



## Frankfort Area Historical Society of Will County, Illinois

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### March-April 2019

*Sandy Vasko, Executive Director of the Will County Historical Society, shared historic newspaper articles she compiled from her ongoing research of Will County. Three are excerpted below.*

### ANXIOUS FOR SPRING

April 18, 1876 – *Joliet Signal*

Frankfort, April 15th, 1876, *Joliet Signal*:  
Our village is very quiet, but little business being transacted; all this must be charged to the impassable roads; today the weather is clearing and we hope soon to be busy at work.

Mechanics are preparing a good deal of new work in anticipation of trade.

At Stephens shop there is unusual activity in building cultivators and double revolving harrows, etc.

Ruggles & Co. have a lot of new cultivators, etc., finished and in preparation.

August Werner & Co. are building a lot of wagons.

Phillip Klepper, at his blacksmith and wagon shop, is putting up a good deal of new work of a first class quality.

Petersen & Schoeneher, "our boss" horse shoers, are ready to put on any number of shoes and fully guarantee their work.

August Hildegrand, merchant tailor, has on hand a fine stock of spring goods.

Henry Nettles, Esq., has just finished a fine two story and basement building for business purposes, it is in the best location in the town.

John McDonald, esq., was duly installed into the office of Supervisor, with appropriate ceremonies, by the Town Board on the 13th inst. Jos. S. Stephen

April 25, 1876 – *Joliet Signal*

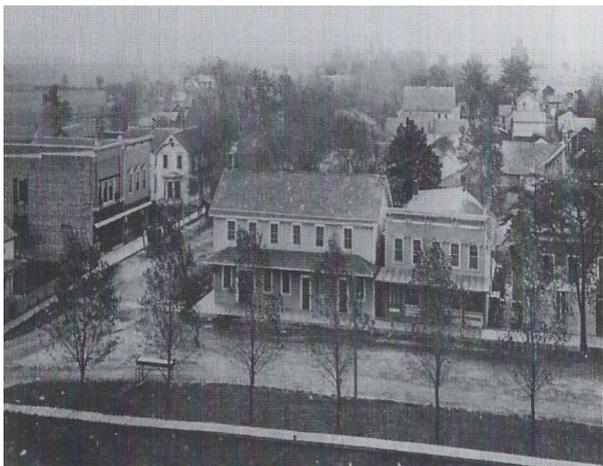
Horace Wood, Esq., of Frankfort, is again in the field with a full line of seeds, plants, shrubbery, etc. In the line of flower seeds and plants he takes especial pride and can warrant them. He has for sale as large and select an assortment as can be found in any market, and raised on Will County soil they are of course far more preferable than foreign importations. Mr. Wood's choice seeds can be found in this city wherever such goods are kept for sale, and orders will be received and filled by him for any kind of shrubbery.

*Ed. Note - The Joliet Signal began publication in 1844 and for a year or two was known as the Joliet Signal. A local weekly paper, the Joliet Signal's last known issue was April 7, 1893.*

*(Chronicling America: Historic American Newspapers. The Library of Congress)*

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*At the turn of the century, Constable Knippel had the dual job of law enforcement officer and lamp-lighter. Each evening just before dark, he would make his rounds lowering each lamp, lighting it, then raising it back into position. The lamps were hung on pulleys over the intersections. To conserve on tax payers' money, he would make the rounds once again at 1:00 a.m. and turn out all of the lamps.*



Bauman's Tavern at the turn of the 20th century.

March 12, 1878 – *Joliet Signal*

Mud-bound Frankfort is what the visitor calls that eastern village, but the citizens and business men of the burg are as contented as at any locality in the county, notwithstanding they have the best facilities for handling grain and the farmers can't bring in a bushel. Last week we found our old friend Hunter at the elevator consoling himself and friends with a euchre deck, Squire Claus at the P. O., happy because he wasn't bothered with customers, while Tom Herschback was pounding tin as though it was the busiest season of the year. Mine host and officer of the law, Martin Muff, was calmly surveying a brand-new billiard table he has just purchased, the same as though times were lively; and Fred Bauman was waiting on customers in his popular establishment with the same alacrity as of yore. Not to see Jos. Stephens sitting cross-legged on a stool know he has been to Frankfort. They are all waiting for the rush of grain to come, and then the business folks of the village will be too busy to notice a stranger when he calls on them.

### **Spring from the perspective of Frankfort's children.**

I like the flowers in our room as they are pretty and they smell good.

- Scherril Weichbrodt

We are waiting for our flowers to finish blooming. Every day the blossom gets bigger.

- Norman Hossbach

We are learning many new spring songs and poems.

- Dick Lambrecht

*The Reporter*, v.1, n.4.

Frankfort Public School, March 11, 1937



### **Notes from the Bandstand**

The Frankfort Brass Band is on course for another great year. Recently one of our charter members returned. Mike Blowmarz, trombonist and tuba player started with us in 2005. He recently flew to New Jersey to test new tubas and came home with a beautiful new German-made horn. For our opening performance of the year Mike played in the tuba section and it was like having a Chicago Symphony player join in. We are so fortunate to have Mike with us again! Our first 2019 performance was at Lincoln-Way West's West Fest, our fifth year playing at this venue. The FBB really enjoys performing for young musicians, proving that music can be a life-long pursuit. The age range in our band is from 14 to 84 years old!

We encourage musicians of all ages to join us. We plan on having another successful year as one of Frankfort's great ambassadors. Hope to see our friends at a performance in 2019.

### **FROM OUR READERS-**

I thoroughly enjoy your newsletters each month but especially the January 2019 article by Don Witt called "Snowbound on the Farm" set in 1917 – 1918. As I write this letter we are in the midst of an extreme cold spell in the Midwest, much like 1917. Wind chills of -40 in Frankfort where I grew up and similar temperatures in Michigan where I live today. Yesterday with 12 – 14 inches of snow on the ground I was trying to clear my driveway before it became packed down and then immovable and

after only a few minutes I realized I was not up [to] the challenge physically or mentally. I retreated to my nice warm house, my slippers, the fireplace and a cup of coffee. I have a generator in case the power goes off, no animals to care for or things in the barn that would need my attention. I was only a phone call away from an ambulance, a fire truck or the police, all of which could be to my home in a moment's notice even with the cold and snow. I was very content knowing I wasn't living on a farm in 1917 and cannot imagine how it must have been except for Don's article. They were the same hardy and determined people that built Frankfort and passed their values on to many of us today. Thanks again, Don.

- Dale Reils

*[Dale also issued the following challenge to our readers]*

I believe we all have stories like this we could tell. You can't live 75 years totally uneventful. It would be very interesting to hear your story. That's your challenge. **Tell your story.**

*Editor's Note – Look for Dale Reils' 1967 winter story in our January 2020 issue.*

**We invite you to share your story with the FAHS!**

### **Frankfort Preservation Foundation/Frankfort Area Historical Society Board**

Board members will be participating in an Historic Preservation Training on Saturday, April 6, 2019.



### **SAVE THE WATER TOWER!**

Members of our Board are communicating with other water tower communities and with paint companies familiar with this kind of work

**Our Frankfort Water Tower – our past, our present, our future!**



### **FAHS**

The museum will open in April, Wednesday through Saturday, 10 – 4, with Sundays open if volunteers are available.

Director Judy Schultz is seeking volunteers to assist with new displays as well as help on Sundays

#### **FAHS Staff**

Museum Director  
Newsletter Editor  
Website Editor

Judy Schultz  
Marcia Steward  
Kelly Renaud