

Effingham County Cultural Center and Museum Newsletter

Effingham Central Business Association's Old Fashioned Christmas 2014



Santa arrived promptly at 4PM on November 29 via the Caledonia Fire Truck

Hundreds of area residents awaited Santa, and many children entered his house on the Courthouse Museum grounds to share their heart's desires. Area residents also toured the museum, some for the first time. The Museum's holiday decor was created by Museum volunteers **Susan Hoelscher, LoElla Baker, Helen Henry, Marcella Shouse, Judy Bolin, Jane Ries, and Jerry and Pat Katz.**



ECCCM Mission Statement

The purpose of the Museum is to establish, maintain, and operate a museum for the general public, and to collect, research, care for and interpret materials and artifacts of cultural and historical interest to the residents of, and visitors to, Effingham County, Illinois. Our vision is that the 1872 Effingham County Courthouse remains as an architectural gem that instills a sense of community pride and provides a venue to educate and showcase the history, art, and transportation of Effingham County. The Museum is a 501(c) 3 organization. Donations are tax deductible.

Hours

Usual hours March-November Tuesday & Saturday: 10 AM - 2 PM
Other hours by special arrangement
Closed to the general public December-February, except for special programming

Accessibility

The museum is wheelchair accessible from the east side entrance just off the parking lot. Toilet facilities that are wheelchair accessible can be found in the west exhibit room.

Collection Building

The scope of the Museum's collection is directed by its Mission Statement. Donations are accepted of objects that relate directly to the Museum's mission of collecting materials and artifacts of cultural and/or historical interest.

Board and Officers

| | | |
|------------------|--------------------|--------------------|
| President | Delaine Donaldson | |
| Vice President | Dan Wormhoudt | |
| Secretary | LoElla Baker | |
| Treasurer | Allen Westendorf | |
| Members at Large | Jerry Katz | Jane Ries |
| | Rueben Boyajian MD | Henry Poterucha MD |
| | John Keenan | |

CONTACT INFORMATION

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Email: ECCMA@gmail.com
Web site: www.effinghamcountymuseum.org
Visit us on Facebook @: Effingham County Courthouse Effingham Il

History-Themed Christmas Trees

Visitors enjoyed the beautiful trees at the Museum during the Dec. 5-6 Open House. Both of these trees were based on an Effingham County history theme, as the Museum's Mission Statement notes it "is a venue to educate and showcase...the history of Effingham County." These trees were set up in the room honoring veterans from the Viet Nam era and other more current conflicts.



The Veterans' Tree



The Hunting Tree

Volunteer **Jane Reis** developed a tree honoring 192 veterans who served the United States during World War II. Each star-shaped ornament originated with a second grader at Central Grade School, where Jane Reis teaches. A photograph of the soldier and his name graced the front of each red or white star, and the student's name was printed on the reverse side. The majority of these veterans (68%, n=119) served with the Army, followed by 35 Navy veterans (18%). Others were with the Army Air Force, Army Air Corp, Marines or Coast Guard. Only three percent were women (3 WACs and 2 WAVEs). Thirty-two of the men on the Veteran's Tree died during World War II (16.6%), and four survived captivity as Prisoners of War. Jane Reis prepared and distributed a list of all the veterans featured on her patriotic tree. The tree skirt at the base of the tree was made by volunteer **Sue Hoelscher**.

Volunteers **Linda** and **Shannon Ruholl** constructed a tree commemorating the tradition of Effingham County hunting. This tree was lit with spent shotgun shells of various gauges, and the ornaments represented legal Illinois prey animals. Included were white-tail deer buck and does, red and grey squirrels and cotton-tailed rabbits. Less commonly hunted animals on the tree were crows, raccoons, opossums, red foxes, beaver, coyotes, and skunk. Visitors learned there is no bag limit, as well as no possession limit, on shunk. Vintage hunting license copies from 1916 through 1929 also served as ornaments, accompanied by photographs of Effingham County hunters, both past and present.

Museum Traffic

Number of visitors noted on registry in 2014

| | |
|-------------|--------------|
| 12 | January |
| 89 | February |
| 91 | March |
| 102 | April |
| 401 | May |
| 198 | June |
| 131 | July |
| 349 | August |
| 248 | September |
| 130 | October |
| 242 | November |
| 82 | December |
| 2075 | TOTAL |

*These figures capture approximately 2/3 of the actual visitors. Some individuals are shy about signing in. Others say, "I was here just a couple of weeks ago and I signed in then."

In the July-December time period, 84% of the visitors came from within the confines of Effingham County, and 16% originated from outside the County.

International Visitors

Visitors from outside the USA in 2014 included citizens of Australia, Canada, Germany, Italy and Sweden.

ECCCMA Membership Application

Please print clearly.

Detach and mail to: ECCCMA, P. O. Box 324, Effingham, IL 62401

Name _____

Mailing address _____

email address: _____

Check # _____ enclosed for one year membership:

_____ **\$25.00 individual** _____ **\$ 50.00 family**

**Membership can also be obtained via PayPal by visiting the ECCCMA website:
www.effinghamcountymuseum.org**

Recent Historical Lecture Series at the ECCCM
November, 2014: The Story of Norge / Fedders



Bud Althoff told the story of his life before and during his long stint as plant manager at the local Norge/Fedders factory at the ECCCM on November 13. The 95-year-old's talk was the first in the Museum's Historic Lecture Series for 2014-2015. After graduating from Effingham High School in 1937, he attended the University of Illinois and served for over three years in the Army Air Corp during World War II. The Norge plant came to Effingham in 1944. After mustering out in Kansas City, he worked there for a short time, but soon returned to Effingham and employment at Norge. During his time with the company, Norge grew steadily. The kinds of appliances grew as well, and at its peak, it employed 2,000 workers. In the 1950s and 1960s, Norge was the largest employer in the county, with a huge economic impact. In 1956, air conditioners were added to the line, as they gained popularity among Americans. At one point in 1962, checks were cashed in \$2.00 bills, in order to examine the breadth of the economic impact of employee spending.

In 1968, the Giodorno family from New Jersey gained ownership. The factory name changed from Norge to Fedders. At that point, Fedders used about half of the city's available water. The city, state and company worked together to recycle the water used in manufacturing, which allowed other companies like Peerless and Crossroads Press to open plants as well. Economic pressures lead the owners to move most of the manufacturing process to China in 2001. Mr. Althoff stated the Chinese factory produced "garbage"-units that had to be individually checked out in a warehouse before they could be distributed in the United States. Fedders declared bankruptcy in 2003. Remaining workers left and the doors were locked. Former employees and neighbors of the plant shared some memories. One man revealed his love of the plant roof when he was a child. Security guards tried to dissuade him, but he kept a baseball in his pocket to convince the guard he was just trying to retrieve a lost object. Member **Bev Soltwedel** described joyful rides in a period costume atop a Norge float. Another audience member spoke of the nearby restaurant that served a large number of Norge employees lunch for many years. These employees were so well known that their food preferences were memorized, and plates set in front of them just after they walked in the door. The long functional life of Norge products was also celebrated; one woman was still using her green dryer, and had just discontinued using a 50+ year old refrigerator.

December, 2014: 150th Anniversary of the First Presbyterian Church



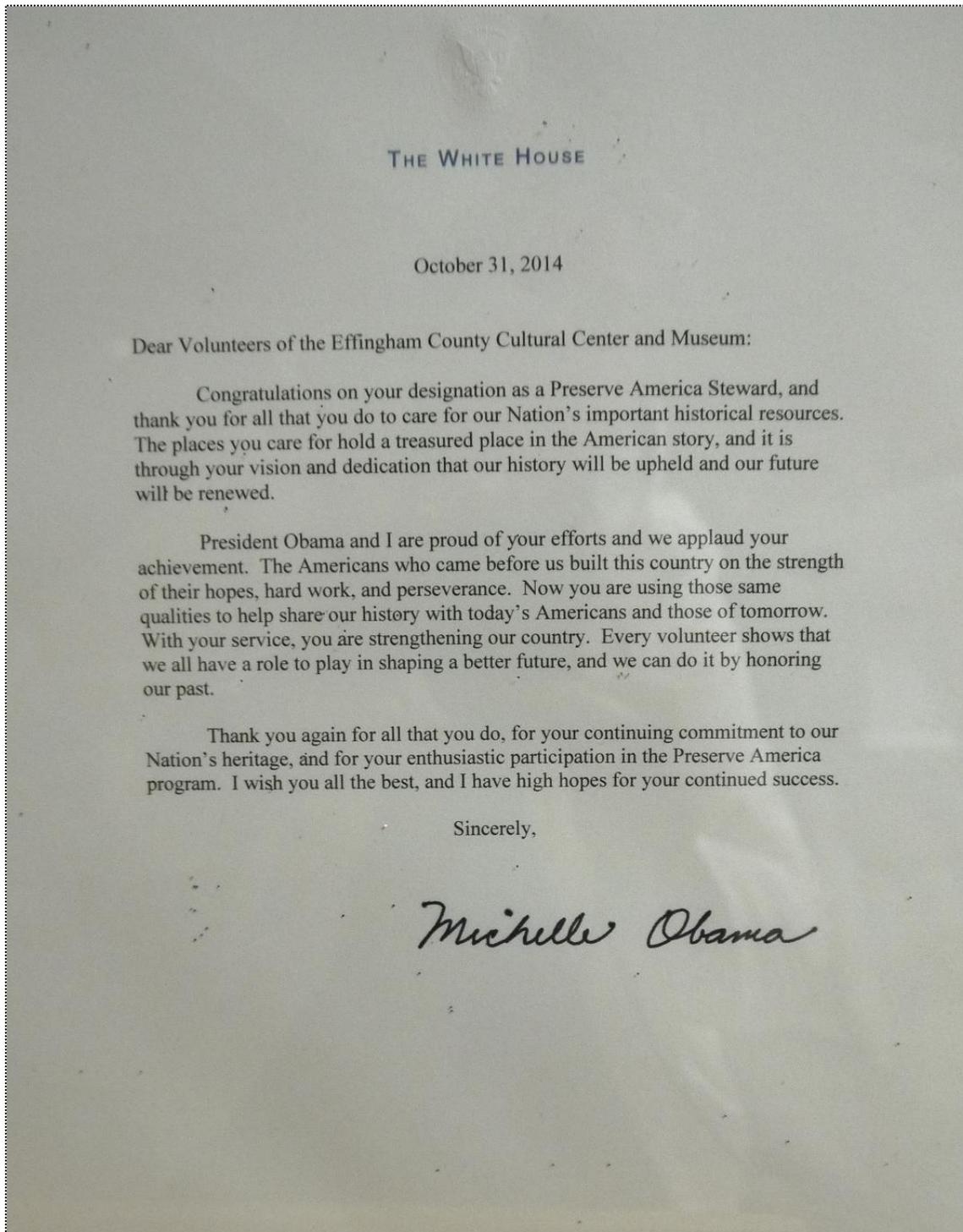
Tom Henderson shared the rich history associated with the recent sesquicentennial celebration of Effingham First Presbyterian Church, located on Maple Street. Even before the city of Effingham was created, Presbyterians were gathering to worship, starting about 1834. Tom described the formal organization of the congregation, starting with the Home Missionary minister, Reverend S. A. Bissell during the Civil War. He was the father of Lewis Bissell, the founder of the Illinois College of Photography. The first church building was erected in 1870, only to be damaged severely by a storm four years later. Mary Newcomb, the Civil War volunteer nurse who lived in Effingham after the War was a prominent female Presbyterian of that era. A second church replaced the first structure in 1909-10, and was referred to as the "rail road man's church", probably because the "Pennsy" Company had its shops in Effingham. Rev. Fred Newlin was a prominent World War II pastor. Cleo and Clyde Martin respected him so much that their son was named after him, hence "Newlin" Martin. Later pastors with long periods of service were Rev. Russell Stark (1970-1990) and the current minister, Drew Holloway who began his term there in 1991.



Rev. Holloway completed the talk by tying the church's history to Church Life Cycle Theory. He connected the dots between prominent effective leaders and positive upswings in the church's fortunes. Successful pastors like G. A. Pollack and Fred Newlin are associated with growth, but a 1950s era pastor named Coleman did less well, as his era was connected with unrest and dissension that would not subside until he moved on. As they celebrate, the Presbyterians anticipate a rich mix of worship, fellowship, and service.

"Preserve America" Recognition

The ECCCMA recently received this letter from the White House in Washington, D.C. The document notified the organization they and the Museum were to be honored as a Preserve America Steward site. This award recognizes the many hours of service rendered by the County Museum volunteers - who have scraped and polished, sorted and catalogued, framed and arranged the multiple artifacts the museum has gathered, as well as the environment in which those artifacts are displayed. When the certificate itself arrives, it will be placed in the entrance area near the Jefferson Avenue door of the Museum.



OTHER RECENT EVENTS

December 2, 2014 New Library Update



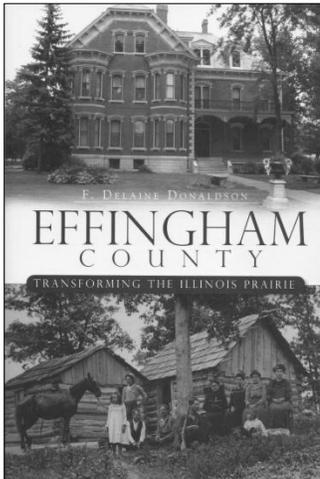
The "groundbreaking" that signaled the start of the renovation of the former Fifth Third Bank on Route 45 was very well attended. Colleagues at the Effingham County Genealogy and Historical Society are eagerly anticipating a move to this facility later in 2015, out from the current Helen Matthes Library on Market Street. The new building will contain a dedicated and well-lit room for genealogical and family history research on the east side of the first floor. The new address, just across Route 45 from the Effingham County Museum, will enhance and simplify the work of area historical researchers.

November 10-12, 2014 Civil War Veteran Luminaries



Museum volunteers created and set up 40 Civil War veteran luminaries in time for Veteran's Day, 2014. The luminaries were cut from milk jugs, and each soldier's face was identified with a name. All 40 veterans were born, lived, enlisted and/or died in Effingham County. Each luminary was lit by a red, white or blue candle during the nights of Nov. 10 and 11, in remembrance of the soldiers' Civil War service.

Available for Purchase at the Museum - Proceeds benefit museum projects



Title: Effingham County: Transforming the Illinois Prairie

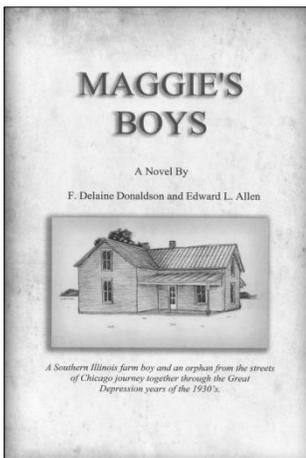
Author: F. Delaine Donaldson

Published: 2010, The History Press, Charleston, SC

126 pages 6 inch x 9 inch PB ISBN: 978.1.59629.965.8

Price: \$20.00

Description: A history of Effingham County drawn from local and other sources from the time of the Native Americans through the mid-20th century. Includes a complete list of sources. Fifty-seven period and current illustrations, including photographs from Effingham, Altamont, Mason, Teutopolis, Montrose, and Edgewood.



Title: Maggie's Boys

Authors: F. Delaine Donaldson & Edward L. Allen

Published: 2013, Kingery Printing Company, Effingham, IL

166 pages 5.5 inch x 8.5 inch PB

Price: \$10.00

Description: A fictionalized account of life during the Great Depression in Effingham County, as experienced by two teen aged boys, Frank and Pete. Original art work by local artists Vera Keplar and Jonathon Donaldson, who is the nephew of the first author.



Title: Mother Mary Ann Brown Newcomb: Effingham Civil War Nurse

Author: Linda Hatke Ruholl

Published: 2013, BeeSquared Publishing, Cincinnati, Ohio

308 pages 6 inch x 9 inch PB ISBN: 978.0615855301

Price: \$20.00

Description: Account of the experiences of a local Civil War volunteer nurse who served 1861-1865 with Grant's Army. End notes in Chicago Manual of Style. Full bibliography, index and 267 B & W illustrations.

Second Floor Renovation Progress Report



Volunteer **Larry Brown** fastens molding above the refurbished waistcoating that encircles the periphery of the second floor.



The gentle curves of the windows echo the curves of the judge's podium.



Volunteer **Steve Miller** points out years-old damage to the hardwood flooring, which has been repaired.



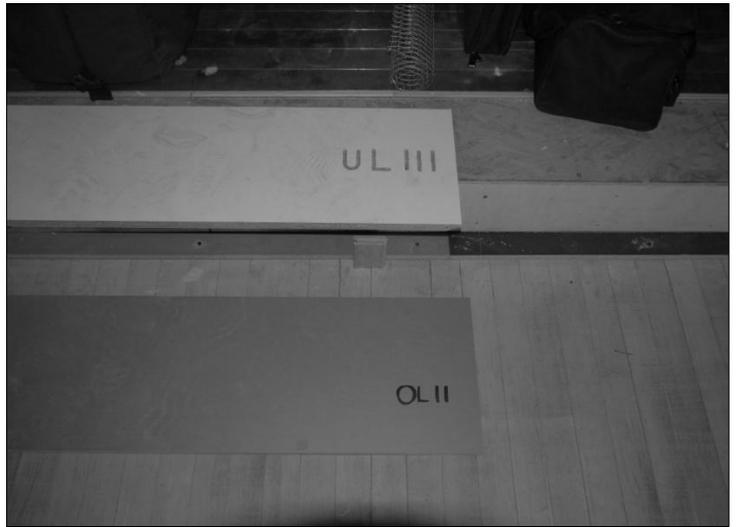
Compliance with fire codes-
new fire doors



Duct work for heating and air conditioning is in place.



Volunteer **Allen Westendorf** works on the hardwood flooring near the jury box section.



Future placements for reestablishing the railings around the courtroom have been meticulously coded and marked.



The interior surface of the dome has been smoothed, plastered and base coated. It awaits an additional coat of paint prior to the creation of a mural by a well-know Museum volunteer and local artist, Dr. **Rueben Boyajian**.

UPCOMING EVENTS

2015 Historic Speakers Series

All historic lectures are scheduled for
7:00 PM

in the Media Room at the
Effingham County Museum

January 8th



George Mette, and his son Bob Mette, of Effingham Builder's Supply, will share the history of the Mette family's 75 year old business, and their motto, "Quality Backed With Service".

February 12th



ECCMA Volunteer & President **Delaine Donaldson** will tell the tale of the 98th Illinois Volunteer Infantry and their commander, Colonel John J. Funkhouser.

March 12th



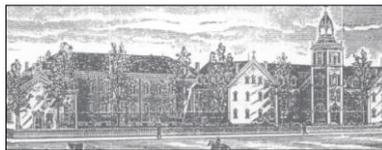
Mike Kirkhoff will explain the story of his "Return to Gut Schmarsow."

These historic lectures were arranged by Museum volunteer, **LoElla Baker**.

New in the TRAIN ROOM



ECCMA volunteer **Jo Thomas** is well on her way to creating another masterpiece. The model to the left is the first segment of a much larger representation of a Teutopolis icon, **St. Joseph's Seminary and College**.



St. Joseph's opened in 1862 and closed in 1969. The institution educated hundreds of Franciscan priests. Up until 1898, the Franciscans also provided post-secondary education to lay male college students. A portion of the original seminary tower still sits along the east-west rail road tracks, near St. Francis Parish Church in Teutopolis.

Source: Dan Niemerg, "Education in Teutopolis," in *Teutopolis Terquasquicentennial* (Privately printed, Teutopolis, IL, 2014), pages 88 - 102.