

# METAMORA ASSOCIATION FOR HISTORIC PRESERVATION

## NEWSLETTER

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[www.historicmetamora.com](http://www.historicmetamora.com)



### Isch's Store

To learn more about Isch's Store, visit

[www.historicmetamora.com](http://www.historicmetamora.com)  
Built in 1880...

A building that is original to the Metamora Square is the Grocery and Dry Goods Store of John F. Isch. It is located at the corner of Menard and Partridge Streets. It was in 1880 that John A. Abersol built the east half of the building to sell groceries.



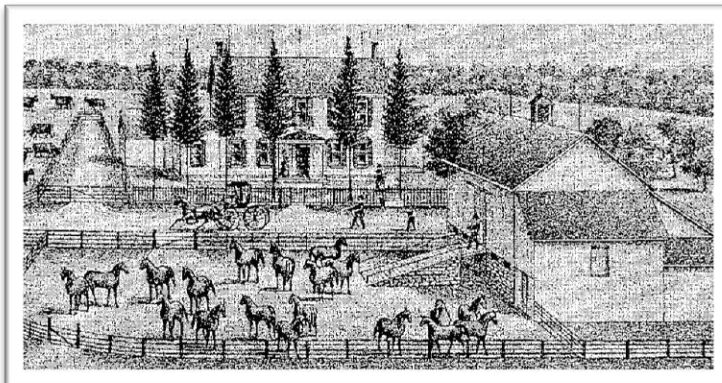
The store was known as Abersol's Corners and was built on the site in which a gun shop stood. The gun shop building was moved 200 ft. to the west to make room for the

grocery store. The gun shop was converted to a home for the Abersol's and later the Isch family. In 1893 Mr. Abersol's daughter, Mary, married John F. Isch who assisted in the store. In 1901 John Isch built an identical store to the west and sold dry goods and groceries. After Mr. Abersol's death in the same year, John Isch and his wife, Mary, took over the ownership and ran both stores. The store was renamed Isch's Grocery and Dry Goods Store. This business continued until the death of Mr. Isch in 1952. At this time, the Isch daughters, Wilma Malone and Madeline Sullivan continued to serve the community running a gift and thrift shop. Madeline passed away in 1989 and Wilma died in 1996. Wilma closed the shop in 1992 having been a fixture on that corner for over seventy years.

### The John Snyder Home...

Still standing today...

### Ever Wonder About the Barn Ramp?



Located on the old stage coach road, the John Snyder residence, about a mile north of Metamora (north on Wiedman Road), is one of the earliest houses in the area.

The land surrounding it was owned by Joseph Wilkerson as early as 1835, and most of the house is dated 1837. Some of the early part of the house was built of solid walnut; it still has walnut closets and when an old walnut porch was removed many years ago, the wood was used in parquet floors in some of the houses in the village.

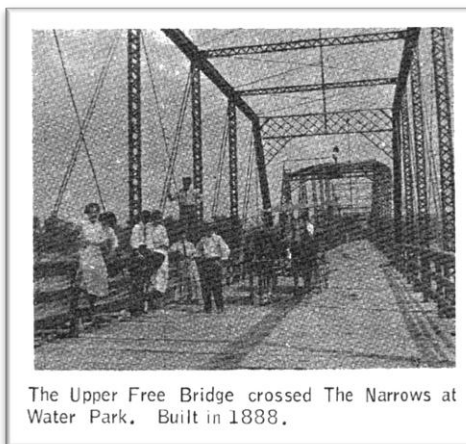
Mrs. Wilkerson told John Snyder Sr. that she could remember sitting in the window of the house so that she could watch the deer that came down to the salt lick on Partridge Creek south of the house.

The stage coach road came to the Snyder residence from the Boy's place and then went south toward Metamora, where it passed the post office at Park's Mill, known for a while as Partridge Point.

### Crossing the Illinois...

The operation of a ferry across the Narrows, between the lower and the upper lakes of the Illinois River began in 1833. The ferry crossed over to a little settlement known as Little Detroit.

In 1858 when Lincoln came to Metamora to make a speech, while campaigning for U.S. Senator, he crossed here and came to Metamora by stage coach by way to Little Detroit and Spring Bay.



The Upper Free Bridge crossed The Narrows at Water Park. Built in 1888.

Around 1888, the ferry from Peoria was abandoned when the Upper Free Bridge was built, which became the quickest way to Peoria while traveling by horse and buggy. The old Germantown road wound around 10 Mile Creek and then down a sandy lane to the bridge. The last tavern, in a chain of 5 such inns on this lane and was known as "The Snake Pit." The trip from Metamora to Peoria took several hours.

It is not known exactly when the bridge was condemned, but it was considered unsafe for travel years before its use was discontinued. The loose wooden boards created quite a clatter as the horses and wagons rode across.

### Contact Us

Questions, ideas...

We would love to hear from you. Laure Adams, President, 369-2353 or [jrfarmer@mtco.com](mailto:jrfarmer@mtco.com); Kenneth Willman, Vice President, 367-4426; Shirley Adams, Secretary, 367-2289; Jack Weddle, Treasurer, 367-4017 or 645-0963 or [jweddle@mtco.com](mailto:jweddle@mtco.com); Board members: Barbie Perry, 678-8402, [barbperry@mchsi.com](mailto:barbperry@mchsi.com), Dave Pohlman, 369-3290; [pohlman46@hotmail.com](mailto:pohlman46@hotmail.com); Lee Summer, 367-4059, 635-0259, [lsummer@mtco.com](mailto:lsummer@mtco.com)