



## Franklin Historical Society October 2024 Newsletter

**The Franklin Historical Society invites you to see history come alive!  
Watch crafters demonstrate their skills!**

**Saturday, October 19  
Noon to 4:00 P.M.  
Lions Legend Park  
8030 S. Legend Dr.**



Elsa



Anna

We will have two special guests play actors from the movie Frozen Elsa & Anna who will be available for picture taking from 1 to 3. They will even be giving out free pumpkins as long as the supply lasts.

**Plus** - Demonstrations including loom weaving, wool spinning, black smithing, cabin cooking, rope making, quilting, wood turning, 2-person sawing, triangle weaving, face painting and operation of model trains in our Town Hall Museum basement.

Activities include schoolhouse lessons and school house games. Also apple cider and apple treats will be served.

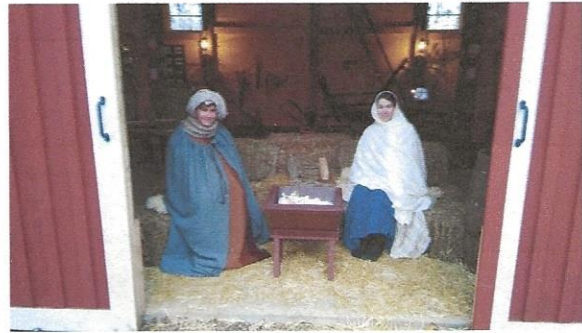
All of our historic buildings will be open for touring.

## **Franklin Historical Society Christmas Program Saturday December 7**

The program will start with our Children's program at 3 P.M to 3:45. Our St. Peters Chapel Services will be at 4 P.M & 5:30. All of our historic buildings will be open for touring from 4 to 7. Our Town Hall Museum will have music and some treats to celebrate the Christmas spirit.

# Christmas Pictures From The Past

Please join us on Saturday December 7<sup>th</sup>



## Open House Park Concerts



Dancing in the Park



Franklin Family Barn Museum Tour

The Franklin Historical Society opened our historic buildings for touring in all of the five Summer Concerts in Lions Legend Park. There was great weather and we had many people tour our buildings.

## Lunch 'n Learn Program

The Franklin Historical Society has started a new educational program called Lunch 'n Learn. The first meeting was Wednesday September 18 starting at noon. The purpose of the program is to come to our Franklin Town Hall Museum building in Lions Legend Park and join with other Franklin folks who are interested in local history and let's learn together!

This will be a once a month get together excluding winter months. Please bring your own bag lunch. Beverages will be provided.

Dates and information will be on our website [www.franklinhistory.net](http://www.franklinhistory.net) or contact Barbara Pforr at [bap4@earthlink.net](mailto:bap4@earthlink.net).

## St. Martins Fair Parking

Every year except 2020 when there was no fair the Franklin Historical Society's main fundraiser has been parking vehicles during the two day fair. This year with some great weather we had our second highest total directing cars to a parking spot with almost 1200 vehicles. This was accomplished by a hard working group of volunteers!

**Thank you** - Matt Englert, Ken Gawrisch, Joyce Houtler, Debbie Jacobus, Greg Jenks, Doug & Sue Kowalski, Joy Kuharske, Roger Lange, Lori Luckey, Tom Luckey, Jim Luckey, Ellen Petrie, Barbara Pforr, Ken & Judy Scherrer, Doug Schmidt and Merle Vogt for all your great work with the parking.

Also **thank you** Franklin's Department of Public Works for your help!

Next is a second installment of a long letter Linda Martin White wrote to her father Alfred Martin on his 80<sup>th</sup> birthday on November 4, 1995 sharing her thoughts about her father and growing up on a Franklin farm.

I have fond, very pleasant memories of my childhood. I wish today, that many kids could have half of what I had. We didn't have a lot of material things, but we had family unity, knew Christian love, togetherness, tons of common sense, and we learned that working could be enjoyable. You always said: "You have to work all your life, so you might as well enjoy it". In this booklet, you will find a lot of my memories as a child. It is possible that some of the facts are not quite accurate, but that is how I remember many, many good times. They are not in any order.

We never ate a meal without first folding our hands in prayer asking the Lord to bless our food and thanking Him for it. We always said our bedtime prayer ... "Now I lay me ..."

For lunch on egg route, you'd buy a quart bottle of chocolate milk, a loaf of "store-bought" bread, a hunk of sausage which you cut with the jackknife you carried in your pocket, and "schnecks". We ate in the truck and then finished delivering eggs, bought groceries, went to the bank and home for evening milking.

In 1955 Rawson Ave. was widened, our hill was cut down and it was the only time we could ride our bike on the road. We had only one bike for all of us kids. If we argued about it, it was hung on a nail in the grainery for a long time. (seemed like a long time).



You bought the John Deere the day I was born. We also had a Case, Allis Chalmers and a 1020 with lugs.

We had a John Deere tractor that started with the flywheel. Only you were strong enough to start it: you'd help me start to side-deliver-rake a field driving v-e-r-y sl-o-w-l-y (so I could also turn the corners at the same speed). When the tractor

killed, you come out and start it again. You must have been keeping an eye on me and you never got angry. Erdman's field took ½ hr. to make one round. (The picture is from our Barn Museum. The tractor and sign donated by Mayer Family).



We had white soda water, but only when we had company. It was \$1.00 a case for quart bottles from **American**. Squirt just came out. On Sunday, Mom made jello, and we had “store -bought” meat (like wieners or bologna) and German potato salad with garden vegetables. We had a huge garden which Mom worked every day.

On the way home from a funeral parlor visit, you treated us to ice cream cones from Leon’s Custard (27/Oklahoma).

On Saturday nights we went to visit Mom’s parents, Grandma/pa Schwartz when gravel roads and bridges weren’t washed out. When we drove over the bridge on S. 51 St., It sounded like it was breaking.



Remember when I jack-knifed the tractor/hay-loader/wagon on that hill? I will never forget that. And you weren’t angry at all.

Once with the tractor, I jerked the wagon so hard, you fell off. You weren’t angry.

When we were loading grain shocks, I was high up on the wagon and got stuck with a pitch fork when someone threw a bundle up. And when we’re loading grain, we’d take along a jug of water and put it under a shock to keep it cool. Ten bundles of grain made one shock. No matter how hot it was, we wore sleeved shirts and pants because of we got scratched up from the dry grain.

To this day when I hear a thunderstorm at night, I think of the many nights you got up, dressed and watched the barn. If lightning would strike it, you’d have to get the cattle out. I can still picture the time our machine barn was flattened by a tornado during the night. It sounded like a freight train. Remember what you called the out house? “The Little House” or “Tante Anna”; we used the Sears catalog cause we didn’t have toilet paper.

Our school St. Paul's played baseball at another one-room Stargard. It was only one mile away on S.51<sup>st</sup> St. After the game we walked just south to Sellhorns filling station to buy penny candy. We also walked to the games at the one-room school at Hwy 36 & 76th and bought penny candy at Pattses.

St. Paul's tolled its bell when a member died. We'd hear the bell toll when we were in the field. The first three tolls were the Lord's Prayer. We count the tolls ... which signified the age of person who died.



St. Paul's Church Today

After school, there were chores to do, chickens to feed, eggs to gather, milk utensils to put together, potatoes to peel, wood to carry downstairs to the furnace, but those high school teachers couldn't understand! They expected me to stay after school to work on a float for Homecoming!

(Guess we had nothing better to do). The only time I had a detention was in high school when the whole class had to stay after. I was very good in shorthand (my teacher wanted me to be a "court reporter" but I didn't want to), I had trouble reading unless I used a ruler under each line. I was a "A" student.

You got grains for the cows from the brewery, but on Wednesday nights after the chores in summer when the breweries made a lot of beer, you bought an extra load and unloaded it yet that night, pail by pail. How the cows loved that oatmeal!

The roadside grass was kept short because farmers staked out young stock (we staked out our sheep) and we'd carry pails of water to the animals at noon. We'd fill pails at the pump and you'd carry them.

The horse barn had no running water, so each animal (calves, bull, horses, dry cows and heifers) could drink pails and pails of water. On the hot days, by the time we got done watering animals the first time around, it was time to start over again.

Watching Bernice Behrendt make rugs out of rags. That was neat! Now their farm is "Princeton Estates".

## Some History of the St. Martins Fair

The story of the fair is from Franklin Historian Judy Scherrer's book "Footprints of Franklin" which includes 40 stories of Franklin's history. There just a few of the books still available and they can be purchased by contacting Jim Luckey at [luckeyjim@yahoo.com](mailto:luckeyjim@yahoo.com) or call 414-421-6539. Cost is \$20.

### FAIR DAYS IN FRANKLIN

In the mid 1800's no one could have been imagined that a stock fair run by local farmers would evolve into a two-day yearly festival held over Labor Day weekend. But that is exactly what happened in the St. Martins area of Franklin with the Labor Day Fair.

Each year over almost 200,000 people jam the streets from curb to curb to be a part of one of the largest flea markets in the area --- complete with food and beverages, music and even animals!

It was almost 150 years ago, in 1865, that a farmer's market and stock fair began in the village of Hales Corners. A German immigrant named August Siegel, who was the owner of a general store, saloon and sawmill and his friend Louis Heineman, both of Hales Corners, decided one day that having a stock fair in their community would be a great idea.



Sometime prior to 1900 the fair was discovered by gypsies and at each fair about 10-12 wagons of people would show up with horses to sell. Men would also trade horses and do tinkering, while the women told fortunes and sold leather handiwork. By 1935 after roads became paved and there was no longer a big market for horses, the gypsies were no

longer seen at the fair.

As years went by chickens, ducks, eggs, country butter, home-cured meats, various homemade sausages, feed grains and hay were brought in by area farmers for sale. As the farmers became more prosperous and machinery became more affordable, their old plows, drags and hay racks were also offered for sale.

With the building of a new Hwy. 100 through Hales Corners and with more cars causing traffic congestion in that area, the village of Hales Corners decided to ban all future fairs, with the last fair being held there in early 1958.

When this happened local Franklin businessmen saw an opportunity to try and move the fair from Hales Corners and hold future fairs in Franklin. St. Martins businessmen Dave and Bob Mayer, Allen Kelly and Ollie Pederson and farmers Tom Godsell and Walter Barbian decided that they would work at bringing the fair to the St. Martins area. Mayer and Godsell rented a sound truck and went to the last Hales Corners fair urging customers to come to St. Martins the first Monday of the next month (June 1958) for the next fair!



It has now become a marketplace of bargains, curiosities, and small town memories. To people who walk past each booth, it looks like a large open air department store. A person can buy just about anything at the fair-- from live rabbits, kittens and puppies and farm produce to T-shirts, sunglasses, socks, artwork, antiques, lawn ornaments, pet supplies, cleaning products, toiletries, office supplies and even furniture!

As fair goers stroll the streets of St. Martins, the aroma of grilled sweet corn and chicken, brats, hamburgers, pizza, cotton candy and other treats fill the air, as does the music being performed by local musicians. As vendors shout out their bargains, fair goers move along past the roadside merchants looking everything over and deciding on what they will be taking home from the fair.

Each year people return to St. Martins to attend the monthly fairs and the two-day Labor Day Fair, continuing the tradition of market days that began years before when Franklin and Hales Corners had a very rural atmosphere.

(The complete story of the fair can be found on pages 102 & 103 in Judy's book)

Please visit Franklin Historical Society's web site [www.franklinhistory.net](http://www.franklinhistory.net). On the home page there is updated information on our upcoming events including the Saturday October 19th Fall Fest and our Saturday December 7th Christmas program and services.

Also "like us" on our face book where you will also find updated information and some interesting stories of Franklin.

Jim Luckey  
President FHS