

## The Village Blacksmith

by Henry Wadsworth Longfellow  
(1807-1882)



Under a spreading chestnut-tree  
The village smithy stands;  
The smith, a mighty man is he,  
With large and sinewy hands;  
And the muscles of his brawny arms  
Are strong as iron bands.

His hair is crisp, and black, and long;  
His face is like the tan;  
His brow is wet with honest sweat,  
He earns what'er he can,  
And looks the whole world in the  
face,  
For he owes not any man.

Week in, week out, from morn till  
night,  
You can hear his bellows blow;  
You can hear him swing his heavy  
sledge,  
With measured beat and slow,  
Like a sexton ringing the village bell,  
When the evening sun is low.

And children coming home from  
school  
Look in at the open door;  
They love to see the flaming forge,  
And hear the bellows roar,  
And catch the burning sparks that fly  
Like chaff from a threshing-floor.

He goes on Sunday to the church,  
And sits among his boys;  
He hears the parson pray and preach,  
He hears his daughter's voice  
Singing in the village choir,  
And it makes his heart rejoice.

It sounds to him like her mother's  
voice  
Singing in Paradise!  
He needs must think of her once more,  
How in the grave she lies;  
And with his hard, rough hand he  
wipes  
A tear out of his eyes.

Toiling,—rejoicing,—sorrowing,  
Onward through life he goes;  
Each morning sees some task begin,  
Each evening sees it close;  
Something attempted, something  
done,  
Has earned a night's repose.

Thanks, thanks to thee, my worthy  
friend.  
For the lesson thou hast taught!  
Thus at the flaming forge of life  
Our fortunes must be wrought;  
Thus on its sounding anvil shaped  
Each burning deed and thought.

**The Dedication of**

# The Phineas Vaughan BLACKSMITH SHOP



**at**

**Glidden Homestead**

**October 24, 2010**

**921 W. Lincoln Hwy., DeKalb, IL**  
**[www.gliddenhomestead.org](http://www.gliddenhomestead.org)**

## About Phineas T.W. Vaughan

Phineas Vaughan was a village blacksmith of DeKalb, Illinois. As an inventor and a friend of Joseph F. Glidden, he is known as the man who helped Glidden invent and develop the machine for making barbed wire. He is listed as co-inventor of that machine, patent #157,508 entitled Improvement in Machines for Making Wire Fences, dated December 8, 1874.

Glidden and Vaughan also invented together a Sulky Plow, patent # 195,119, September 11, 1877, and a Cultivator, patent #378,089, February 21, 1888.

Prior to his association with Glidden, Vaughan had patented an Improvement in Grinders for Harvester Cutters, patent #107,985, October 4, 1870, with his brother Silas O. Vaughan. By himself, he later invented another Improvement on Grinding, patent #122,083, December 19, 1871.

About June 1851, Phineas Vaughan and his wife, Phebe, set up shop on the corner of what is now known as Second Street and Lincoln Highway. At that time DeKalb was known as Huntley's Grove and was a village of about 30 people.

Vaughan later moved his shop to the north side of Lincoln Highway (then Main Street) between Third and Fourth Streets. There is still a horseshoe implanted in the sidewalk in front of that building. The original east elevation of the building is exposed towards Fourth Street and can be viewed today.

The Vaughans' first home was a rented little frame shanty 12 x 14 feet. They later built a house at 212 North Second Street in which they lived until they died. Phineas and Phebe were well known and respected in DeKalb. He was known as Uncle Phin and she as Auntie Vaughan.

Phineas died in September of 1897, and Phebe the next year, in 1898. No child of the marriage is noted. They are both buried in the family plot at Evergreen Cemetery. His grave is marked with his anvil.

## The Lore of the Blacksmith

- ◆ In Teutonic mythology, blacksmiths were magical craftsmen; and even in the Middle Ages they were looked upon as superior to other artisans, owing to their faculty of seemingly toying with fire, rendering the dangerous element subservient to their will, and manipulating iron with ease and dexterity.
- ◆ A horseshoe is hung over a door or window to shower good luck as a way to keep the devil and bad spirits from entering.
- ◆ In northeast Scotland a cure for rickets consisted of having the child bathed by a blacksmith in the water-trough of the smithy. He was then laid on the anvil and iron implements were passed over him, the use of each being asked. The ceremony was followed by a second bath.
- ◆ In south Germany and the Tyrol, when a blacksmith rests from his work on week end, he strikes with his hammer three blows upon the anvil, thereby chaining up the devil for the next week.
- ◆ In Finland, blacksmiths were held in profound respect, and the greatest luxuries were none too good for them. They were presented with brandy to keep them in good humor; and a Finnish proverb says, "Fine bread always for the smith, and dainty morsels for the hammerer."
- ◆ The Baralongs of South Africa regard the art of smelting and forging as sacred, and when the metal begins to flow, none are permitted to approach the furnaces except those who are initiated in the mysteries of the craft.
- ◆ Among certain tribes of west equatorial Africa the blacksmith officiates also as priest or medicine man, and is a chief personage in the community.
- ◆ When the western United States was being settled, it was not uncommon for the blacksmith to officiate weddings on the wagon train trail or in the small settled villages.
- ◆ In some lore, blacksmiths were said to be "dentists" but this attribution has more to do with their making "tooth drawers" (pliers) rather than actually extracting teeth.

## **Those Who Made It Possible**

### ***Funding***

Illinois Dept. of Community & Economic Opportunity  
-Bureau of Tourism  
DeKalb County Community Foundation  
Kiwanis Club of DeKalb  
Kiwanis Club of DeKalb-Kishwaukee  
Wright Elementary School  
Various Anonymous Sources

### ***Volunteers and Contributors***

Debbie Armstrong, DeKalb Co. Convention & Visitors Bureau  
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Gordon Hardware – Roger Keys – John Launer  
Jack Goodrich – Brian Tobin – Andy Small  
The Svetlana Henrikson Family  
Chris Hubbard, Blacksmith  
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Several unnamed members of Kishwaukee Kiwanis  
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Steven Johnson – Marty Scheidecker – Kathy Siebrasse  
Jim Morel – Paul Morel – Alex Morel – John Morel  
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The Students of Wright Elementary School

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## **Welcome**

The members, volunteers, and Board of Directors of the Joseph F. Glidden Homestead and Historical Center are very pleased you have joined us today and we extend our hardy welcome.

The Phineas Vaughan Blacksmith Shop at Glidden Homestead reflects a skill and trade that was at the very center of the settlement and growth of our nation. We are pleased to honor Phineas Vaughan, an innovative man who, during DeKalb's development in the 1800s, was truly the village blacksmith. His friendship and partnership with Joseph F. Glidden was instrumental in the invention of The Winner barbed wire.

## **Dedication Program 2:30 p.m.**

### ***Welcome***

*Kathy Siebrasse, Board President*

### ***The Project***

*Jim Morel, Project Coordinator*

### ***A Blacksmith Story***

*Clark Neher*

### ***The Blacksmith Club***

*Chris Hubbard, Head Blacksmith*

### ***Acknowledgements***

*Jim Morel, Project Coordinator*

*"The smith, a mighty man is he" . . .*



Chris Hubbard at work

*"And catch the burning sparks that fly" ...*



DCCF grant presentation

*"Thanks, thanks to thee, my worthy friend." . . .*

*"Something attempted, something done," . . .*



In the beginning ...



Kiwanis Club service

*"Thus at the flaming forge of life our fortunes must be wrought" . . .*

Lines from "The Village Blacksmith" by Henry W. Longfellow