

TUSCOLA

Strolling Through the Past
1857 – 2007



A PICTORIAL HISTORY

Dear Citizens and Friends of Tuscola,

Thank you for your contributions towards the creation of this book. It is your history whether you have been a part of Tuscola for a short time or your ancestors have been a part of the more than one hundred and fifty years. We are indebted to many resources most especially the Douglas County Museum and Lynnita Aldridge Brown, the archives of the *Tuscola Journal* and the *Tuscola Review*, Pettitt Photo Studios, Alta Long at City Hall and Mike Boyer of Netcare Internet Services.

Our journey began over four years ago requesting and compiling volumes of text, pictures and stories. Our experience grew from complete naïveté of our task to the reality of the demands of our goal. It has been a learning experience.

Our hope is that you will enjoy this book and be kind in your appraisal. We have done our best.

A lot of you will be around for the Bicentennial in fifty years. Our wish is that you will have memories and stories of your own to add to Tuscola's history.

**Tuscola
Strolling Through the Past
A Pictorial History
1857 - 2007**

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Sponsor – **The City of Tuscola**

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Ann Arbor, MI



HISTORY BOOK COMMITTEE

Front row: Linda Brewer (TCHS Class of 1972), Pat Phillips (TCHS Class of 1955) and Judy Landeck (TCHS Class of 1962).

Back row : Alan Michener (TCHS Class of 1965), Frank Lincoln (TCHS Class of 1957) and Boyd Henderson (TCHS Class of 1958).

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CITY CLERK

ALTA LONG
CITY TREASURER



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MAYOR

J. DREW HOEL
CITY ADMINISTRATOR

MEMBER OF ILLINOIS MUNICIPAL LEAGUE

City of Tuscola

214 NORTH MAIN STREET
TUSCOLA, ILLINOIS 61953-1486
TEL. (217) 253-2112
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Dear Tuscolians,

Welcome to one hundred and fifty years of Tuscola. I am quite sure you and your families will be able to enjoy this book for many years to come.

I know I have many fond memories of my life here in Tuscola. A lot of those memories center around downtown Tuscola. I can remember my grandmother, Vangie Kleiss, looking at my jeans and telling me to go downtown to the Matinee Store and get a new pair of jeans and to have them put it on her bill. I remember going to Carpenter's Clothing Store and picking out a pair of dress slacks for the special occasions that didn't call for jeans. I still remember the taste of those cheeseburgers that I had at Nick's before my basketball games as an East Prairie Hornet. Craig Hastings and I would stop in *The Tuscola Review*, where his parents worked, to say, "Hi", before we crossed the street to order our food. I still think it was that food that made me jump so high in grade school. (Maybe the same food that stunted my growth after grade school!)

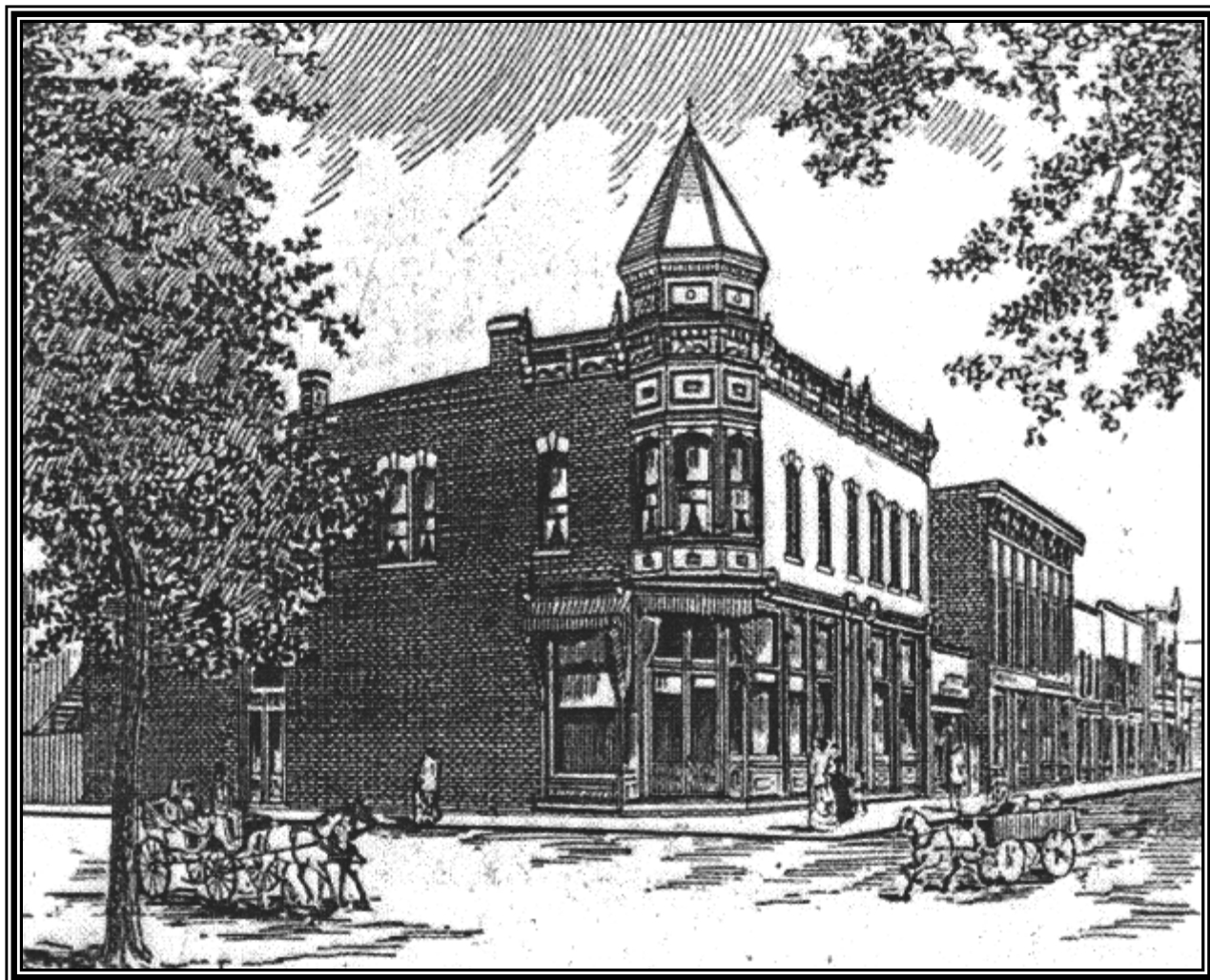
Speaking of food, what about those wedding mints that I helped my grandmother, Vangie, pick up at the corner of Main and Sale Street, at Gus Flesor's? I don't know how many weddings my grandmother catered but most of them had the mints made at Gus's!

What is truly amazing is that for all the changes that have taken place here in Tuscola, like the Route 36 and the I-57 businesses, the core of Tuscola still shines through after all these years.

Tuscola continues to be a friendly, safe, and helpful community to live, visit and shop, much like it was 150 years ago.

Warmest regards,

Daniel J. Kleiss
Mayor of Tuscola



Evans Grocery Store – Corner of South Main Street and South Central Avenue
1892

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Pee Wee Cunningham ringing bell in Ervin Park at our Nation's Bicentennial - 1976

RESOLUTION 2005-R- 4

A RESOLUTION PROVIDING FOR THE PUBLICATION AND SALE OF A "HISTORY OF TUSCOLA" BOOK FOR THE CITY OF TUSCOLA, DOUGLAS COUNTY, ILLINOIS

WHEREAS, the City of Tuscola, Douglas County, Illinois (hereinafter the "City,") has the authority, pursuant to 65 ILCS 5/11-47-1 et seq., to encourage and promote historical research within its jurisdiction and to appropriate for the publication and sale of proceedings, papers, and other documents of historic interest; and

WHEREAS, the Tuscola Sesquicentennial History Book Committee (hereinafter the Committee) has conducted research, assembled documents, and commenced planning a "History of Tuscola" book, whether by that or another title, to commemorate the sesquicentennial anniversary of the founding of the City of Tuscola;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF TUSCOLA as follows:

1. It is hereby found and determined that the publication and sale of the History of Tuscola Book by the Committee is in furtherance of the promotion of historical research as authorized by statute.
2. The Committee is hereby authorized and directed to complete the planning of the History of Tuscola Book, to provide for its printing and/or publication, and to provide for its sale to the Citizens of Tuscola and others at such price as in their judgment will reimburse the cost of publication.
3. The expenses associated with the assembling, printing, publication, marketing, and distribution of the History of Tuscola Book shall be borne by the City, and the revenues generated by the sale of said book shall be realized by the City.
4. This resolution shall be in full force and effect in the manner provided by law.

Upon Motion by Truitt, seconded by Henderson, adopted this 24th day of October, 2005, by roll call vote as follows:

AYES (Names): Cleland, Fox, Harriss, Henderson
Keagle, Seip and Truitt

NAYS (Names): _____

ABSENT (Names): _____

Approved this 24th day of October, 2005

Daniel J. Weiss
Daniel J. Weiss, Mayor

(SEAL)

Attest:

Elizabeth A. Leamon
Elizabeth A. Leamon, City Clerk

TUSCOLA CITY COUNCIL 2006



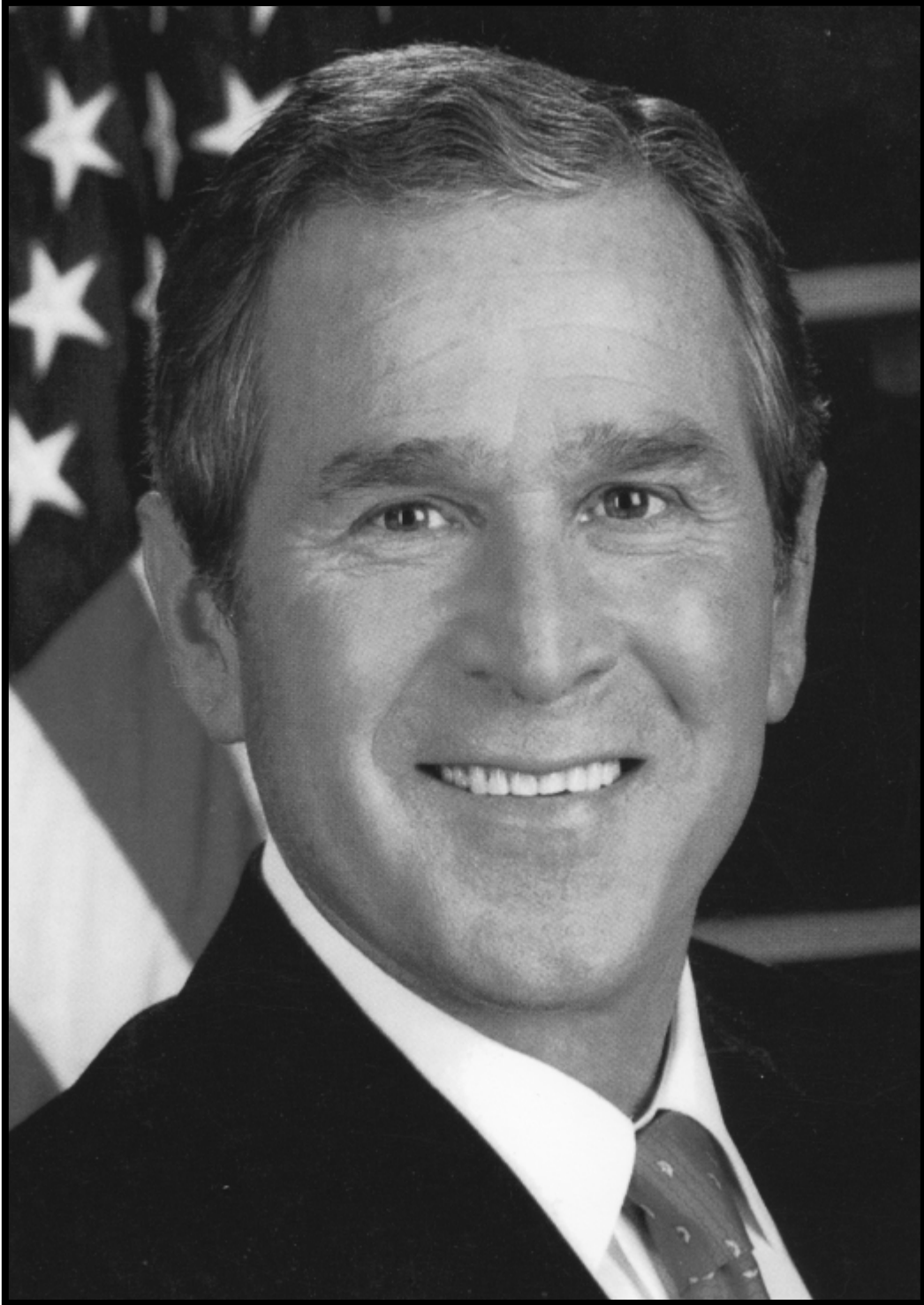
FRONT ROW

Judy Landeck, Mayor Dan Kleiss, and Phyllis Truitt.

BACK ROW

Steve Fox, Danny Cleland, Boyd Henderson,
Tim Seip, Bob Vukelich, and Clayton Harriss.

George W. Bush
43rd President of the United States



RICHARD J. DURBIN
ILLINOIS
COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS
COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY
COMMITTEE ON RULES
AND ADMINISTRATION
ASSISTANT DEMOCRATIC
LEADER

United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510-1304

May 17, 2006

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(217) 492-4062
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(618) 998-8812
durbin.senate.gov

Ms. Judy Landeck
The City of Tuscola
214 North Main Street
Tuscola, IL 61953-1422

Dear Citizens of Tuscola:

I would like to extend my congratulations to the citizens of Tuscola during their historic Sesquicentennial. Since the first settlers arrived in 1835 the city has played an integral role in the lives of its citizens as well as to all of us in Illinois.

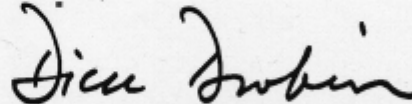
I hope the Sesquicentennial celebrations, Pictorial History Book, and remembrances of Tuscola's past and present are enjoyed by all.

Best wishes for a successful convention and for many more years of continued success.



Senator Richard J. Durbin

Sincerely,



Richard J. Durbin
United States Senator

BARACK OBAMA
ILLINOIS

COMMITTEES
ENVIRONMENT AND
PUBLIC WORKS
FOREIGN RELATIONS
VETERANS' AFFAIRS

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-1306

April 17, 2006

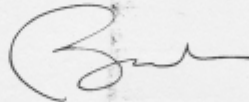
People of Tuscola
c/o Ms. Judy Landeck, Councilwoman
City of Tuscola
214 North Main Street
Tuscola, Illinois 61953

Dear People of Tuscola:

This is just a quick note to congratulate you on the City of Tuscola's 150th birthday. Initially established by the Illinois Central railroad company, Tuscola has a long history, and is a special community with many treasures. I have visited Tuscola and was impressed by the hardworking people I met in your city.

Your city has much to be proud of, from your annual harvest festival to your most famous son, Joseph G. Cannon, Speaker of the House of Representatives from 1903 to 1911. I congratulate you on your sesquicentennial and wish you prosperity in the next 150 years.

Sincerely,



Barack Obama
United States Senator



Senator Barack Obama



SPEAKER J. DENNIS HASTERT



July 13, 2006

City of Tuscola
214 North Main Street
Tuscola, Illinois 61953

Dear Friends,

I am honored to join with so many in the community in congratulating Tuscola on its Sesquicentennial anniversary.

Rich in history, Tuscola has much to celebrate - from its inception in 1835, as a cornerstone to the success of the Illinois Central Railroad, to the legacy of Joseph G. Cannon.

May the events planned in celebration of Tuscola's 150th anniversary be ones of merriment and offer to the residents of Tuscola a true sense of community.

Sincerely,

J. Dennis Hastert
Speaker

P.O. Box 625 • Batavia, IL 60510 • (630) 879-1988

Paid for by the Hastert for Congress Committee. Not printed at government expense.



TIMOTHY V. JOHNSON
15TH DISTRICT
ILLINOIS



HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20515

June 12, 2006

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in honor of the 150th Birthday of Tuscola, Illinois. This sesquicentennial celebration marks a significant moment in the history of this prairie town in rural Douglas County, Illinois.

The city of Tuscola was established to help develop and support the Illinois Central railroad. Congress granted alternate one mile square sections of land to the Illinois Central railroad and the city of Tuscola occupies that original square mile given to the company.

The town was laid out on July 9, 1857 as a part of Coles County and shortly thereafter the State of Illinois re-designated the northern section of Coles County where Tuscola is located into a newly formed county that was named after Illinois Senator, Stephen A. Douglas. The city of Tuscola has since thrived as the Douglas County seat and is a hidden gem in America's heartland.

One of Tuscola's native sons was former Speaker of the House (1903-1911), Joseph A. Cannon. Mr. Cannon is acclaimed by most historians as one of the most powerful Speakers of the House of Representatives and until current Speaker Dennis Hastert passed him on June 1, 2006, he was the longest-serving Republican Speaker in history.

This political icon of his era got his start as one of the original members of a group of fourteen men voting to ratify the city's charter on March 11, 1859. He went on to become the first State's Attorney of Douglas County and then a member of the United States House of Representatives from 1873 through 1922. On his last day in office he appeared on the first cover of Time Magazine.

Joe Cannon said of Tuscola, "My heart is buried in your cemetery; my little son for whom I had such high hopes; my Quaker mother; my brothers and their families; and memories of my struggle to a foothold in my professional life; the faithful friends. Yes, Tuscola is home to me and always will be." (June 12, 1913)

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me today in recognizing the 150th birthday of Tuscola, Illinois.

Sincerely,

Timothy V. Johnson
Member of Congress

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**ROD R. BLAGOJEVICH
GOVERNOR OF ILLINOIS**





OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

JRTC, 100 WEST RANDOLPH, SUITE 16
CHICAGO, ILLINOIS 60601

ROD R. BLAGOJEVICH
GOVERNOR

July 2007

CONGRATULATIONS

As Governor, and on behalf of the citizens of the State of Illinois, it is my pleasure to congratulate the City of Tuscola, Illinois as you celebrate the 150th Anniversary of your founding.

This is indeed a significant and meaningful milestone for your citizens, lawmakers and for the people of Illinois as a whole. It takes a great deal of hard work and diligence to create the foundation for a successful community. One hundred and fifty years ago that foundation was established, and you have continued to build upon it ever since. I am proud of each and every person who has contributed to the prosperity of Tuscola, and I have no doubt that there are many more prosperous years ahead for your community.

It is my honor to join in commemorating your *Sesquicentennial*. I offer my best wishes for an enjoyable and memorable celebration, and continued longevity for the City of Tuscola.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Rod R. Blagojevich". The signature is written in a cursive style.

Rod R. Blagojevich
Governor



STATE OF ILLINOIS

Senate Recognition

*The Illinois Senate
of the 94th General Assembly of the State of Illinois
acknowledges*

The City of Tuscola

*In Recognition of
celebrating its 150th Birthday*

1857 - 2007

*and extends its congratulations and best wishes
to all its residents on this momentous occasion.*

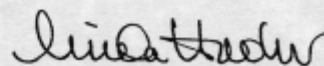
Offered by: Senator Dale E. Righter



State Senator



*Emil Jones, Jr.
Senate President*



*Linda Hawker
Secretary of the Senate*

No. 94-4592

July, 2007

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217/235-6052 (FAX)
888/235-6033 (Toll Free)



SPRINGFIELD OFFICE:
M103C CAPITOL BUILDING
SPRINGFIELD, IL 62706
217/782-6674
217/782-9586 (FAX)
drighter@consolidated.net

GENERAL ASSEMBLY
STATE OF ILLINOIS

DALE A. RIGHTER
STATE SENATOR - 55TH DISTRICT

Mayor Daniel Kleiss
City Hall
214 N Main Street
Tuscola, IL 61953

Dear Mayor Kleiss:

It is with great pleasure that I forward to you this Certificate of Senate Recognition, congratulating the citizens of Tuscola on its 150th Birthday.

I am proud to represent your community and its citizens, and hope you will never hesitate to contact me whenever I can be of assistance.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Dale A. Righter".

Dale A. Righter
State Senator
55th District

DAR/jg



Dale A. Righter
State Senator - 55th District



Representative Chapin Rose



**STATE OF ILLINOIS
NINETY-FOURTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES**

House Resolution No. 1114

Offered by Representative Chapin Rose

WHEREAS, Throughout the month of July 2007, the City of Tuscola will celebrate its 150th birthday; and

WHEREAS, The origin of the name Tuscola is a mystery but it is widely accepted that the name is of Native American origin and may be from the Muscogee Indian word for warrior; and

WHEREAS, In 1835, the first settlers came to the Tuscola area; and

WHEREAS, Tuscola was established because the Illinois Central Railroad was constructed through the area in 1851 and needed towns along its route to help finance the railroad; and

WHEREAS, A railroad charter was issued to the Decatur and Indianapolis Railroad in 1855 and a company was soon formed to promote the growth of Tuscola; and

WHEREAS, The east and west railroad did not materialize until July 9, 1873, and another east and west railroad, the Chicago and Eastern Illinois, was completed in September, 1887; and

WHEREAS, Tuscola is unique because it covers the original square mile of land granted by Congress to the Illinois Central Railroad; and

WHEREAS, Tuscola was originally laid out July 19, 1857, as a part of Coles County but residents of the area petitioned the legislature for the creation of a new county from the northern portion of Coles County; and

WHEREAS, The bill creating the new county passed the legislature on February 16, 1859, and was named Douglas County after Stephen A. Douglas; and

WHEREAS, Tuscola was incorporated on March 11, 1859; and

WHEREAS, Tuscola was the home of Joseph G. Cannon, Tuscola's most famous citizen, who served as Douglas County's first State's Attorney and also served in the United States House of Representatives from March 4, 1873, to March 3, 1891, and from March 4, 1893, to March 3, 1913, and served as Speaker of the United States House of Representatives from 1903 to 1911; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE NINETY-FOURTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, that we honor and recognize the City of Tuscola and its residents on the 150th birthday of the city and extend our best wishes for the future; and be it further

RESOLVED, That a suitable copy of this resolution be presented to the Mayor of the City of Tuscola.

Adopted by the House of Representatives on April 3, 2006.

Michael J. Madigan, Speaker of the House

Mark Mahoney, Clerk of the House