

Spreading the.....

Farm Museum News

ST. CLAIR COUNTY FARM MUSEUM
"PRESERVING A BIT OF YESTERDAY FOR TOMORROW"

SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST:

- General Membership Meetings: Please check the website for updates.
- Fall Harvest Days Preview

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

Member Spotlight	1
Fall Harvest Days	1
Volunteer Thank You	2
Upcoming Events	2
Our Collection	2
Interesting Finds	3
Our Mission	4
Board Members & Contacts	4

FALL HARVEST DAYS

Always the last full weekend in August, the St. Clair County Farm Museum’s Fall Harvest Days is back in play. Cancelled in 2020 due to Covid restrictions, this year’s event is scheduled for August 27, 28, & 29. This year the featured tractor is “orphans and odd-balls”, those crazy tractors that never rolled off the assembly line in large quantities. It will be exciting to see the lesser known tractors of days gone by.

A few new events are being planned for this year’s show including an ATV drag race and a golf cart/atv rodeo. These join other events in the “crater” which include a tractor pull and the popular tractor games.

Making a second appearance is the fiber expo which will showcase fiber art and products and the Bluewater Area Woodturners with live demonstrations. These, in addition to demonstrations of threshing, sawmilling,

blacksmithing, shingle making, hit and miss engines, steam whistles, and steam powered engines operating historic implements, will be sure to entertain.

Wagon rides, kids activities, strolling through the museum barns, musical events and good food are always big attractions.

News alert: This year there is no admission charge to harvest days. It’s FREE - Donations are accepted

M E M B E R S P O T L I G H T -

Y V O N N E M A R K E L

Yvonne resides in Memphis, MI, has been a museum member since 2005 and is currently vice president but has held other board positions. Yvonne is married to a wonderful man who supports and encourages her to continue working with the museum. Having three children and a beautiful granddaughter adds joy to her life. When not pursuing her hobbies of gardening, photography or volunteering, Yvonne finds time to run her store, **Laser Mark-it**, in Richmond.

Getting to know members of the museum thru another club led Yvonne to realize that she could

utilize her talents in ways to help the organization grow, as the farm museum isn’t just about tractors. As a matter of fact, she doesn’t even own a tractor but admits she does like them all. Yvonne’s favorite feature of the museum is the good friends that she has made over the years as well as the enjoyment derived from helping educate the public about the museum, why it is here and then giving patrons a glimpse of the past. Yvonne’s involvement in the museum projects involves her love for planning and organizing Fall Harvest Days with the reward of seeing the faces of

the people who come to enjoy the event. Working in the concession stand and serving the great food brings Yvonne a great deal of satisfaction as she can usually be found somewhere close when the concession is open for business.



HELPING US ACHIEVE OUR MISSION

The St. Clair County Farm Museum can not exist without the many volunteers and sponsors that donate either time or money to help us accomplish our mission. We would like to thank the many that help us through out the year.

Event Sponsors

- Steiner Tractors
- AIS Construction Equipment
- Star of the West Milling
- Dick Huvaeres Chrysler

- Cargill Salt
- JRT Thumb Auctioneers & Realty
- Foster Oil
- Goodells Mini Storage
- Lixey's Storage
- Foam All
- Hammers Contraction LLC
- 24th Street Pizza
- And everyone else who helps make the Fall Harvest Days possible.

The farm museum has always been operated by volunteers and like many other organizations, is suffering from a lack of help. The museum has many opportunities to volunteer. No particular skill is needed as members are always willing to share their knowledge and help others learn. If you do have a skill that you are willing to share, members are always willing to learn. If you are interested in helping out in some way, please contact one of the members for information on how to get involved.

OUR COLLECTION -

INTERNATIONAL GRAIN BINDER

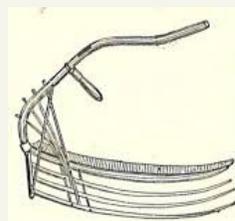


It's that time of year when we not only think of the upcoming Fall Harvest Days but we begin the process of harvesting the wheat that will be used for demonstrations of the threshing machine. The International Grain Binder is the piece of equipment that is being prepared to cut the wheat and bind it into shocks. After last sea-

son some damage occurred to the binder which needed to be repaired prior to use. A couple of the arms which hold the reel slats were broken and needed to be replaced and through that process, a casting was found to be broken. Thanks to **Bob's Welding and Fabrication** in Avoca, MI, the part was able to be repaired in time to complete the harvest.

The binder used by the farm museum members to harvest

the grain was donated to the museum by former member Art Kuney. It is believed to be a model that was produced in the 1930's. Member Glen Schade, over the years, has been the go to resource with the knowledge and assistance setting up and operating the International binder. Thanks Glen for sharing your knowledge and all of your assistance and hard work.



Grain Cradles.
 No. 1744 Morgan Grain Cradle, 4 fingers, grape vine pattern, wood brace, ring fastening, silver steel scythe.
 Price, each..... \$2.25
 No. 1745 Grain Cradle, same as above, with iron brace.
 Price, each..... \$2.25

UPCOMING & PAST EVENTS

Membership Meeting

- July 13, 2021
- August 17, 2021
- September 21, 2021

With this Covid pandemic that has consumed our lives, we must be able to change directions as quickly as driving a narrow front end tractor. Our ability to hold events may change direction so please check the museum website, facebook, or call to confirm the events you are interested in attending.

Fall Harvest Days

August 27, 28, 29, 2021

Museum Open

Various Saturdays and Sundays
 May through October
 Check Website for calendar of dates

Fall Pumpkin Fest

First four Weekends in October

Plow Day was held on May 8 under gloomy skies with only a few members present to help prepare the fields for planting. Thanks to Fred Peasley, Bob Sullivan, and Terry Dunn for all of their hard work and time. The only color tractor that could be seen working the field was red and they made the job look easy. The members would like to see more tractors in the coming years.



INTERESTING FINDS -
HARVESTING GRAIN THROUGH THE YEARS

<https://www.heritage-history.com>

Through the years, the harvesting of grain has evolved from hand picking of the grain head to the use of the huge combines seen today. Grains, especially wheat, have a very small window of time when it can be harvested. In early days, the wheat head was picked by hand, making the process of harvesting a great quantity almost impossible. To speed the process, the farmer began to use a knife to cut several stalks at one time. A knife with a curved blade, a sickle, made the job easier but still time consuming. A good day was to cut and bind a half acre of wheat. Next came the cradle which was a scythe with wooden fingers to catch the grain stalks so as to lay them parallel in straight rows. This increased the production to 2 acres per day if another person would bind the sheaves.

Patrick Bell of Scotland was the first to develop a machine called a reaper, but was only used to cut the wheat stalks and move them out of the way of the horses which powered the machine. Bell's reaper was used in the harvest of 1828 although Bell is not considered the inventor of the reaper. Four of the reapers manufactured by Bell made their way to the USA which makes it the forerunner of the American reaper. Problems with this machine prevented it from becoming a huge success. Farmers still relied on the cradle to pick up the grain left by the Bell reaper. It wasn't until Cyrus H. McCormick of Virginia improved the reaper that the back breaking work of cutting and binding grain was to soon end.

Cyrus' father, Robert, had an 1800 acre farm which included a saw mill, a grist mill and a blacksmith shop. Robert, a self proclaimed inventor, made the development of a reaper his hobby from 1816 until 1831 without much success. During a trial of the reaper in 1831, the machine failed to keep up with the cutting of the stalks and Robert proclaimed he was finished as it was impossible to make a "practical reaping machine". Cyrus then took over the invention process where his father left off. Cyrus' first changes were to the cutting mechanism by adding a sickle bar and divider at the end to separate the grain to be cut from that which is to be left. The first demonstration in 1832 was not very successful, mostly due to uneven ground. Cyrus was told to leave the field but went to an adjoining field where he proceeded to harvest the six acres of grain before sundown.

McCormick advertised his reapers for sale locally in 1833 but failed to sell even one in the first seven years. Financial problems due to a failed family iron smelting business caused Cyrus to revert to the sale of his reaper and he succeeded in selling seven machines in 1842 for fifty dollars each. His sales increased to fifty in 1844. Cyrus looked to the West to increase business and chose Chicago as the best location. Needing money to make the move, he sold half interest in the company to William Ogden. Production increased to 500 machines for the harvest of 1848 and fifteen hundred for the following year. At the end of the second year, McCormick bought back the half of the company which he sold to Ogden.

The next major development in the evolution was that of the "self

raker". Previously, a person needed to remove, rake, the wheat and straw from the platform of the reaper. The self-rake was invented in 1852 by Jearum Atkins and his invention was then purchased by McCormick.

An inventor by the name of Mann fitted a McCormick reaper with a canvas elevator to carry the cut grain up to a wagon moving alongside the reaper. Late in 1850's the two Marsh brothers developed a platform on which to stand and a table to tie the grain bundles by hand. This increased the productivity of the harvest. The patented device was called the Marsh Harvester and cut the labor cost of binding in half.

It wasn't until 1874 that Charles Worthington of Wisconsin brought a new invention to McCormick which would bind the grain by twisting a wire around the bundles. Within the next five years, McCormick made and sold fifty thousand of these machines. Farmers were dissatisfied with the wire ties as pieces of wire cut the hands of those handling it and got into the mouths of cattle, at times killing them. John Appleby, of Wisconsin, presented to William Deering an invention that could tie a knot in twine to bind the grain. Before the harvest of 1880 was over, Deering sold three thousand twine binders.

The final chapter of the improvement of the reaper was the invention of the complete harvester which could not only cut and gather the wheat but thresh the wheat to remove the grain. McCormick live until 1884, long enough to see his invention evolve.

WE'RE ON THE WEB
STCLAIRCOUNTYFARMMUSEUM.ORG



Find us on Facebook



**S T . C L A I R C O U N T Y
F A R M M U S E U M**

8310 County Park Drive
Goodells, MI 48027

810-325-1737
sccfarmmuseum@gmail.com

Museum Board

Garry Spencer, Pres.	Bob Sullivan
Yvonne Markel, V. Pres	Terry Dunn
Lisa Thacker, Sec.	Kim Schultz
Bill Schultz, Treas.	Fred Peasley
	Wayne Coon
	Bill Zegelian

The mission of the St. Clair County Farm Museum is to provide an understanding of our heritage, add to our areas cultural base and enhance regional tourism. This is achieved by acquiring, preserving and presenting agricultural and domestic equipment and related artifacts in structures and settings which will portray the origin and evolution of farming and rural living from when the area was first settled until about 1960.

The museum is a 501c3 charitable non profit organization which is operated entirely by volunteers. The museum always welcomes new volunteers to join us in achieving our mission. An agricultural background is not a requirement to become a member. Please join us at our meetings on the third Tuesday of each month at 7 pm in the Community Building at Goodells County Park.

St. Clair County Farm Museum
P.O. Box 202
Goodells, MI 48027

