



# Thymes

May 2021  
Annual Issue

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## FMH PROGRAMS RETURN IN 2021

### WORK ON THE BARN COMPLETED

**T**HE 2020 programs at the Five Mile House were cancelled due to the COVID-19 epidemic, but we still accomplished a great deal during the year. All construction on the barn was completed including the siding, the lofts, and the installation of sections of the original corn crib and the granary. Our contractor, Riley Milburn, applied Heritage Oil to the exterior of the barn. Electric service was bored

underground to the barn and Charleston Electric has recently completed the installation of the electric lines and lighting inside the barn. The first program in the newly-lit barn was held on April 28th.

FMH board members and blacksmiths Brian Karrick and Eric Gray have completed the basic forge. The complex

design of the forge precluded contractors bidding on it, but the chimney will be completed by a masonry contractor in the near future. The bellows for powering the forge will be completed this summer, but an electric blower will also be provided. Brian has completed all of the blacksmithed hooks for the barn doors and windows.

Landscaping around the barn was a major project. The heavy equipment created two to three foot deep ruts during the barn



*The two storage sheds were moved to different locations to open up the area around the barn. A stage is planned for the area in front of the rocks which were foundation rocks for the original barn.*

construction. Board member Les Dallas leveled out the ruts with his tractor, and Dirt Works Landscaping prepared and seeded the area with grass. Two storage buildings were moved to open up the barn area and a new sidewalk was installed from the house to the barn to provide access to all visitors. The sidewalk will be extended this summer to the new parking area that is being developed on the property just east of the barn.



*A new sidewalk from the Five Mile House to the barn provides accessibility to all visitors.*



*An EIU Center for Lifetime Learning program on the "Old York Road" was presented by Carolyn Stephens in the newly electrified barn on April 28th.*

**The Five Mile House Foundation** - is a not-for-profit, 501(c)(3) organization located in Charleston, Illinois. Its mission is the preservation, restoration, and interpretation of the Five Mile House and surrounding property.

**P.O. Box 114  
Charleston, IL 61920**

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The commemorative brick patio was also completed by Dirt Works in front of the barn, the handicap ramp to the house was stained, the Eaton house was painted, and a beautiful butterfly garden was planted and developed during the 2020 year.

The annual Fall Festival is planned for Sunday, October 3. On Saturday, October 2, a full day of blacksmithing and celebrating the new barn is planned. Blacksmiths will demonstrate and sell their wares all day and a barn dedication is planned for 1:00 p.m. A bonfire and barn dance are planned for the evening.

An important new feature this year will be the development of a parking area on the east side of the FMH property. Our appreciation goes out to Shrader Farms who is planting an area in grass to provide easily accessible parking for Five Mile House visitors.

The new barn is already providing a venue for programs and the Five Mile House Spinners have been meeting in the barn (or in the house in cold weather) on a monthly basis. The new barn now stands ready for programs and visitors during the 2021 season. □



*Left - One of the barn lofts and the section of corn crib from the original barn. Above - the new forge and blacksmiths Brian Karrick and Eric Gray . Next page - The FMH spinners in the barn and the new Butterfly garden.*

## EIU STUDENTS PROVIDE VALUABLE HELP FOR PROJECTS

BY KATHY HUMMEL

**W**E have been fortunate to have young, strong bodies in the form of Eastern Illinois University students help with the never-ending projects at Five Mile House. Each spring and fall, EIU sends student volunteers out into the community and the Five Mile House always gets a large group of enthusiastic workers.

In the fall of 2020, the EIU Women’s Soccer Team came to the site and unloaded the old shed so it could be moved to the back of the barn to serve as storage for coal to fire the blacksmith forge. They also washed windows, stained the handicap ramp, re-arranged lumber, and spread straw over the newly-graded and seeded lawn, and spread mulch around the trees at the FMH. □





## “GOOD MEMORIES” OF THREE FMH FOUNDERS

BY DAVID KENT COY

**W**HILE this past year has been rough on many of us in various ways, mainly due to the pandemic, it has also been difficult on the Board of the Five Mile House Foundation in that three of our most stalwart members have passed away.

Willa Rennels Ashby, Nancy Easter-Shick, and Calvin N. Smith, Ph.D. were loyal, reliable, and hardworking members of the Five Mile House Foundation for many years. They each gave much to the local Charleston, Coles County community, but we especially note their contributions to the Five Mile House efforts.

**Willa Maude (Rennels) Ashby** was born Dec. 22, 1928 in Humboldt Township, Coles County, a member of the Rennels Family with a long-time history connected to the Five Mile House. She passed away peacefully on March 18, 2020 in Charleston at the age of 91. She left four children, ten grandchildren, and 20 great-grandchildren. Willa became a fifth and sixth grade teacher at Jefferson Elementary School and taught there for 22 years before she retired in 1994. Willa enjoyed traveling, antiques, history, and genealogy. She was dedicated to the Five Mile House and attended all the local board meetings and functions. She helped with the printing of Five Mile House Tee Shirts several years ago.

**Nancy Sue Easter-Shick** was born Aug. 26, 1940 in Charleston and died Sept. 28, 2020 also in Charleston, at the age of 80. She left two children, ten grandchildren, and 20 great-grandchildren. Nancy was a local author, photographer, historian, and genealogist. Her books are a mainstay of local history for Coles County. She was an active mem-

ber of the Coles County, Illinois Genealogical Society, belonged to the Historical Society and the Association for the Preservation of Historic Coles County. She was a great friend of Wallace Eaton, who helped preserve the Five Mile House and interviewed him for posterity. She was involved in the efforts of preserving the Five Mile House almost from the start and never faltered.

**Dr. Calvin N. “Cal” Smith** was born Feb. 26, 1935 in Soda Springs, Idaho and passed away on Jan. 1, 2021, in Charleston. He was 85 years old. His widow, Nancy Lou (Pool) Sparks Smith died March 6, 2021, barely two months after his death. They left a total of four children, four grandchildren, and a great-grandson. Cal was a professor of Speech at E.I.U. for 32 years before he retired in 1998. He was one of the four founders of the Coles County, Illinois Genealogical Society. He was a charter member of the efforts to save the Five Mile House, was on the Foundation board, and served as President at one time. He also served on the City Cemetery Board and volunteered with Habitat for Humanity.

Through the efforts of these three former members of the Five Mile House Foundation Board, the organization has realized many of their goals and has seen the preservation and utilization of the Five Mile House become a reality. They were dedicated, hard workers and contributed their best at all times to the success of the Five Mile House. I personally feel they were committed and drawn to the project because of their interest and motivation to preserve the Five Mile House for the future generations to be able to enjoy the “Good Memories” that they had each enjoyed with the Five Mile House. □

### 2021 Board of Directors

Tom Vance, Pres.  
Dick Hummel, VP  
Joyce St. Michael, Sec.

Lance Beever  
Gail Casey  
David Kent Coy  
Les Dallas  
Giuliana Dongu  
Eric Gray  
Kathy Hummel  
April Karrick  
Brian Karrick  
Barbara Krehbiel  
Lynne Padovan  
Dorothy Retzolk  
Carolyn Stephens

### Committee Members

Larry Bates  
Valerie Boroughs  
Jamey Cahoon  
Jim Craig  
Gary Foster  
Earl Halbe  
Cheryl Hawker  
Randy Jackson  
Myrna Madigan  
Diane Ratliff  
Cynthia Rouse  
Bob Sterling  
Bailey Young



Marble Making



Magic Show

## 2021 SUMMER SCHEDULE

### LIVING HISTORY OPEN HOUSES - 1-4 P.M.

*Demonstrations - 1-4 p.m.; Music - 1:00-2:30 p.m.; Programs - 2:30 p.m.*

<p><b>May 30 (Sun)</b> <i>Children's Activities</i></p>	<p><i>"The Old York Road"</i> Spinning on the porch Contemporary folk music</p>	<p>Carolyn Stephens FMH Spinners <b>Lunar-Halo</b></p>
<p><b>June 13 (Sun)</b> <i>Children's Activities</i></p>	<p><i>"Making and studying historical powder horns"</i> Spinning on the porch Early Illinois traditional music</p>	<p>Pete Hutton FMH Spinners <b>Old Time Fiddlers</b></p>
<p><b>June 27 (Sun)</b> <i>Children's Activities</i></p>	<p><i>"Blacksmithing on the Illinois frontier"</i> Spinning and weaving Contemporary folk music</p>	<p>Eric Gray FMH Spinners <b>Bob &amp; Laura St. Gemme</b></p>
<p><b>July 11 (Sun)</b> <i>Children's Activities</i></p>	<p><i>"Suffragettes 100th Anniversary, Women's vote then and now"</i> Spinning &amp; Weaving Contemporary Bluegrass music</p>	<p>Carolyn Cloyd  FMH Spinners <b>Flat Mountain</b></p>
<p><b>July 25 (Sun)</b> <i>Children's Activities</i></p>	<p><i>"Old-fashioned phrases &amp; their origin 2.0"</i> Spinning &amp; weaving Food Preservation Country &amp; gospel music</p>	<p>Lance Beever FMH Spinners Giuliana Dongu and Cheryl Hawker <b>Mackville</b></p>
<p><b>August 8 (Sun)</b> <i>Children's Activities</i></p>	<p><i>"Spinning and the history of fiber"</i> Spinning &amp; weaving Acoustic folk, country, &amp; blues music</p>	<p>Val Gaddis FMH Spinners <b>Joe McLean</b></p>
<p><b>August 22 (Sun)</b> <i>Children's Activities</i></p>	<p><i>"History of the Charleston Fire Dept."</i> Spinning &amp; weaving Contemporary &amp; traditional folk music</p>	<p>Tom Watson, former Fire Chief FMH Spinners <b>Motherlode</b></p>
<p><b>October 2 (Sat)</b> <i>Children's Activities</i></p>	<p><b>CELEBRATE THE NEW BARN 10 a.m. – 4 p.m.</b> Blacksmith Hammer-In – blacksmithing all day Sales of hand-made items Music and other activities</p> <p><b>1:00 p.m. Barn Dedication</b> followed by refreshments <b>6:00 p.m. Bonfire</b> – BYO hotdogs and marshmallows <b>7:00 p.m. Barn Dance</b> with music by Motherlode</p>	 <p>Cider Press</p>
<p><b>October 3 (Sun)</b> <i>Children's Activities</i></p>	<p><b>FALL FESTIVAL 1-4 p.m.</b> Open hearth &amp; wood stove cooking Food preservation Spinning &amp; weaving Farm animal petting Clay marble making Rope making</p> <p><b>Blacksmithing</b> <b>Cider pressing</b> <b>Chair caning</b> <b>Scherenschnitte</b> <b>Candle dipping</b></p> <p><b>Featuring:</b> Traditional folk music by <b>Motherlode</b> <b>The Amazing Andrew, Magician</b> <b>Food concession and Kettle Korn</b></p>	 <p>Candle Making</p>

**2021 BBQ & BINGO FUNDRAISER - CANCELLED**

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