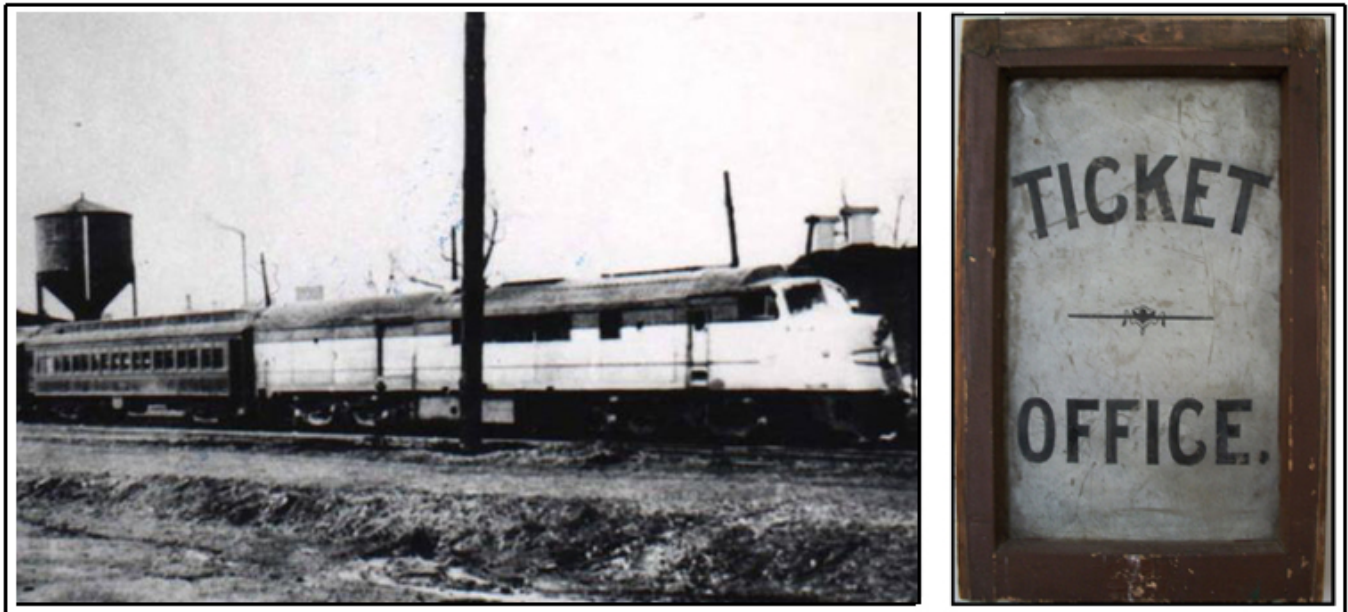
“There was a time in the days of the saloon, when conditions were far from ideal. Drunkenness, swearing and carousing were no uncommon things. A drunken mob, holding carnival on the streets was an all too frequent occurrence. And crowds of rowdies from any neighboring community who were out for all kinds of deviltry found Cherry Valley a convenient place, until decent people hung their heads for shame. But all that is changed now. Righteous men decided for better things, and fought until they got them. A gang of drunks from any other community knows now what kind of reception they will receive in Cherry Valley. Seldom is a drunken man seen on the streets.”

A Cherry Valley businessman was quoted as saying, “What drunks we have in town are only the ‘old regulars’. Street manners are better. Drunken mobs are a thing of the past, and a lady can go downtown now at night and not be insulted.”

This article and photo of Washington Park Dance Hall are taken from Our Memories Are Warm. We don't have exact locations for some of the hotels and halls mentioned in our archives. Perhaps one of you might have some evidence of them among your old photos and could help establish the location of these mystery establishments.



The Last Passenger Train



In the '30's there were three scheduled daily passenger trains each way. August 1930 was probably the busiest month of railroading ever through Cherry Valley. The line was thoroughly saturated with troop trains handling the Illinois National Guard on their annual maneuvers to Camp Grant. There was 85-90 train orders issued that day, so traffic must have been nearly continuous.

Passenger service was terminated in 1952. The last passenger train to run between Chicago and Freeport was pulled by big diesel, Number 5000-A, operated by Billy Miller. The above photo documents the last run and passing of an era. Since the beginning, the railroad served the community with thousands of freight and passenger trains, carried the mail, moved livestock, provided jobs, paid taxes and transported loved ones. The actual ticket office window is in the CV Historical Museum.

Some passenger fees from 1923 from Cherry Valley to:

Belvidere	\$.22	St. Charles	\$3.90
Minneapolis ...	\$12.87	Chicago	\$3.04
Rockford	\$.32	Pecatonica	\$1.07
Freeport	\$1.34	Milwaukee	\$3.92

The Last Ticket Agent

Tim Kehoe started working for the C and NW railroad as a depot agent's helper for the agent Mr. Craig in the early 1890's. He worked the railroad for over 60 years being the last agent in the Cherry Valley depot. In the last years, there was only one passenger train each way and not much freight either. So his time could be better spent playing pitch with the boys over in Oberg's drug store and later in the Valley Tavern. On one of his service anniversaries with the railroad, the chief dispatcher from Chicago and some of the other railroad officials decided to pay him a surprise visit.

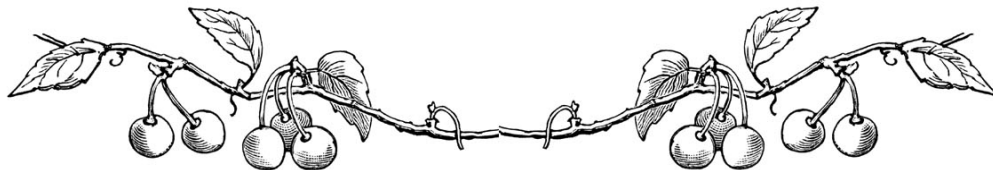
Upon arriving at the depot they found it empty. As it was a long hot trip from Chicago, they decided to stop at the tavern until Tim returned from delivering the 'important telegram'? As they walked in the front door of the tavern, the rear door slammed and someone disappeared around the corner of the ice house heading in the general direction of the depot.

The Tim Kehoe story was told to John Larson by Mr. Gilliam, the chief dispatcher.
The last passenger train photo and article is taken from the archives at the CV Historical Society.



The Historical Society is looking into having more t-shirts and sweatshirts made with our name/logo on them. It would be very helpful to have an idea of how many might be interested in purchasing, and possibly a size indicator. (Remember, our email is always included in the newsletter.) Also, we are down to two copies of "Our Memories are Warm" and will be having a few more printed. It is expensive to have done, so we don't keep too many on hand for purchase. It is wonderful to browse through time and time again.

Our meeting time is 3:30pm the first Sunday of the month. If that falls on a holiday weekend, we postpone until the following Sunday. Anyone is welcome to attend. And please note we have a [new email address](#). The date 1899 in our new address is how old our wonderful building is! We would love for you to share photos, stories and ideas for the newsletter there!



Editor.... Pam Jeske (golfnsew@aol.com) 815-621-7262

Please feel free to drop a line, add some content, share some stories either to my e-mail,

The Historical Society's e-mail (cvhs.1899@gmail.com)

Or stop by, leave a note ...have a chat with a member!

Cherry Valley Historical Society, Box 266, Cherry Valley, IL 61016



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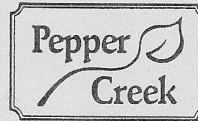
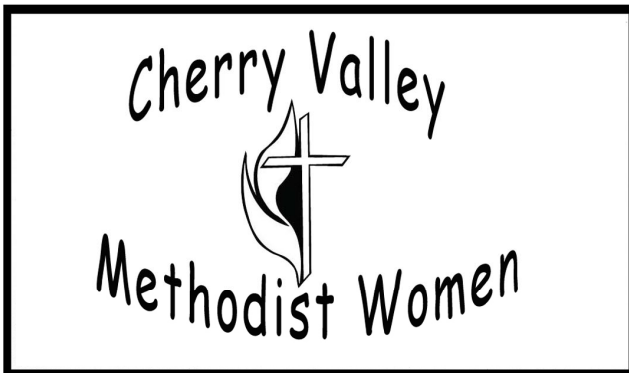
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Thank you to the Cherry Valley Village Hall for their wonderful support and assistance.
 Please let our sponsors know you saw their advertisement in the newsletter, we appreciate them!



Terry Murphy, a lifelong Cherry Valley resident had always envisioned organizing a non for profit organization with a group of Cherry Valley area men with the goal of helping Cherry Valley area children and the community in general. In 2011 he put his ideas into action and the Cherry Valley Area Men's Association was established. Sadly Terry passed away in 2017 but his vision and goals are the driving force of our organization. We are a small organization that raises money through various events, company sponsors and membership dues. We donate to various community needs and offer five \$500 scholarships per year towards continuing education.

Cherry Valley Area Men's Association is a Nonprofit 501 (C)(3) organization Fed ID # 90-0674903

Events Cherry Valley Area Men's Association has sponsored or contributed to:

1. Petitioned and got the speed limit reduced from 55 mph to 45 mph on Harrison (Bypass 20) and Mill Road intersection.
2. Established an educational scholarship program donating five \$500 scholarships every year.
3. Donated uniforms and equipment for the 4th and 5th grade boys and girls basketball teams at Cherry Valley School
4. Donated cheerleading uniforms for the 4th and 5th grade Cherry Valley School Spirit squad.
5. CVAMA members assist with the yearly food and paper shredding drive at Village Hall.
6. Raised funds for uniforms for the Goldie B. Floberg special athletes.
7. CVAMA worked with the Winnebago County Forest Preserve to design, produce and install rules of the river signs at six county forest preserves.
8. Donated to the 2011 and 2012 downtown Cherry Valley Christmas lights
9. Donated and passed out over 4,000 Frisbees at the Cherry Valley 4th of July parade 2012 thru 2018.
10. Sponsored the Oscar Meyer Weiner Mobile at the 2012 4th of July parade.
11. Sponsor the Cherry Valley Family Night Ice skating at Carlson Ice Arena 2016-2018
12. Sponsored Cherry Valley 4th and 5th grade basketball players to youth basketball clinics.
13. Mini Golf and silent auction sponsor 2017, 2018 Cherry Valley Public Library fundraiser.
14. Sponsored Wild Life Exhibit and Educational Show Cherry Valley Public Library 2017
15. Donated a defibrillator to the Cherry Valley Police Department.
16. Sponsor the Cherry Valley Bounce Night at the Gymnastics Academy South for 2017 and 2018.
17. Contributed fishing poles and tackle boxes to the Cherry Valley Library that can be used with a library card.
18. Sponsor the Cherry Valley Library tour at the Burpee Museum 2018
19. Sponsor Cherry Valley Library Furry and Friends Petting Zoo 2018