

# MAEYSTOWN VOLKSBLATT

Maeystown, Illinois

## Maeystown Preservation Society

[www.maeystownpreservationsociety.org](http://www.maeystownpreservationsociety.org)

### Historic Maeystown to Host Antique & Garden Show (Fruehlingsfest)

Maeystown, Illinois, will host its annual Fruehlingsfest antique and garden show on Sunday, May 4, 2014. The show, which begins at 9:00 a.m. and ends at 4:00 p.m., will take place around the stone mill in the heart of town. Maeystown, located only 30 minutes from St. Louis, is one of a handful of towns in Illinois that is listed, in its entirety, on the National Register of Historic Places.

The Fruehlingsfest will feature unique antiques from some of the finest dealers in the Midwest. In addition, various local nurseries will be selling annuals, perennials and herbs.

"The Maeystown Fruehlingsfest is permanently on my calendar," says Andy Culbertson of Quintessential Antiques in St. Louis. "We look forward to it every year, and I wouldn't think of missing it. It's a unique, entertaining day in a beautiful setting — appealing to hardened collectors and casual antique buffs alike, or for those just looking for an enjoyable way to spend a Sunday." Culbertson has been selling antiques at Fruehlingsfest since 2004.

This show, held rain or shine on the first Sunday in May, has rapidly become one of the best and most highly anticipated antique shows in the Midwest.

"It's amazing how the Fruehlingsfest has become a full-day's destination and event," says John Rehling, event coordinator. "At most antique shows, people arrive early, shop quickly, and leave for other events. At the Fruehlingsfest, people tend to arrive early, shop leisurely, and stay the entire day to soak up the Maeystown magic. They relax at the wine garden, walk the

creek, explore the town, and revisit the show to see the new items dealers bring out throughout the day." The event is free, so attendees can check out the show as often as they like.

A variety of food will be offered at Fruehlingsfest, including bratwurst, barbecue, potato pancakes, kettle corn, funnel cakes, pretzels and strawberry shortcake.

For more information, call the Corner George Inn at [618-458-6660](tel:618-458-6660) or visit [www.maeystown.com](http://www.maeystown.com).

John Rehling

### Frauenabend November 22, 2013

I'm not sure if it was the pampering, delicious foods and drinks, Christmas shopping or just simple fun that brought the ladies out that brisk November evening for our second annual Frauenabend. At the Inn ladies enjoyed chair massages by Connie Cammarata while Kelly Stedman gave personal hand scrubs. To complete their pampering the Village Kaffeehaus offered sample spa and cleansing teas.

Vici's Front Porch and Tea Garden served delicious choices of soups, salads and desserts while The Tavern had an appetizer special.

Just as she did on Great Day St. Louis, Mary Hummert demonstrated Van Gogh chalk paint, banners and her unique jewelry line. Handmade denim coats and jackets were brought by Elizabeth Eisloeffel while Michelle Posey showed her one of a kind scarves and vintage jewelry. Christmas florals by Pat Dunn, children and baby gifts by Anna Glaenzer and monogrammed gifts by Gina Hefflinger were available on the lower level of the Mill Museum.

Holiday scrapbooking ideas and

supplies were offered by Janese Schmitt in the ballroom of the Inn. Chocolates from Zettie's Confections and wine from Lau Nae Winery were provided for tasting and purchasing.

The Maeystown General Store served private label food tastings while the aroma of freshly roasted coffee came from the Village Kaffeehaus. Sweet treats and teapots were available at the Sweet Shoppe while discounts were offered on selected items at Georgia Mae's Antiques and Corner George Inn gift certificates.

Ladies toured the museum at the Maeystown Preservation Rock Mill and completed their evening with carriage rides sponsored by Coast to Coast.

Join the fun next year. Ladies, take a night for yourself and mark your calendars for Frauenabend on Friday, November 21st!

Anita Muertz

### Old Fashioned Christmas Puts Everyone in the Spirit

Maeystown's Old Fashioned Christmas put everyone in the holiday spirit with its variety of music and emphasis on the traditions of a German Christmas. One of the largest Christmas crowds in recent memory came to the village and took part in all the activities offered. Special thanks to St. John UCC for hosting the Christkindmarkt, to the vendors who displayed both at the church and the mill, to all of the musicians who performed throughout the day, to Valmeyer Librarian Lori Brutton for story time, to St. Nicholas Jerry Reilman of Belleville, to Kevin Hirsch for the carriage rides, to the volunteers who worked at the mill and the houses, to the Women's Club for their

Taste of Christmas and to the village businesses for all of the hard work in preparation for the day. A huge thank you to the homeowners who opened their beautifully decorated homes for the House Tour: Chris and Christy Muertz, Joanne Goeddel, Randy and Laurie Unterseh, and Leland and Wendy Mueller. Seventy-five people took the house tour with all proceeds going to benefit the backpack program at St. John UCC. The mission team's backpack program provides weekend food for children in the Monroe County area school districts.

Most of all, a huge thank you goes to all of the people who attended the Old Fashioned German Christmas 2013!

Marcia Braswell

### **2014 Spring Art Show March 15 & 16**

The 2014 Spring Art Show, sponsored by Historic Maeystown, will be held on Saturday and Sunday, March 15 & 16 from 11:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m. each day. This year's featured artists are Rita Coats Engbring and Jeff Engbring, both from the Valmeyer area. Mr. and Mrs. Engbring now reside in Cobden, Illinois.

Rita Coats Engbring will be displaying 35 of her paintings done primarily in acrylics. She enjoys painting landscapes, wildlife, flowers and portraits. She paints primarily from photographs, both taken personally or by request. Rita has been retired for two years from her position as a Housing Administrator at SIUC. She began painting in 2005 at the urging of a friend and has enjoyed it ever since.

Jeff Engbring, a featured artist with the Illinois Artisans Guild, has been carving from wood for almost his entire life. From the time that he was big enough to work in his dad's workshop, he has experimented with all kinds of wood carving. He first worked with duck decoys and song birds and then moved on to more stylized and dramatic

pieces. He is currently working with wood and steel to create sculptures. This allows him to go beyond the limits of his traditional carvings. Jeff's works are held in private collections nationwide.

Mr. and Mrs. Engbring's works will be displayed at the Rock Mill and the Corner George Inn. There is no admission charged for the show. For more information on the Spring Art Show call 618-458-6660.

Marcia Braswell

### **Membership Renewal Reminder**

Membership renewals were mailed out with the November issue. There are still several people who have not renewed their membership for 2014. If you received a membership form with this issue of the Volksblatt that means you have not renewed your membership for 2014. If we do not receive your renewal by April 15, we will assume you do not wish to renew and will drop your name from our list.

### **Bellheim-Maeystown Connection**

There are nine families that emigrated from Bellheim, Germany to Maeystown. Bellheim resident, Mr. Klaus Schäffner and David Asselmeier from the Maeystown Preservation Society had been in contact with each other until Mr. Asselmeier's death. Their endeavor was to have the families of the people from Bellheim and residents of Maeystown reconnect with information about their families. At this time the Society is gathering information from these nine families to share with the families in Bellheim. Shirley and David "Buzz" Asselmeier will be traveling to Germany to meet these families, with the help of Klaus Schäffner. If you are a descendent of one of the families or know of any

information regarding these families, please contact Shirley Asselmeier at 618-281-7441.

Following are some articles from Klaus.

Emigrants from Bellheim were founding fathers of Maeystown. Bellheim: Kulturverein fostered contact to historic village in USA for reciprocal help to research the roots.

About 1776 years after Bellheim was mentioned for the first time diplomatically in 774, in the US State Illinois, about 50 - 60 km away from St. Louis, Maeystown was founded - this happened about 1850. Significant townsmen of Bellheim were involved.

Citizens of Maeystown started a contact to the "Bellheimer Kulturverein" to get information about potential successions of their forefathers. On the other side, the people of Maeystown maintain the people of Bellheim to research the roots of the emigrants.

Since midyear 2012 Mr. Klaus Schäffner from Bellheim and Mr. David A. Asselmeier from Columbia, IL are cultivating an a live contact to interchange information about Maeystown/Bellheim. Mr. Schäffner has learned that about 1850 circa 300 citizens of Bellheim emigrated to USA, but also to South America. Most of them travelled via Le Havre (France) across the "big lake" direction to St. Louis westward. The same route used the "Bellemer Heiner" a palatian dialect poet, when touring 1904 for two years through the USA.

Amongst these emigrants were the families of Georg Heinrich Hoffmann, Jakob Job, Philip Adam Hoffmann, Nikolaus Sutter, Georg Hoffmann, Philip Jakob Hünerfauth and Philip Doll. Those families were co-founders of Maeystown.

The names of these families pursuant to Mr. Schäffner still exist in Maeystown, even though in some modified form. So Job changed to Jobb and Hünerfauth to Henerfauth. But an immigrant from Oggersheim, Mr. Jakob

Mees. founded Maeystown in 1860.

Mr. Schäffner is amazed about the old German customs that outlasted in the former "new world". Mr. Schäffner has learned from Mr. Asselmeier that some people of Maeystown make "Fastnachtskiechle" on Fastnacht, Sommerwurst a kind of salami "Smierkäs" comparable to curd cheese, as well as apple butter, a kind of thickened apple sauce. Thanksgiving, home slaughtering and Oktoberfest are celebrated. After all Bellheim in Palatin belonged at the middle of the 19th century to the kingdom of Bavaria.

Mr. Rainer Becki, chairman of the "Kulturverein Bellheim" (Bellheim culture club) refers to the analogy between the "Kulturverein Bellheim" and the Maeystown Preservation Society. Both are eager to conserve the history of the villages. Mr. Becki informs about a project of the KV to perpetuate the special idiom of Bellheim for the following generation.

For this interviews with original inhabitants are documented and video recorded. Mr. Schäffner has learned that until World War I people in Maeystown spoke German. As Mr. Asselmeier reported, elder people speak German if they don't want their children to know what they are speaking about. Mr. Becki guesses, that the German of the people of Maeystown is the idiom of the emigrants of back then.

Therefore it's planned intermediate term or near term to visit Maeystown with a Delegation.

Another project melds the organizations of US State in the North and South Palatine. In Bellheim the "Mittelmühle" a historic saw mill will be restored and used as museum and meeting place. In Maeystown an old stone mill was renovated and completed as museum and meeting place.

Philipp Doll

Philipp Doll, born February 21, 1828, in Bellheim, constantly had trouble with the authorities. Therefore, he was

arrested and put in jail. In the jail house he became friend with a farmer who delivered the jail house with goods. The friendship grew so much that the farmer one day hid Philipp on his wagon and smuggled Philipp out of the prison. Doll escaped and arrived in US. Due to his military education he joined the army and was a captain in the US Army. He fought in the civil war and fell in the battle near Pittsburg, Tennessee, on April, 5. 1862.

His wife Margarete, nee Schroth (later Schrott), let him be buried in his hometown of Maeysville, Illinois (later Maeystown). This is documented on a tombstone in German language. As Mr. Schäffner says, it is not known on which side Philipp Doll was fighting.

#### Grumbeerfescht 2013

Dear friends, we have learned, that there are many traditions and festivities celebrated in Maeystown and as well in Bellheim. For example Fastnacht, Oktoberfest and so on.

A very typical German festival is KIRCHWEIH, respectively KERWE or KIRWE, how it is called in our local idiom. In Bellheim KIRWE is celebrated in October and this year coincided with the Maeystown Oktoberfest on October, 12. In former times it was the festival for the family with go to amusement parks and visit relatives to celebrate together. Over the centuries this festival got lost in importance, but meanwhile it changed again and this year was celebrated with a KIRWE- procession.

Another festival, installed within the last 10 years, is "Schanzen-und Mühlenfest" celebrated at our old saw mill and the redoubt and borderline of the French Border at the end of the 18th century. Although a part of the old saw mill was burned down in the early summer on malicious arson, the festival took place.

On September 7 & 8. we had our "Grumbeerfescht". In Bellheim tradition, potatoes are planted. Some years ago tobacco was also planted. On the barnyard of a local farmer who is

specialist in producing potatoes, we celebrate the "Grumbeerfescht". Grumbeer is the local idiom for potato and "Fescht" means festival.

The Grumbeerfescht was installed by the Bellheim Kulturverein and also organized by the KV and the members. It needs a lot of volunteers to process this big event and volunteers like me are on duty all day for more than one week.

Equipment is moved from the stores to the ranch. Electric and water must be installed and all the goods must be transported and stored before used or prepared. The barn and the barnyard must be decorated and an infrastructure to help the visitors find the place of the event.

Many diligent women are peeling potatoes on many days to prepare potato pancakes, French fries, potato soup, fried potatoes and potatoes in their jackets offered together with Bratwurst, Blut-und Leberwurst, Saumagen, Steaks and Apfelmus for the potato pancakes, plus cord cheese with the potatoes in their jackets.

Of course the women of the village donate homemade cakes and in a bakery are made Plumcakes to enjoy together with potato soup.

On the two days, about 4 tons of potatoes, 400 kg meet, sausages and cold meet and 70 homemade cakes and tarts, as well as 30 plum cakes were consumed. Hundreds of bottles "Bellheimer Bier" and wines and soft drinks were served.

To entertain the visitors, a band and a choir were engaged.

#### Contact with Maeystown

Rainer Becki and Klaus Schäffner struggle to administer the contact to the successors of the emigrants from Bellheim to the USA.

At the other side of the Atlantic, in the state of Illinois, about 50 km south of St. Louis on the banks of the Mississippi exists a town named Maeystown. Maeystown was founded by immigrants from Germany, where some elderly people still speak German,

as Rainer Becki. and Klaus Schäffner of Bellheim preservation society are reporting.

Descendants of German emigrants repeatedly tried to open a contact to explore the roots of their forefathers. The first letter of inquiry in 1999 fizzled out as nobody took care of this request.

The Bellheim preservation society was established not until one year later, the historical workshop even in 2010. At this particular time the 56 year old Rainer Becki and the ten years older Klaus Schäffner consulted elderly citizens of Bellheim about historic memories and tried to preserve the very special primary idiom, now they had a brand new line of action. In the USA Mr. David Asselmeier was happy about the new contact to Germany and nearly every day notes were compared. Even after Mr. Asselmeier died suddenly the contact was still alive. Mr. Schäffner and the leader of the Bellheim preservation club continued to collect information and mention instances why the 150-citizen-town not only has been chartered but also is listed in the register of historic places in USA.

Not only the fact that in Maeystown, lying on the foothills of a little range, German culture is preserved, like Fastnach, Frühlingfest and a church service on Christmas Eve with German Christmas carols. The most important festivity is the Oktoberfest, which is acclaimed at the same time in Bellheim the "Kirwe" is made merry. This scheduling conflict may be caused by the tradition the 8 Immigrant families of Bellheim adopted from their home. Nowadays up to 6000 visitors come to this festival at the river of the longest flows on earth.

The town was founded, presumably at that time named Maeysville, by Jacob Mees from Oggersheim. The first Mayor is reported to be Jacob Job (Jobb), a member of the family Job, who relocated together with families Hoffmann, Sutter, Doll and Hühnerfauth.

The emigrants disposed there in Germany gained skills even in their new

home. For example the old stone mill was build of stone and not of timber. Likewise presumably, they knowledge of how to build ice houses was transferred. Palatine cooking still is practiced. At home slaughtering Leberwurst, Blutwurst and Sommerwurst was part of the job. Bratwurst mit Sauerkraut or fried mashed potatoes with Apfelmus (apple butter) are well known like plainly the specialty of Maeystown, apple butter.

For a start next year Mrs. Shirley Asselmeier, widow of Mr. David Asselmeier, together with her son "Buzz" is going to visit Bellheim. A return visit of a delegation of citizens of Bellheim to Maeystown is presumed. Meanwhile the contact to USA is to be to deepen.

The visitors from Bellheim could use accommodation at the "Corner George Inn". This traditional motel with its "Hoffmann Room" reminds to the heritage of the emigrants from Germany and is fit up with plant and equipment of the then old days. The restoration of the historic stone mill give an idea to the members of the Bellheim preservation society, to force the reconstruction of the historic Bellheim saw mill, to have a historical culture center.

### New Life Member

Karl and Betty Breidecker of Waterloo have become the newest life members of the Society. Thank you, Karl and Betty

### Death

*Bernie Ross*

Bernard "Bernie" Ross, longtime member of the Society, died on December 23, 2013, at the age of 63 years. He is survived his wife Fay, daughter Julie (Jay) Whitlock, and sons Jason (Jill) Crouch and Ryan (Dawn)

Crouch. He is also survived by four grandchildren and many other relatives.

### New Officers

At the January meeting officers for 2014-15 were elected. They are as follows:

President-----Dorothy Brandt  
 Vice President-----Anita Muertz  
 Secretary-----Joanne Goeddel  
 Treasurer-----Linda Green  
 Curator-----Nancy Uhl  
 Corresponding Secretary-----Shirley Asselmeier  
 Property Manager-----Christy Muertz  
 Immediate Past President-----David Braswell

### Calendar

March 4 St. John Church Fastnacht  
 5:00-8:00 p.m.  
 March 15 & 16 Spring Art Show  
 11:00 – 4:00 p.m.  
 May 4 Fruhlingsfest/Springfest  
 9:00 – 4:00 p.m.  
 May 10 Hoyleton Walkathon  
 St. John UCC  
 May 23 & 24 Civic Association  
 Homecoming  
 5:00 p.m. to Close  
 August 2 Trash & Treasures  
 Village Yard Sale  
 August 17 Maeystown Fire Dept.  
 BBQ and Car Show  
 September 26 Apple Peeling  
 Rock Mill  
 8:00 – 2:00 p.m.  
 September 27 Apple Butter Stirring  
 Rock Mill  
 6:00 – 3:00 p.m.  
 October 12 Oktoberfest  
 9:00 – 4:00 p.m.