

Historical Facts and Goals

Students attending the *Hands on History* program are exposed to many of the same chores and experiences that children had in the 1880's. When students experience these different activities, they are able to imagine and understand how it felt to live 120 years ago. The activities at Volkening farm explore four aspects of farm life: animal care, dairy production, food and grain production and preservation, and household chores.

The following points are basic factors that effected life in Schaumburg during the 1880s. Your students will be able to comprehend their historical experience more fully if they have considered and understood these points prior to visiting the farm.

1. This farm depicts RURAL life in the 1880s. Almost all modern suburbs were, in 1880 rural farming communities.
2. Most Schaumburgers were German-Americans; many were born in Germany and most spoke German as their first language, many could not speak English at all.
3. Their main sources of power included wood, wind, horses, and their own two hands.
4. These farmers raised cows to produce dairy products. Most milk was processed into cheese or butter at one of the four creameries in Schaumburg Center. A few farmers manufactured it themselves.
5. These farmers grew large amounts of several types of grain such as oats, wheat, flax, and corn. Some grains were grown to feed livestock, some were grown to feed people, some were sold to factories to make things like linseed oil, and the excesses were sold in Chicago.
6. The farm family's main sources of food were the kitchen garden and livestock. Food was preserved in the root cellar and smokehouse.
7. Schaumburg Township consisted of dispersed farms with a small commercial center- no big towns and only a handful of stores, schools, and churches.
8. Schaumburg Township had no train service.

PROGRAM GOALS:

1. To allow students to see and experience rural life during the late 19th century thereby giving students a better understanding agricultural processes that affect land use and food supplies today.
2. To provide students with a vivid experience of 1880s farm life through hands-on participation.
3. To develop inquiry thinking skills.
4. To provide a museum experience that is educational and enjoyable.

