



ILLINOIS
STATE
MUSEUM



Oral History of Illinois Agriculture

- Catalog Number:** ISM_04_BarkerMak
Interviewee: Makenna Barker
Interviewer: Michael Maniscalco
Interview Date: August 14, 2008
Interview Location: Illinois State Fair
Recording Format: Digital Video (.avi; original HD.M2T requiring proprietary software available)
Recording Length: 7 minutes
Recording Engineer: Robert Warren
Repositories: Oral History Archive, Illinois State Museum, Springfield, Illinois; Oral History Archive, Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library, Springfield, Illinois
Transcript Length: 7 pages
Transcriber: Tape Transcription Center, The Skill Bureau, Boston, Massachusetts
Editor: Michael Maniscalco and Christina Goings
Indexer: James S. Oliver
- Abstract:** Makenna Barker was born on January 30, 1996 in Macomb, Illinois. She now lives in Lewiston, Illinois where she, her parents and grandparents operate an 80 acre farm. She is a member of her local 4-H group which meets once a month. This year, she decided on a gardening project and grew tomatoes, potatoes, carrots, beans, onions, and squash in her grandparents' garden. She explained that she would have to make reports to her 4-H group on the progress of her project. The hardest part for her was all the weeding she had to continually do, but with the finished project she is satisfied. Next year, she plans to conduct a floral project for the 4-H.
- Keywords:** Macomb, IL; Lewiston, IL; 4-H; Garden; Gardening; Tomatoes; Potatoes; Carrots; Beans; Onions; Squash; Weeding
- Citation:** Oral History Archives, Illinois State Museum and Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library and Museum, Springfield, Illinois
- Copyright:** © 2009, Illinois State Museum and Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library, Springfield, Illinois. Permission to quote from the transcript under the fair-use provision of the copyright law (Title 17, U.S. Code) is granted provided that this source is cited.



Interview with Mackenna Barker

IMS_04_BarkerMak

Interview #1 August 14, 2008

Interviewer: Mike Maniscalco

- Maniscalco: Alright today is August 14th 2008 we are standing the 4-H building and we're standing here with Mackenna, how are you doing?
- Barker: Good.
- Maniscalco: Great, great. Now Mackenna tell us your age and date of birth to start out.
- Barker: Umm. I'm twelve I was born January 30th of '96.
- Maniscalco: Great and where do you live?
- Barker: Uh, Lewistown.
- Maniscalco: Lewistown, alright. Now we're here in the 4-H building you just got judged. Can you tell us a little bit about your project?
- Barker: Umm, this is my horticulture project. My grandma and grandpa have a garden so they helped me with it. All these vegetables are home grown.
- Maniscalco: Great. So what's special, what's the real special ones in there that you're proud of?
- Barker: Umm, this one.
- Maniscalco: That one? What is that?
- Barker: That's a golden Hubert squash.
- Maniscalco: Ok and what did you have to do to make sure it was the best?
- Barker: Well we had three of them and it was the cleanest and the prettiest.
- Maniscalco: Ok, so what makes it the prettiest? What makes it look the best?
- Barker: Well the others had bumps and bruises and everything all over them and this had the pretty little ring around it.
- Maniscalco: Ok, so when you get done with your project today are you going to bring that home and eat it or?
- Barker: Probably.
- Maniscalco: Probably. Are you looking forward to that?
- Barker: Yeah
- Maniscalco: Alright. What other vegetables do you have in there?
- Barker: Umm. Texas Super Sweet Onions, Walla Walla's, uh, Beef Masterst(?) Tomatoes, Golden Yukon Potatoes, and Kentucky Pole Beans.

Maniscalco: Now you did this as a project for 4-H, what did you have to do to make sure it was a project for 4-H?

Barker: Umm, well we enrolled for horticulture in 4-H--

Maniscalco: Ok.

Barker: Because they had a big garden so they could help me with it.

Maniscalco: Ok. And so did you have to keep track of things or...?

Barker: Umhuh, yeah

Maniscalco: What sorts of things were you keeping track of?

Barker: Keeping track of, making sure all of the vegetables were uniform and that we had enough of them to use.

Maniscalco: Oh really? Oh wow, ok. So how big was the garden?

Barker: Their garden is pretty big.

Maniscalco: Do you have any idea of the size? Give me a number or..

Barker: It's..no

Maniscalco: No, it's just real big.

Barker: It's big

Maniscalco: So was it a lot of work?

Barker: Yeah, kinda but it was fun.

Maniscalco: What was, what were some of the jobs you had to do?

Barker: Cleaning all the vegetables and the hardest part was arranging them in the basket.

Maniscalco: Oh arranging them was pretty hard. What about while they were in the garden? Any specific chores and anything you had to do?

Barker: Well we had to get them up out of there, digging them, pulling them, getting the weeds out from them.

Maniscalco: Was there a lot of weeding?

Barker: Uhummm, there was a lot of weeding.

Maniscalco: Great, what about fertilizers and things? Did you use fertilizers or..?

Barker: Not really. Grandpa and I used straw for our potatoes so that helps them.

Maniscalco: And you said you had to do a lot of weeding? Did it get pretty bad at sometimes?

Barker: Not really bad, but we just wanted to keep them safe.

Maniscalco: Now what about, you know, it rained a lot this year, was that a problem?

Barker: No, it wasn't a bad problem.

Maniscalco: Not at all?

Barker: Nuhum

Maniscalco: Really?

Barker: Not too much

Maniscalco: Oh wow. So tell us about your involvement in 4-H. What sorts of things have you done?

Barker: Umm, I was in a lot of projects this year, some of which I didn't do, because there was so many. And, umm, I use to show cattle, in 4-H. Then we quit that, so now I'm doing horticulture.

Maniscalco: Great. So what kind of cattle did you show?

Barker: Angus.

Maniscalco: Angus. And why did you end up quitting?

Barker: Well it was just a lot of work.

Maniscalco: It was a lot of work.

Barker: A lot of work.

Maniscalco: Well what was the hardest part about it?

Barker: Breaking the calves to lead.--

Maniscalco: Really?

Barker: --Trying to lead it by the rope.

Maniscalco: Really? Well how did you do that?

Barker: Uhh, put the halter on it and lead it around the yard.

Maniscalco: Oh ok

Barker: Sometimes it decided to be stubborn and didn't want to go.

Maniscalco: What would happen then?

Barker: We twisted its tail and then it went.

Maniscalco: [laughs] That works huh?

Barker: Yup.

Maniscalco: Ok. What were some of the fun parts that you miss doing about cattle projects?

Barker: Umm, I liked, I liked, cleaning them, giving them a bath actually.

Maniscalco: Oh really?

Barker: Uhuh.

Maniscalco: Good.

Barker: I liked that and brushing them.

Maniscalco: Can you tell us how you did that?

Barker: Washing them?

Maniscalco: Yeah.

Barker: Yeah. The hose. They just have special soap you use, shampoo and stuff. And you bush them out while you're washing them. Just a regular hose and soap.

Maniscalco: Great. Now what about 4-H. Is 4-H through your school?

Barker: Nuhuh

Maniscalco: No. It's after school

Barker: Yup. It's usually at 6 o'clock on Mondays.

Maniscalco: Great. And what do you do?

Barker: We have the meeting and they cover all the points and stuff of what we've done, and then they tell us what we're enrolled in.

Maniscalco: Oh, So they, so you have to give an update on your project then? On a weekly bases?

Barker: Yup.

Maniscalco: Oh wow.

Barker: It's every, well it's just once a week, once a month, I mean.

Maniscalco: Once a month, ok.

Barker: Every Monday.

Maniscalco: Well what sorts of thing would you report?

Barker: Umm, that the garden is doing great and the vegetables are very nice.

Maniscalco: Great. And what about some of the other kids? What were some of the other projects that they did?

Barker: Um, some of them did dogs in shows and cats,

Maniscalco: Really?

Barker: So they talked about their dogs and cats.

Maniscalco: That's cool. So what do you think you are going to do for your future projects?

Barker: Probably flowers. Probably horticulture.

Maniscalco: Really, and will you grow them in the garden them?

Barker: Uhhum

Maniscalco: Oh wow. That will be cool, that'll be cool. I'm sure we are going to look forward to that. So do you know how you did in the contest yet?

Barker: Not yet.

Maniscalco: Not yet. When will you find out?

Barker: Probably at nine or a little after.

Maniscalco: Ok, well great. Have you been at the fair all week?

Barker: Nope this is the first day.

Maniscalco: This is the first say? Are you going to be able to do any of the other stuff that's around here?

Barker: Yup.

Maniscalco: What are you looking forward to doing?

Barker: The conservation world.

Maniscalco: Conservation world. Why?

Barker: Umm, because my friend told me you can make candles and stuff there. And watch the people ride on the log in the water.

Maniscalco: Great. So are a lot of the kids in your school involved in the 4-H?

Barker: Not a lot, no.

Maniscalco: No? How many do you think there would be?

Barker: Probably just a handful out of my grade.

Maniscalco: A handful? Really, how about some of the other grades?

Barker: Not very many.

Maniscalco: Not very many at all? Are you, I guess you're kinda special then out of your school that you get to go this.

Barker: Yeah, our, our 4-H club is out in Checkrow(?) I'm the only Lewistown there.

Maniscalco: Really?

Barker: Umhun

Maniscalco: Wow. Do you have, who's the person in charge? Is it a teacher, is it--?

Barker: Uh, it's just a 4-H leader, Sharon Spangler(?)

Maniscalco: Ok and what is she, I mean what does she do besides run the meetings and stuff? Does she help you with our projects and stuff?

Barker: She does sometimes.

Maniscalco: What kind of things did she help you with on this project?

Barker: She said that I really should do it, because she knew my grandma and grandpa had a really big garden and it would be fun, because she's done it before.

Maniscalco: Did she give you any other advice?

Barker: No not really.

Maniscalco: She just said 'Go to it'?

Barker: Yup.

Maniscalco: Great. So did, who in your family helped you with your project?

Barker: My grandma and grandpa

Maniscalco: Your grandma and grandpa mostly.

Barker: Yeah

Maniscalco: Did your mom or your brother help you at all?

Mackenna Barker

ISM_04_BarkerMak

Barker: My mom helped too.

Maniscalco: Your mom helped too.

Barker: My brother got in the way

Maniscalco: [laughs] Your brother got in the way.

Barker: Yes

Maniscalco: Great, well thank you very much for doing this.

Baker: Thank you.

Maniscalco: They look tasty.