

Fall Color Tour

On a cold, cloudy October 25th, our members and family met at the Des Peres Hospital parking lot to begin our color. Our annual color tour this year had us heading to Illinois to the Kaskaskia/Cahokia Trail. The Kaskaskia/Cahokia Trail offers rolling oak-hickory forests, prairies and farmlands including historic villages and rural back roads. After crossing the Mississippi River, our first stop was at the Eagle Cliff/Miles Cemetery in Monroe County. With Halloween coming later in the week, this was an appropriate stop. This truly creepy cemetery is rich in Illinois history and is supposedly haunted. Originally known as Eagle Cliff Cemetery, it was renamed after Stephen W. Miles built a family mausoleum near the edge of the bluff in the 1850's. The area in front of the mausoleum is reportedly a Indian burial ground. The mausoleum was built at the cost of \$25,000, a small fortune for the time. There are seventeen early veterans buried here, ranging from the Revolutionary War to the Civil War plus vets from later wars. If some of our group had read about the empty mausoleum, they may have not entered it.

Our next stop was Maeystown. The town was founded in 1852 by Jacob Maeys and settled by German immigrants. Sixty significant buildings still exist. As you enter the city, you cross a one lane bridge, the Maeystown

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Eagle Cliff / Miles Cemetery
 EAGLE CLIFF GRAVEYARD WAS ESTABLISHED AS A PUBLIC GRAVEYARD ON LAND DONATED BY TRUMAN MILES.
 THE FIRST PERSON TO BE BURIED IN EAGLE CLIFF GRAVEYARD WAS RACHEL BOND, WIFE OF JUDGE SHADRACH BOND - Sr. ON MARCH 17, 1806.
 THE VAULT WAS BUILT FOR STEPHEN W. MILES, IN 1858, BY MAJOR YRASILLION FOR THE SUM OF \$25,000.
 THE MOST RECENT BURIAL WAS CHARLES LOUER IN 1978.
 THE CEMETERY IS RESTORED AND MAINTAINED BY EAGLE CLIFF / MILES CEMETERY, INC. FOUNDED IN 1994



MAEYSTOWN
 MAEYSTOWN, WHERE THREE STRAINS DESCEND THE VALLEY WAS FOUNDED BY JACOB MAEYS IN 1852 THE ORIGINAL SETTLERS WERE GERMAN MEMBERS OF THE FORTY EIGHTER MOVEMENT. THE VILLAGE IS BUILT IN MANNER WITH STRUCTURES INTEGRATED INTO THE LANDSCAPE. THE ORIGINAL STONE CHURCH HELD SERVICES INTERMITTENTLY IN GERMAN UNTIL 1843. SIXTY SIGNIFICANT BUILDINGS STILL EXIST INCLUDING MAEYS LOG HOUSE, THE ORIGINAL CHURCH, THE STONE BRIDGE, ZETTINGER'S MILL, AND MARPLE OUTBUILDINGS, BARN, AND SMOKEHOUSE MADE OF LIMESTONE, BRICK, AND WOOD. THOSE BUILDINGS BUILT IN THE MID TO LATE 1800'S FORM THE QUAINIT LITTLE VILLAGE.
 MAEYSTOWN WAS DESIGNATED AS AN HISTORIC DISTRICT IN 1978.
 DIRECTED BY THE MISSOURI HISTORICAL SOCIETY UNDER THE LEADERSHIP OF THE MISSOURI HISTORICAL SOCIETY.



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Creek Stone Arch Bridge that was built in 1881. The quaint village offered many historic buildings and shops and was a great rest stop and a good place to get a warm cup of coffee and check out the gift shop. As a town, Maeystown is listed in the National Register of Historic Places.



Our final destination was Fort de Chartres in Prairie Du Rocher. It is a French fortification originally built in 1720 on the eastern bank of the Mississippi. The first thing on the agenda was lunch. Not our traditional fare for a color tour as all brought their own food and drinks. After lunch, we toured the fort. Many of the original buildings still stand and there is a museum to tour. Prone to river flooding, the fort was rebuilt several times, further from the river, and the last time built of limestone in 1756. The fort's stone powder magazine is considered the oldest building in the State of Illinois. The fort was later turned over to the British and abandoned in the late 1780's.



Due to COVID-19 and the cold cloudy day, we only had 13 cars and trucks and 27 people. Never the less, it was a great tour and was a great way to spend a fall Sunday. Bill and Donna Bauer put much effort in making this work so well. Thanks for a great job.



Some photos by Donna Layton