



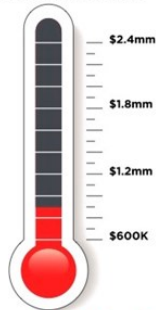
Champaign County Historical Society and Museum
Est. 1934

March/April 2023

CHAMPAIGN CHRONICLES

\$2.4 MIL. EXPANSION UPDATE!

Champaign County
Historical Museum
EXPANSION PROJECT



Donate Today!

In January, to create awareness of our Expansion Project, which includes a new Agriculture and Industry Exhibit Gallery, CCHS representatives (shown in accompanying photo*) manned a booth at the Gloria Theatre before the presentation of the movie “Diversity of Agriculture in Champaign County.” The movie was sponsored by the Champaign County Chamber of Commerce Visitors Bureau’s Agriculture Council in collaboration with the Champaign, Clark, Darke and Miami counties of the Ohio Farm Bureau Federation. The event as well attended.

Although several members of the Capital Campaign Committee were out of town for most of January and February, another \$33,000 was raised since our last update in the January/February Newsletter. This brings the total funds privately raised to \$168,000.

With winter (nearly) over and Capital Campaign members back in town, fund raising activities targeting the agriculture and industrial communities will be intensified. In addition to fund raising, individuals representing these entities will be asked to participate in our research efforts that support the Industry and Agriculture exhibit theme “Why Champaign County?”

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**The banner photo above is taken off the Cedar Bog website.*

**Pictured below, (left to right), Ken Wright, Cheryl Ogden, and Dave Case.*



UPCOMING EVENTS

2023 ANTIQUE APPRAISAL FAIR



“What is it worth?” Do you have an old object, piece of art, or a family heirloom that you want to know more about? We may have a solution for you! The Champaign County Historical Museum is hosting the fourth annual Antiques Appraisal Fair from 5:30-8:30 pm on Thursday, March 23, 2023.

In addition to learning about your item and its' value from our experienced appraisers, Buzz Jackson, Dan Fawcett, Greg Shipley and Beth Arthur, you might be the lucky winner of the \$50. prize for the most valuable item presented. In addition, a panel of three judges will award a \$50. prize for the most unusual item submitted.

For the price of admission guests will receive a verbal appraisal for one item, a complimentary glass of wine and "bistro" style refreshments

provided by Freshwater Farms. Current CCHS members may have two objects appraised. If you are not a member of the CCHS, you may have a second item appraised for \$10.00.

During the evening, enjoy the game of "What Is It?" which highlights items in the Museum having an unusual purpose - can you identify the item? In addition, you will learn about items submitted for appraisal and their value!

Advance tickets are \$20. each and are available at The Peoples Savings Bank, Park National Bank (Urbana), Farmers and Merchants Bank, Civista Bank, The Chamber of Commerce office, and the Historical Society Museum, located at 809 East Lawn Ave., Urbana. Tickets may also be purchased on the evening of the event for \$25.00.

Don't miss this opportunity to explore the Museum, sample the delicious treats from Freshwater Farms and learn about your treasured item!

The proceeds from the event support the operations of the Champaign County Historical Society Museum.

Robert Pollock examining an item for appraisal



UPCOMING PROGRAMS

MICHELLE COMER CEDAR BOG



An aerial view of Cedar Bog, taken from the Bog website, <https://www.cedarbognp.org/photo-gallery/>

Join us for a presentation on the geology and effects of the last glacial invasion on this part of Ohio. On March 19th at 2:00 p.m., Michelle Comer from the Ohio Department of Natural Resources will be giving a presentation on Cedar Bog State Nature Preserve. Cedar Bog is the largest and best calcareous fen in Ohio which is a result of the culmination of several glacial events. We will highlight this preserve as well as a few other glacial remnants in this discussion.

KIM SNYDER D.A.R. HISTORY

On April 16th at 2p.m., Chapter Regent, Kim Snyder, will give a presentation on the history of the National Society Daughters of the American Revolution (NSDAR), the history of the local Urbana Chapter, the Ohio State Society, and the impact of these local women. NSDAR is the largest lineage based women's service organization in the world. Chapters exist in all 50 states and in countries around the world. Come learn how these descendants of American Revolution Patriots have impacted Champaign County for more than 126 years.

Chapter Regent, Kim Snyder



JACOB BOSLER, SHERIFF

by Candy Gilliam

Born in 1873, Jacob Bosler grew up in a very large family on the outskirts of Urbana, Ohio. As a young man in the early 1900's, he would sometimes spend his summers finding farm work in the western states. He did everything most farm boys do: digging ditches, splitting rails, cutting cord wood and running threshing machines. In 1908, he married a local girl, Anna Hanna and they immediately moved far west near Seattle, WA. Jacob found work there as a laborer in a stone quarry, but after four years, they decided to move back home to Urbana. He was appointed supervisor of roads in Champaign County in 1913, being responsible for planning and repairing roads to serviceable conditions. When WWI broke out, Jacob volunteered twice for service, but was rejected both times as his munition work was needed instead. He worked for the American Tool & Die Company (1916) and the Illinois Car Shops (1917) building freight cars needed for war. On his third try to join the war effort, he was finally accepted and patiently waiting on his call for duty when the war ended. Despite never entering battle, Jacob always contributed liberally to all war drives. At the end of the war in 1918, he was working at the Urbana Tool & Die Company as a tool maker and millwright.



Jacob K. Bosler, 1900

RIVAL CANDIDATES FOR SHERIFF.



—Photos by Stanton
BERT MILLER, (Democrat) JAKE BOSLER, (Republican.)
CANDIDATES FOR SHERIFF OF CHAMPAIGN COUNTY.

It was during these wartime years that Jacob Bosler decided to run for Champaign County Sheriff. He was familiar with law enforcement as his Uncle Samuel Bosler was the Champaign County Sheriff from 1877-1881. Jacob campaigned all over the county by riding on a motorcycle asking for votes. The motorcycle was a new invention that most citizens had never seen, and attached to his motorcycle was a sidecar in which he would give rides to the citizens of the communities he visited. Although he gave many joy rides, he lost this election to Sheriff John Siegle. But Jacob Bosler didn't give up and ran for sheriff again four years later in 1920. Because he was still working as a

millwright in Urbana, he did not have much time to campaign. He rode over 1,300 miles and walked more than 1,200 miles in his spare time. But again, he lost this election to Sheriff Irvin McRoberts. Jacob was a good loser and took this second defeat graciously. In 1921, he studied for the civil service examination. He took the exams for every department in city services (fireman, patrolman, street superintendent) and passed them all. In 1924, while still working at the Urbana Tool & Die plant, he asked his fellow co-workers for their continued support as he decided to run a third campaign for sheriff. Third time was the charm for Jacob, and he won the election for Champaign County Sheriff! Since his friends had been supportive of his efforts in the previous eight years, he hosted an oyster supper in the banquet room of the Busy Bee Restaurant, passing out cigars to the men and chewing gum to the women, all while a stringed orchestra played square dance tunes. To get familiar with his duties and new role as sheriff, Jacob worked the entire month of December 1924, without pay. Then, just four days after taking office in January 1925, Sheriff Bosler returned to the jail after a busy day, only to discover 16 of his inmates trying to escape. The inmates had broken the cell locks with a mop handle, door locks were stuffed with paper to prevent them fastening, and bars on the doors had been separated. The new sheriff had his hands full, but he was quickly able to get confessions from these prisoners by giving them nothing to eat but bread and water.

On the evening of October 11, 1926, the police were dispatched to an apartment on North Main Street on a call of a domestic quarrel. Mrs. Emily Sprague had ran to a neighbor's home seeking help because her husband was threatening to kill her. Officers were familiar with her husband, 43-year-



J. K. Bosler • Rep.
URBANA 1925-1926

UU Yearbooks for Sale

Champaign County Historical Museum received a generous donation from Urbana University when they closed in 2020. After cataloging copies for our collection and distributing copies to various local libraries, we have multiple copies of Urbana University yearbooks (various years) available for sale to the public.

We are offering these extra yearbooks for \$5 each and the proceeds from this sale go toward care of our collections.

They will be available for purchase at the museum, we are open Tues. – Fri. from 10-4 and Sat. 10 – 2. Unfortunately, we are not able to ship them at this time.

You can message us through our Facebook page, Champaign County Historical Museum – Urbana, OH. Or email us at champaigncohistory@gmail.com, to check availability.

CHESTER HOOLEY “HOOLEY DID IT!”

by Candy Gilliam

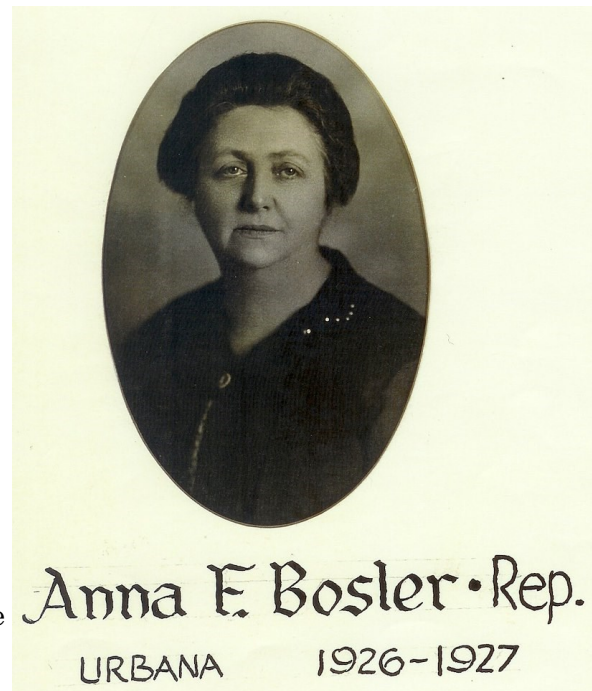


Bosler killer -Harry Sprague 1926

old Harry Sprague, as he had numerous prior arrests for violence. A few years earlier in 1921, Mr. Sprague had threatened to kill his wife and was sent to the Columbus State Hospital for the Insane but was discharged in 1922. He was readmitted in 1922, then dismissed, but sent back a third time in 1925, then released again. He was returned in August 1926, for more threats and with a warning from Sheriff Bosler to the state hospital that Mr. Sprague was a very dangerous man and should not be released. However, a month later, the state hospital granted Sprague a trial visit home with his wife, and Mr. Sprague returned to Urbana. Harry Sprague was insanely jealous of his wife, always being suspicious of her being unfaithful to him. Emily Sprague had been visiting with her daughter in Springfield that October evening, and when she returned home to Urbana, Harry Sprague was waiting with his suspicions and threats. When officers first arrived at the scene, Sprague had locked himself inside his upstairs apartment. Officer Howard Helfrich talked with Sprague through the locked door while trying to calm him down, but Sprague refused to open the door and was insisting the officer bring his

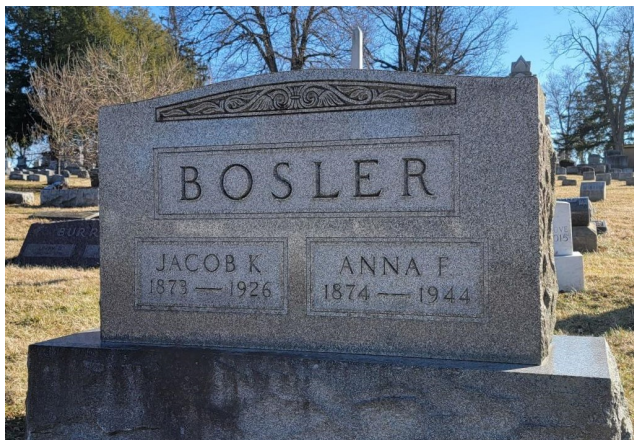
wife back. He threatened to shoot any policemen who approached him. Sheriff Bosler was called to help since he was previously acquainted with Sprague from their many trips to the state hospital. The sheriff felt he could reason with him into coming out of the apartment, but Sprague still insisted on talking with his wife first. Sheriff Bosler sent for Emily Sprague and together they went back upstairs to talk with her husband. Harry Sprague opened the door for his wife, and as the sheriff and Emily walked into the room numerous shots were fired. It is believed that Harry Sprague held a gun in his hand, and when Sheriff Bosler saw the gun pointed towards him, he shot at Sprague first. Sprague immediately returned fire. Emily Sprague was able to jump out of the room and ran screaming downstairs out of the apartment. Sheriff Bosler was shot in the left arm and crouched behind a table. The sheriff shot over the table as Harry Sprague emptied his gun, riddling the walls, windows and doors of his home with bullets. Other officers took up firing their guns from behind the opened door frame, reaching around to shoot towards Sprague while protecting their bodies with the wall. Once the gunfire ceased, officers leaped into the room as Sprague held his hands high above his head shouting "Don't shoot! Don't shoot!". He was quickly overpowered and arrested. Soon, it was discovered that Sheriff Bosler had been shot through his forehead and killed during that

terrible battle. The entire community was shocked as Sheriff Bosler was the first Champaign County sheriff to lose his life while in office. Sheriff Bosler died in the performance of his job, unafraid to answer the call of duty. A few days later, the church was filled for Sheriff Bosler's funeral. Most businesses suspended services in respect and as a tribute to the fallen sheriff. Harry Sprague was charged with first degree murder for the killing of an officer in the execution of his duty. He claimed self-defense, testifying that Sheriff Bosler shot first and it was never his intention to kill the sheriff. He wiped tears from his cheeks as he said he felt threatened by the officers who were yelling at him through the door. After doctors examined him to determine his mental state, Sprague was found to be insane. He was committed to the Lima State Hospital for the Insane in 1927 and died there in 1932.



The day after Sheriff Jacob Bosler was killed, the Champaign County Commissioners appointed his wife, Anna Bosler, as Sheriff to finish out her husband's unexpired term. This also made history as she was (and is) the first female Sheriff to ever serve in Champaign County, OH. The Republican officials then nominated Anna Bosler to run for sheriff in the upcoming November election. They felt the county owed Anna this title, as it was their obligation to her for the loss of her husband, and it would also provide her an income. Sheriff

Tombstone of Jacob K. and Anna Bosler, located in Oak Dale Cemetery



Bosler had spent his time and money in campaigning for the next election, and Anna should reap those rewards. Whereas the Democrats felt that only a man should hold this job title, as it was too dangerous for a woman and the safety of the citizens. But they also agreed Anna was entitled to a position of some type and offered her the job of deputy sheriff. In the end though, Anna lost the nomination, and Mr. Pearl Jones became the new sheriff in 1927. Anna continued to live in Urbana the rest of her life and died in 1944. Sheriffs Jacob and Anna Bosler are both buried in Oak Dale Cemetery.

Mission Statement

The Champaign County Historical Society collects, preserves, and interprets relevant artifacts, documents, and other resources from Champaign County to educate current and future generations about our history.

Welcome New Members

Lois Monroe & Family

Kathy Shambaugh

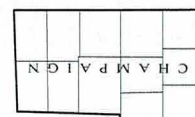
www.champaigncountyhistoricalmuseum.org
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Est. 1934



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MUSEUM

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