

McLean County Museum of History

**McLean County Arts Council
Bicentennial Collection**

Processed by Museum intern
Kenny Tymick
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Collection Information
Brief History
Scope Note
Box and Folder Inventory

VOLUME OF COLLECTION:	1 Box
COLLECTION DATES:	1974 - 1977
RESTRICTIONS:	None
REPRODUCTION RIGHTS:	Permission to reproduce or publish material in this collection must be obtained in writing from the McLean County Museum of History
ALTERNATIVE FORMATS:	None
OTHER FINDING AIDS:	None
LOCATION:	Archives
NOTES:	None

Historical Sketch

The McLean County Arts Council Bicentennial Collection contains documents pertaining to the McLean County Bicentennial Arts Festival and the committee that planned the event. Through the work of Margaret Chasson and other committee members, the Bicentennial Festival celebrated McLean County's history. The committee members sought assistance across the county, marking significant historic buildings and sites; enlisting the aid of performers, schools, and scholars for event programs; and calling on organizations for participation and financial support for the celebration. The program was developed over two years and began on May 8, 1976 in the City of Bloomington.

Most of the festival events featured music and street performances or public workshops. The May 8 parade began in Normal and ended near Franklin Park, where many historic buildings are located, including the former home of Adlai E. Stevenson I.

An art show was incorporated into the program as well, where works produced by professional artists were on display inside the McLean County Courthouse. "Youth Division" art was displayed in windows around the Courthouse Square. These art works were judged and awarded prize money, evidenced from a variety of thank you cards found within this collection.

The McLean County Historical Society also conducted four different guided tours for the Festival. The Northeastern Tour included sites within the Chenoa-Lexington area such as Patton's Cabin and the John Gregory homestead; the Eastern Tour included the Colfax coal mines; the Northeast Central Tour featured Sulphur Springs and the "Five Oaks" home of Melville Stone; and the Southeastern Tour included Stumptown, the Kickapoo "Indian Fort" and the Benjaminville Quaker Church.

The McLean County Arts Council also staged a Riding Club Horse Show and a July 4th celebration at Miller Park; however, both events have little related documentation within the collection.

Scope and Content

The collection contains documents pertaining to the McLean County Bicentennial Arts Festival and Committee planning. There is a multitude of information on historic sites within McLean County from newspaper articles, letters, certificates, and pamphlets. Also included within the collection are many of the budgetary and financial planning documents, including loan receipts and sales from the Historic Sites Calendar. Festival registration forms reveal which organizations attended the celebrations, while various notes, letters, and programs indicate performers that participated in the events. An assortment of newspaper articles spanning 1974-1976 cover the preparation and events of the Bicentennial Festival. And the McLean County Historic Sites Calendar 1976, which was sold in large numbers as promotional merchandise for the Festival, is also included.

Box and Folder Inventory:

Folder 1: McLean County Arts Council

- 1.1.1 Original and copy of a letter enclosed with a certificate honoring the Eagle at ISSCS building as a historic site in the Bicentennial program, chosen by the McLean County Bicentennial Arts Festival Committee, May 30, 1975
- 1.1.2 Copies of *The Pantagraph's* McLean County Bicentennial Arts Festival edition, June 29, 1975, containing information on all the historic site selections and mapped locations

Folder 2: Bicentennial Art in the Park

- 1.2.1 The Art in the Park summer program, evaluations, and budgeting information
- 1.2.2 Description of program and program budget detail forms
- 1.2.3 A program of art activities, containing a schedule of dates and required materials
- 1.2.4 Handwritten letter to the Bicentennial Committee giving thanks for making the Art in the Park program available to the community of Heyworth 's schoolchildren, July 30, 1976

Folder 3: Bicentennial Booths

- 1.3.1 Booth request forms for organizations such as the Girl Scouts U.S.A, the McLean County Head Start Parents' Group, the McLean County Arts Council, the Bloomington-Normal Symphony Guild, and other Bicentennial clubs and committees
- 1.3.2 A letter and booth registration form for the Unitarian Women's Federation
- 1.3.3 List of crafts booths, food, and demonstrators for the Arts Festival
- 1.3.4 A booth registration form
- 1.3.5 The Balloons and Popcorn Stand and Information Booth volunteer time slots
- 1.3.6 The McLean County Health Department Rules for Operating Outdoor Itinerant Food Facilities
- 1.3.7 Update of the favorable reactions from McLean County communities for the Bicentennial Festival, occurring from mid-November to mid-December of 1975, conducted by Rose Ann Schaab and Nancy Saint
- 1.3.8 List of registered booths, what they featured, and their locations at the Bicentennial Festival
- 1.3.9 Food sales commissions for 68 booths
- 1.3.10 Follow-up letter to Farmer City, Illinois from the Bicentennial committee inquiring about the Historic Sites Calendar sales, July 17, 1976
- 1.3.11 Letter from Margaret Chasson to Ed Ingold in which she discusses calendar sales, July 17, 1976
- 1.3.12 Unsigned letter to Ed Ingold concerning an absent list of persons who received calendars that had not been delivered when last reported, July 29, 1976
- 1.3.13 Packet of information concerning the payment records of businesses and organizations sales of the Historic Sites calendars

Folder 4: Bicentennial Committee 1975-1976

- 1.4.1 The McLean County Bicentennial Arts Festival logo
- 1.4.2 Envelope addressed to Mrs. Alan McKinley from Mrs. Gene Leonard with letter enclosed concerning the Hatch farm, April 16, 1975
- 1.4.3 Envelope addressed to Margaret Chasson with letter enclosed from members on the Bloomington Downtown Council congratulating the Festival's success, May 10, 1976
- 1.4.4 Letter from the National Casualty Company with an attached application to National Casualty Company for a Specified Hazard Insurance Policy form, January 31, 1977
- 1.4.5 Letter from the Illinois Bicentennial Commission declaring the final report on the expenditure of Bicentennial grant funds have been received and approved, ca. February 1976
- 1.4.6 Enveloped addressed to Margaret Chasson with letter enclosed from Martha Dellman congratulating the Festival's success, May 16, 1976
- 1.4.7 Specification of banners for the Festival display
- 1.4.8 Hand drawn poster promoting the making of a Bicentennial banner
- 1.4.9 Descriptions of crafts and workshop events at the Festival
- 1.4.10 Write-up to Mayor Walter Bittner from Chasson thanking him and the support and cooperation of the involved groups in creating the Bicentennial Festival
- 1.4.11 The Bicentennial Arts Festival pamphlet drafting
- 1.4.12 Brief biography of Charlette Punk, 1 page

- 1.4.13 Banner creation information
- 1.4.14 The City of Bloomington newsletter, *Safety Talk*, April 1976
- 1.4.15 Workshops and event schedules for the Bicentennial Fest, May 9-10, 1976
- 1.4.16 July 4th at Miller Park booklet, containing programs for the Bicentennial Arts Festival and listing of booths
- 1.4.17 Letter from the City of Bloomington to Chasson concerning a request to display an ArchiVan on Main Street and the inability to provide sufficient barricades to close all streets for the Festival, April 6, 1976
- 1.4.18 Letter from the City of Bloomington to Chasson concerning the closed streets and barricade locations, and parking arrangements for the Festival, April 15, 1976
- 1.4.19 Drama ideas for the Bicentennial celebration
- 1.4.20 "Sound of America" Bicentennial Show list of performers
- 1.4.21 Letter to Chasson from Robert E. Stuart expressing interest in participating in the Festival, February 17, 1976
- 1.4.22 Letter to the City of Ashigawa, Japan, requesting a banner to be displayed during the Festival, February 10, 1976d
- 1.4.23 Letter to the Sister City Committee concerning the arrangement of a banner from Ashigawa displayed at the Festival, February 5, 1976
- 1.4.24 Letter requesting information on parades or festivals in Bloomington for the Antioch Community High School Summer Marching Band Program to participate in, February 3, 1976
- 1.4.25 Information packet about the ArchiVan, the Architecture Mobile Van Museum, January 14, 1976
- 1.4.26 Illinois Bicentennial Commission memorandum on the Bicentennial New Year, January 7, 1976
- 1.4.27 Registration Information form for reservations at the Holiday Inn East
- 1.4.28 Agenda for the Central Illinois Regional Bicentennial Conference at the Holiday Inn Easy, dated January 7, 1976
- 1.4.29 Letter to Chasson concerning a vote by the Property Committee of the County Board to approve the use of the Courthouse on May 8, 1976
- 1.4.30 Distribution of Art Show brochures, December 14, 1975
- 1.4.31 Letter from the College of Fine Arts at Illinois State University Dean, Charles W. Bolen, concerning the coordination of the department with the Bicentennial Festival, September 30, 1975
- 1.4.32 Packet of letters and committee planning concerning the McLean County Arts festival
- 1.4.33 Packet of fragmented notes from the Art Festival Planning Committee Meeting, compiled February 7, 1974

Folder 5: Bicentennial Circus and Dance

- 1.5.1 Three thank-you cards addressed to Chasson, May 1976
- 1.5.2 Two copies of an invitation for the ISU P.E. department to participate in the Bicentennial Performing Dance and Circus Troupe
- 1.5.3 The Bicentennial Festival program of events
- 1.5.4 Consent and release forms for participation in the Circus Troupe
- 1.5.5 Letter from Chasson to ISU thanking the P.E. department's participation in the dance performances at the Bicentennial Festival, May 12, 1976

- 1.5.6 A list of names, addresses, and phone numbers of the circus performance participants
- 1.5.7 Bicentennial Performing Dance and Circus Troupe activity rehearsals
- 1.5.8 Details pertaining to the dance and circus troupe members, training, and performances
- 1.5.9 Details on Dance Is, the Liturgical dance group at ISU, February 1976
- 1.5.10 A list of expectations in the use of volunteer university personnel in the planning of the Bicentennial Program, January 20, 1976
- 1.5.11 Notes, details, and a newspaper article concerning the acquisition of unicyclists for the Festival
- 1.5.12 List of names, possible unicyclists
- 1.5.13 Correspondence between Chasson and the *Pantagraph* concerning the recognition of ISU students in the Festival, April 29, 1976
- 1.5.14 National Casualty Company Claimant's Statement form
- 1.5.15 National Casualty Company insurance policy
- 1.5.16 Square Dance II class at ISU list of students
- 1.5.17 Letter to Chasson confirming the dance and music for the Bicentennial Program, March 30, 1976
- 1.5.18 Liturgical Dance Group and program
- 1.5.19 "Great Songs of America" program presented by the Speech and Choral Department of Bloomington High School, February 16, 1976
- 1.5.20 Picture of one of the performers in a clown costume

Folder 6: Bicentennial Awards Workshop

- 1.6.1 The Bicentennial open show awards and honorable mention
- 1.6.2 A small, red thank you-card, May 12, 1976
- 1.6.3 Card concerning the Art Show bill
- 1.6.4 Business reply mail from Crosby Donkey Ball Inc.
- 1.6.5 A letter written concerning the reception of a prize check for the Bicentennial exhibit, May 13, 1976
- 1.6.6 Card to Chasson about the Bicentennial Festival
- 1.6.7 Letter to Chasson about a Jr. High's contribution to a display for the Festival, March 31, 1976
- 1.6.8 A WJBC script complimenting those involved in the celebration, May 11, 1976
- 1.6.9 Letter to Chasson about the Bicentennial Festival, May 10, 1976
- 1.6.10 Program for Festival USA, presented by Illinois State University's American Heritage Dancers, December 4-6, 1975
- 1.6.11 Five awards pamphlets for the Art Competition and Exhibition at the Bicentennial Festival
- 1.6.12 Entry form pamphlet for the Art Competition and Exhibition at the Bicentennial Festival
- 1.6.13 Stage program for the Bicentennial Art Competition and Exhibition
- 1.6.14 Copies of an invitation to the open house of the Bicentennial Arts Festival Workshop, March 4, 1976
- 1.6.15 Copies of a flyer for the Bicentennial Banner Workshop
- 1.6.16 Thank-you card concerning the award payout at the Bicentennial Arts Festival, May 24, 1976

- 1.6.17 Documents including a receipt for the Art Fest commission; a request confirmation for the ArchiVan; and a letter from Chasson expressing gratitude for ArchiVan and its staff at the Festival, May 20 1976
- 1.6.18 Street and stage show programs and performances
- 1.6.19 Two copies of the Bicentennial Arts Festival Committee members
- 1.6.20 Street corner entertainment with a list of the Hudson Kitchen Band members
- 1.6.21 ISU Bicentennial topical display designs
- 1.6.22 A brief description of a choreographed performance
- 1.6.23 Women's Rights documents including writings by Alice Duer Miller, 1915; an essay on the conservative view of the woman question, by Sandra Harmon, February 1972; Women's suffrage songs; a speech by Florence Kelley, 1903, and by Lucy Stone in 1855; an article by Charlotte Perkins Gilman, October 1, 1898; a pastoral letter of the Massachusetts Congregationalist Clergy and Sarah Moore Grimke's response, 1837-1838; and information on Harriot K. Hunt and her 1952 Tax protest
- 1.6.24 The McLean County Bicentennial Celebration 1976 complete program of events

Folder 7: Bicentennial Historic Sites

- 1.7.1 Notes on Historic Sites in McLean County, Illinois, by T. J. Powell, title page
- 1.7.2 McLean County Historic Sites Calendar and Arts Festival historic sites list
- 1.7.3 Two copies of "Search for county historic sites to begin," *Pantagraph*, September 8, 1974
- 1.7.4 "Writers announced in historic sites contest," *Pantagraph*, March 16
- 1.7.5 "Site contest seeks entries containing historical value," *Vidette*, November 14, 1974
- 1.7.6 "Historic Home," *The Family Circle*, January edition
- 1.7.7 Encapsulated pages of *The Pantagraph's* McLean County Bicentennial Arts Festival edition, June 29, 1975, containing information on all the historic site selections and mapped locations
- 1.7.8 Two certificates designating the George Flint Homestead and the Parke Brailey House as historic sites by the Bicentennial Committee, April 1975

Folder 8: Bicentennial Workshops History Grant

- 1.8.1 Bicentennial Arts Festival pamphlets
- 1.8.2 Flyers for a Multi-Media Art Workshop from August 23-26
- 1.8.3 Bicentennial Workshop program flyer, with donation amounts and expenses written on the back
- 1.8.4 Historic Sites calendar balance dues, May 10, 1976
- 1.8.5 Letter to Chasson concerning calendar sales, July 22, 1976
- 1.8.6 A note of appreciation for the services of Jerry Simac, June 8, 1976
- 1.8.7 Loan receipt from the Bloomington Federal Savings and Loan Association for the Bicentennial Festival
- 1.8.8 Note with payments from various towns and organizations, September 13
- 1.8.9 Historic-artistic lesson packages put together by the Bicentennial Arts Festival Committee
- 1.8.10 A news release concerning the Frank Lloyd Wright Houses as the topic for a slide lecture at ISU, April 21, 1975
- 1.8.11 Certificate of Incorporation of the McLean County Arts Council, Inc., November 9, 1972

- 1.8.12 An immediate release document from the Bicentennial Committee concerning Lonn Pressnall's availability to provide his services for the Bicentennial Program
- 1.8.13 The Financial Assistance Program for the Fiscal Year 1975-76
- 1.8.14 The Illinois Arts Council application for financial assistance form for the McLean County Arts Council, 1976
- 1.8.15 Illinois Bicentennial Commission Financial Report for Bicentennial Matching Grant Projects, grant period from June 15, 1975 to January 15, 1976
- 1.8.16 Information on the Bicentennial Arts workshop plans
- 1.8.17 "Pilot program for Bicentennial arts Festival," *Pantagraph*, March 30, 1975
- 1.8.18 Financial statement for the Arts Council, 1974-1977
- 1.8.19 Information on the results anticipated from the Arts project
- 1.8.20 Information on the programming for the Arts Festival
- 1.8.21 Letter from Chasson to the McLean County Bicentennial Commission seeking assistance to provide equipment for the McLean County Arts Center, October 25, 1975
- 1.8.22 *Outlook* newsletter, vol. 9, no. 2, February 1976
- 1.8.23 *Outlook* newsletter, vol. 7, no. 8, September 1974
- 1.8.24 Budget planning for the Bicentennial Committee
- 1.8.25 Workshop planning notes
- 1.8.26 Illinois Bicentennial Commission request for advance on funds for bicentennial matching grant projects for the Bicentennial Arts Festival, June 30, 1975
- 1.8.27 A schedule of the Bicentennial Arts Festival's tentative work programs and developing activities; budgeting plans and financial summaries for 1974; and two letters from Chasson to the Bicentennial Commission on funding, March-February 1975
- 1.8.28 Illinois Bicentennial Commission descriptive report for bicentennial matching grant projects for the McLean County Bicentennial Arts Festival, February 6, 1976
- 1.8.29 Letter from the executive director of the Illinois Bicentennial Commission granting a check for \$3,200 to McLean County, August 1, 1975
- 1.8.30 Reports for grant project, 1973-1976
- 1.8.31 Logo design board for the McLean County Bicentennial Arts Festival

Folder 9: Old Settlers Picnic

- 1.9.1 History of the Old Settler's Association and annual picnic event, 2 pages

Folder 10: Newspaper Clippings 1974

- 1.10.1 "Residents may participate in Bicentennial activities," November 3, 1974
- 1.10.2 "Lancaster County Bicentennial Calendar," *The Sunday News*, November 17, 1974
- 1.10.3 "Historic site entries deadline pushed back," November 27, 1974
- 1.10.4 "Bent on discovery?" undated
- 1.10.5 "Bicentennial group slates 'brainstorm'," October 1974
- 1.10.6 "Group seeks artistry with history," *Pantagraph*, undated
- 1.10.7 "History found in 'house that Jack built'," *Pantagraph*, November 3, 1974
- 1.10.8 "Historical site search contest," *Lexington Unit Journal: Chenoa Clipper Times*, undated
- 1.10.9 "Search for county historic sites to begin," *Pantagraph*, September 8, 1974
- 1.10.10 "License design winner," June 27, 1974
- 1.10.11 Two articles, "Bicentennial group slates 'brainstorm'," September 8, 1974; "ACI OK's setting up bi-centennial group," August 3, 1974

Folder 11: Newspaper Clippings 1975

- 1.11.1 "Winner announced in historic sites contest," *Pantagraph*, March 16, 1975
- 1.11.2 *Pantagraph* photo, "Historical sites" of Bloomington High School industrial arts chairman, June 26, 1975
- 1.11.3 "Oak Apartments livable landmark," *Pantagraph*, July 6, 1975
- 1.11.4 "Wednesday in the park," *Pantagraph*, July 19, 1975
- 1.11.5 "Victorian era apartments," *Pantagraph*, August 17, 1975
- 1.11.6 "Bentown hopes reel from quirks of fate," *Pantagraph*, August 24, 1975
- 1.11.7 "Cultural programs linked to Bicentennial," September 28, 1975
- 1.11.8 "Gingerbread remains in Victorian house," *Pantagraph*, August 24, 1975
- 1.11.9 "Bicentennial spirit flying with her flags," *Pantagraph*, November 19, 1975
- 1.11.10 "Hunting for treasures," *Pantagraph*, November 23, 1975
- 1.11.11 "Historic site entries deadline pushed back," undated
- 1.11.12 "Group still seeking county historic sites," January 22, 1975
- 1.11.13 "ISU art professor, students win awards," undated
- 1.11.14 "Historic sites catch on," February 1, 1975
- 1.11.15 "Bicentennial group gets grant," July 8, 1975
- 1.11.16 "Get in the Spirit of '76," January 23, 1975
- 1.11.17 "Pilot program for Bicentennial arts Festival," March 30, 1975
- 1.11.18 Four articles, "Supplement draws approval," August 1975; "Bicentennial workshop open house March 4,"; "Girl Scouts slate two '76 workshops,"; "Workshop at Withers for Girl Scouts"
- 1.11.19 "Committee plans spring festival," *Pantagraph*, December 1, 1975
- 1.11.20 "Bicentennial efforts shifting into high gear," *Pantagraph*, February 19, 1975
- 1.11.21 "Bicentennial topic for debate," March 21, 1975
- 1.11.22 "Bicentennial proves a time for history," *Pantagraph*, March 16, 1975

Folder 12: Newspaper Clippings 1976

- 1.12.1 "Bloomington Parks and Recreation 1976-1977 Fall, Winter and Spring Activities," *Pantagraph*, September 19, 1976
- 1.12.2 "Barn stands 146 years," *Pantagraph*, February 3, 1976
- 1.12.3 "Set preview of slide show," *Pantagraph*, February 29, 1976
- 1.12.4 "Art for holidays," *Pantagraph*, January 4, 1976
- 1.12.5 "Tentative OK given to bicentennial funds," *Pantagraph*, January 21, 1976
- 1.12.6 "Art festival," January 31, 1976
- 1.12.7 "Enjoys festival," *Pantagraph*, undated
- 1.12.8 "Puppetry workshops set for 3 locations," *Pantagraph*, February 1, 1976
- 1.12.9 "Pressnall hired by arts group," *Pantagraph*, February 15, 1976
- 1.12.10 *Pantagraph* advertisement for the McLean County Historic Sites Calendar, February 4, 1976
- 1.12.11 "Circus troupe training for festival," *Pantagraph*, May 6, 1976
- 1.12.12 "Modern Dance Presented By Local Church," *The Farmer City Journal*, March 18, 1976
- 1.12.13 "Speaker's bureau, logo Arts projects," *Pantagraph*, undated
- 1.12.14 "Art workshops get own building," *Pantagraph*, February 8, 1976
- 1.12.15 "Adult, children art workshops slated," *Pantagraph*, undated

- 1.12.16 "Call out for county artists," undated
- 1.12.17 "Art exhibit, competition May 8 Festival features," *Pantagraph*, April 4, 1976
- 1.12.18 "'Come all ye' celebration readied," *Pantagraph*, April 25, 1976
- 1.12.19 "Bicentennial even not enough," *Pantagraph*, undated
- 1.12.20 "Art workshops begin Monday," undated
- 1.12.21 "McLean County takes a step back in time," *Pantagraph*, May 9, 1976
- 1.12.22 "Merna youth, 18, tops bicentennial art show," *Pantagraph*, May 9, 1976
- 1.12.23 "To revive lost arts for bicentennial day," *Pantagraph*, May 2, 1976
- 1.12.24 "Saturday celebration to kick off '76 events," *Pantagraph*, May 5, 1976
- 1.12.25 "Ghost guide offers unique county tour," *Pantagraph*, May 23, 1976
- 1.12.26 "Children's art, drama under way," *Pantagraph*, June 13, 1976
- 1.12.27 "Banner making for bicentennial arts festival May 8 encouraged," undated
- 1.12.28 "Calendar sales to start Friday," *Pantagraph*, undated
- 1.12.29 "'Art on the Farm' slides available," *Pantagraph*, undated
- 1.12.30 *Pantagraph* photo, "Shirts on sale"
- 1.12.31 "Art in The Park," *The Saybrook Gazette*, June 17, 1976
- 1.12.32 "Speakers available for talks," undated
- 1.12.33 "Workshops to create 'The Magic Castle'," *Pantagraph*, July 3, 1976
- 1.12.34 "Children flock to park (Magic Castle, that is)," *Pantagraph*, July 8, 1976
- 1.12.35 Four articles, "Group urges towns to pick historic sites," undated; "Postponed," undated; "Children's art, drama under way," June 13, 1976; "Supplement draws approval," *Pantagraph*, undated
- 1.12.36 Three articles "Arts program begins Monday at LeRoy," *Pantagraph*, July 10, 1976; "Quilting," undated; "Historical sites search to set in McLean County," undated
- 1.12.37 "Readers asked to vote for 'Spirited 76'," *Pantagraph*, June 20, 1976
- 1.12.38 "Patriotic colors galore; some faces blue," *Pantagraph*, July 4, 1976
- 1.12.39 "1976 brings new meters, new rates," January 7, 1976
- 1.12.40 Packet of July 4, 1976 *Pantagraph* articles
- 1.12.41 "Homebody carves out winter avocation," *Pantagraph*, February 29, 1976

Folder 13: Program

- 1.13.1 Two copies of the McLean County Bicentennial Celebration 1976 complete program of events

Loose Items:

McLean County Historic Sites Calendar 1976