Goshen Settlement, Glen Carbon History Discussed On Our Daily Show!

by Dalton Brown, News Reporter
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ALTON/GLEN CARBON - Glen Carbon Heritage Museum Coordinator Samantha Doolin appeared on [a recent episode of Our Daily Show! on Riverbender.com](link) to preview her presentation of the Goshen Settlement before presenting it on March 9 at

the Glen Carbon Centennial Library. The presentation took a historic look at "Glen Carbon before Glen Carbon" and explained why so many things in and around the village carry the Goshen name.

"There were people here as early as 1799," Doolin said. "There had already been people here - obviously the Native Americans were all through this area and the American Bottom, and St. Clair County before it was founded as St. Clair County had settlers as early as 1699.

"There was a gentleman named David Badgley who came from , which is in , and he was a Baptist reverend and he did not really agree with the French lifestyle, so he went further north than the French settlement and saw all this untouched wilderness and deemed it 'The Land of Goshen.'"

"Goshen" is an Egyptian and biblical reference - Doolin said it made sense for a pastor to draw biblical connections and to associate the Cahokia Mounds with Egypt, having never been there himself.

"The settlement came in, Samuel Judie settled here after 1800/1801, and people really started to gather in this area," Doolin said. "As early as 1805, there was a Methodist congregation here in Glen Carbon - or the Goshen settlement - and Glen Carbon's Main Street right now is a section of that Goshen Road."

Goshen Township was established after Madison County was formalized in 1812, but before Illinois was established as a state in 1818. At one time, Doolin said the area was so large it contained parts of other counties.

"Goshen Township was so large that by 1830, it had been broken up into smaller townships, and by 1820, it had parts of Sangamon County and Macoupin County in that Goshen Township area, so it was really huge," she said.

Our Daily Show! Host CJ Nasello elaborated by listing the five townships Goshen was broken into: Edwardsville, Silver Creek, Big Prairie, Six Mile Prairie, and Wood River. Doolin then explained how the name ended up being changed to Glen Carbon.

"Glen Carbon was officially established as a village and its own city in 1892 as a mining company town for the Madison Coal Corporation," Doolin said. "Originally, they wanted to name it Carbon Glen, but one of the trustees - or it might have been the first mayor or village president - his daughter thought that sounded ridiculous and changed it to Glen Carbon, which means 'Valley of Coal.'"

She added that Glen Carbon was an ideal location for railroads not only because of the abundance of coal, but also the natural landscape of the area.

"They established Glen Carbon because of the coal preserves that were here in the soil, as with most of southern Illinois," she said. "But also because of that natural valley … it was the smoothest natural grade to get out into those bluffs, so it made sense for the rail lines to come through here - and with the coal mine, just load it in the rail line and ship it out.

"It was sort of the confluence of many different things that made this an ideal location."

To learn more about the Glen Caron Heritage Museum, including upcoming events, historic photographs, and more, visit their first-ever Facebook page. The full interview with Doolin is available below: