

# MAEYSTOWN VOLKSBLATT

Maeystown, Illinois

## Maeystown Preservation Society

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

### Annual Fruehlingsfest Save the Date

Save this date, Sunday, May 1, 2017. It is this year's Fruehlingfest. Organizers are already working hard on vendor contracts. They are also busy checking the Old Farmer's Almanac, AccuWeather forecasts, NOAA predictions, and any old wife's tales about possible weather forecasts hoping for anything a little better than last year. The meteorological outlook doesn't matter... Rain or shine, come prepared for the Fruehlingsfest Antique & Garden Show!

Anita Muertz

### Old Fashioned Christmas

"OLD FASHIONED" GERMAN CHRISTMAS There may have been some damp weather, but not damp spirits for our "Old Fashioned" German Christmas on Sunday, December 4th. Six ladies who had never been to Maeystown, came from Farmington, Missouri, and into my shop promptly at 11 am wanting to know what they could do. After going through the schedule, they got out their umbrellas and quickly decided to take in the Christkindlmarkt up at church. By noon the group was back down the hill looking for Sankt Nikolaus and the complimentary carriage rides. They found both but, not before they joyously sang with the Band Room Brass on their way up to "A Taste of Christmas". While at the Mill the group shopped for hand carved Santas, discussed the vintage Christmas tablecloth and apron display, and laughingly folded German paper stars. It must have been then that they went back up to church for the Quilt Show. In between activities I know they Christmas shopped at our stores buying

antique white ironstone dishes and elaborate iced cookies to take home, and then ate a late lunch of Weihnact stew. Again the enthusiastic ladies were in my shop. That is when I realized one of them was actually checking off on the schedule the activities they had done. Now they were looking for the ballroom at the Corner George Inn. I can only assume they stayed up in the ballroom for the Kaskaskia Trail Chorus and the Valmeyer High School Vocal Ensemble, because it was obvious they had been up there for the German Christmas carol sing. You could hear them on the steps almost giddy laughing at each other and the way their ensemble had sung in German. As it was still dreary and getting dark, the crowd was thinning. It was almost four and I thought the "Farmington ladies" were gone for the day. Not so, because when I ran up to the Mill the circle of ladies had just taken a picture in the decorated Victorian sleigh and were merrily singing with the hammered dulcimers and accordion. As I left, one of the spirited ladies grabbed my arm and asked if we would be doing this again next year. After I shared that we do this every Christmas, the group responded in unison, "We're coming back". The damp weather did not affect their Christmas spirit!

Anita Muertz

### Frauenabend, Friday, November 18, 2016

Most of the special events in Maeystown take place during the day except for Frauenabend. That night it's magical to see the luminaries light the way from the Mill to the Corner George Inn. Downstairs at the Mill, one side felt as if you were back in time at a

colonial shop decorated for Christmas. The other side was transformed perfectly for a fun night of ladies' shopping. Candles lit the windows of the Tea Room where groups of women dined on soups, salads and desserts.

Ladies shopped the local stores, sampled private label foods and sipped on gluhwein. It was surprising to see the variety of items available in the Corner George Inn: holiday shadow boxes, handmade wire jewelry, boot socks, hair jewels, essential oils, new jewelry made from vintage pieces, lace bags, personalized skin care products, feminine lace wraps, chair massages, and even 28 totes of stylish clothing ranging in sizes from 00 to 26!

As the evening came to an end the white horse drawn buggy could be seen leaving town only guided by sets of vintage lanterns. Maeystown by candlelight is so charming!

Anita Muertz

### Our Latest Acquisition

This fall, the family of Alvin Maeys had an auction in Columbia, Illinois. Looking at the online listing, a band uniform got my attention. The hat had "Diehl's Band" embroidered on it. Knowing that Mr. Maeys (Doc Maeys) had come from Maeystown and knowing that there had been a Diehl's Band here, I was hoping this hat was from that band. According to our files, Alvin Maeys had been a member in both of the Diehl bands. I was somewhat confused because the band jacket at the auction was navy blue with a red cording embroidered on it. In our museum photo, the jacket appeared to be solid. After the picture was enlarged, it was confirmed the band uniform at the Columbia auction was from the Diehl's Concert Band. The very same

day I enlarged the band photo to make comparisons, Dennis Knobloch had thoughtfully emailed me to make sure the Society was aware of the rare find. So at the October Preservation meeting it was then decided to send two of our members to make the auction purchase, and they were successful! The band uniform hat and jacket are in exceptional condition, while the moths have enjoyed the pants. Not only were they able to purchase the uniform, but also the military medical trunk that had belonged to Capt. A.H. Maeyes (Doctor). According to Gloria Bundy's files, it was evident that almost continually there was a band in Maeystown from the 1860's to 1930. "No matter what the German's reason was to immigrate to America, how oppressed he may have been, where he came from or how arduous the journey, one thing engrained in the immigrants was their love for music, dancing, singing and drama. Those early German settlers in Maeystown and the surrounding community were no exception and succeeding generations followed the pattern." Gus Diehl, who was a talented man, a gifted musician and entertainer, played many instruments. Early in life, he gathered friends and family members together to play music. His first group was formed in 1888, and not in the strictest sense a band because the group had among its musicians a man who played an accordion, a bass fiddle, a violin, and a guitar. They played to entertain themselves and their friends. Then in 1905, Diehl's Concert Band was organized. According to their old musical programs, this band was quite professional. They practiced above Maey's Store on Main Street and were transported to different events by a farmer who used his team and wagon. In 1913, Diehl organized a new larger band known as the Maeystown Brass Band. (Dennis and Elaine Knobloch kindly donated the bass drum that belonged to this band.) Because Diehl moved away in 1923, the Maeystown Brass Band was disbanded and the Maeystown Brotherhood Band was

organized. They remained together until 1930.

Many people from the Maeystown community continue to participate in numerous musical activities. We are proud of our musical heritage and quite pleased with our latest acquisition!

### **Maeystown Rock Bridge in Need of Major Repair**

The historic stone arched bridge that marks the entrance to Maeystown, is sorely in need of major repairs and restoration. At this time, the 135 year old bridge has passed Monroe County inspection, but much damage was noted. Due to its age and construction, costly repairs require skilled stonemasons and labor intensive work. Costs are estimated at upwards of \$30,000.

Through donations we have raised enough money to start the first phase of the bridge repair. Sometime soon we will be putting in a culvert to redirect the flow of the water. In order to put the culvert in we had to uncover the flow line. When doing so we found part of the stone gutter that has been covered for many years. We are very excited about this and think it will only add beauty to our town.

We have been very fortunate to receive some donations that have had matching business grants. Also, David Cornell donated his beautiful painting of the Maeystown Bridge to be used in a raffle. Anyone interested in more tickets or knows of someone that did not receive them, please contact me at [cmuertz80@yahoo.com](mailto:cmuertz80@yahoo.com) or 617-719-3726. The ticket stubs along with the money and any other donations can be mailed to: Maeystown Preservation Society, Save the Bridge c/o Christy Muertz, 3265 Bushy Prairie Rd, Fuels, IL 62244

Thanks so much to everyone that has donated and helped us spread the word! Please remember...No donation is too small and ALL donations are tax deductible. Christy Muertz

### **Membership Renewal Reminder**

Membership renewals were mailed with the November issue. There are still several people who have not renewed their membership for 2017. If you received a membership form with this issue of the Volksblatt that means you have not renewed your membership for 2017. 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.

### **Lye Soap**

The recipe for lye soap printed below was given by Jean Knobloch. She came across this recipe that had been written by her mother. She remembers making lye soap when they butchered at home. The soap was used to wash stained clothes and if they touched poison ivy.

#### **Cooked Lye Laundry Soap**

28 lbs. lard or rinds and scraps from  
butchering hogs or tallow from  
butchering beef  
6 cans lye  
6 gallons water  
1 pint salt

Cook three hours in an iron kettle outdoors. Stir constantly. Let cool. Cut into bars. Place on wooden boards to dry for about a week.

### **Meeting Date Change**

Due to the Fastnacht on February 28, the February meeting of the Maeystown Preservation Society will be on Tuesday, February 21, at 6:30 p.m.

## Calendar

February 28 St. John UCC Church  
Fastnacht  
5:00-8:00 p.m.

March 25 & 26 Spring Art Show  
11:00-4:00 p.m.

May 7 Frühlingsfest/Springfest  
9:00-4:00 p.m.

May 13 Hoyleton Hike & Bike  
St. John UCC  
9:00 a.m.

June 16 & 17 Maeystown  
Homecoming

August 5 Trash & Treasures  
Village Yard Sale  
8:00-12:00 p.m.

August 20 Maeystown Fire Dept.  
BBQ & Show Us Your Ride  
9:00-4:00 p.m.

September 22 Apple Peeling  
8:00-2:00 p.m.

September 23 Apple Butter Stirring  
6:00-3:00 p.m.

October 8 Oktoberfest  
9:00-4:00 p.m.

December 3 Old Fashioned Christmas  
11:00-5:00 p.m.