



History Matters!

Newsletter of the Effingham County Cultural Center
and Museum

Effingham, Illinois

Volume 5, Issue 2

April - May - June, 2018

CAP

Collections Assessment for Preservation

IS COMING SOON!

The Board of the ECCCMA is happy to announce that we will host a site visit this summer to assess our collection of artifacts and to examine our 1872 structure.

One assessor will look at the building from clock tower to basement. The other will examine our exhibits, our archives, and our accessions documentation. Both assessors are very accomplished, and are acknowledged as experts in their fields.

After the site visit, the collections assessor and the architect will collaboratively produce a report with recommendations. ECCCMA will in turn produce a plan to apply the suggestions and advice from the site visit document.

The Collections Assessment for Preservation Program is administered by the Foundation of the American Institute for Conservation of Historic and Artistic Works, an agency housed in Washington, D.C.

The CAP application process was competitive, and 80 awards were made nationwide in 2018. The Effingham County Courthouse Museum was one of four facilities in Illinois. The other three were much further north, near Chicago and in Rockford.

ECCCMA 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-December: Tuesday & Saturday: 10 AM - 2 PM
Other hours by special arrangement
Closed to the general public January-February, except for special programming
or by appointment

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	Jane Ries
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	Ruben Boyajian MD
	Linda Ruholl
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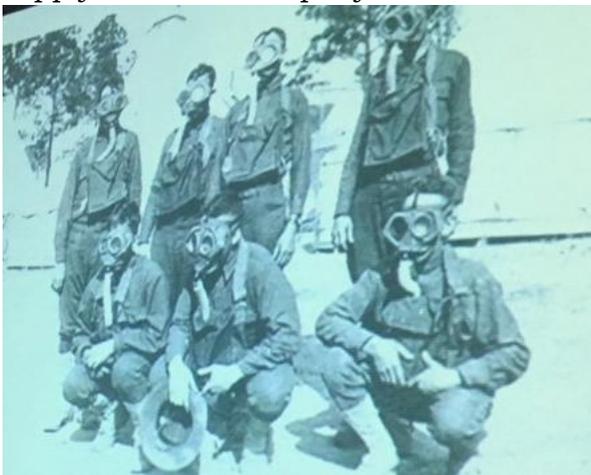
RECENT EVENT - 1ST QUARTER 2018
Historic Lecture # 3
January 11, 2018 @ 7:00 PM

In spite of the threat of cold, freezing rain, and snow, an intrepid crowd of history enthusiasts attended KIP JOHNSON'S lecture on the DIETERICH MACHING GUN COMPANY. Kip is a long-term faculty member at Beecher City High School, and his research-based passion for local history was evident. He employed his interesting collection of contemporary 1918 photographs to inform his lecture.



A "machine gun truck"

The men in the Dieterich Machine Gun Company were already members of the Illinois National Guard. They were stationed in Texas when they got word they were being sent to France. These men were surprised that they were to be sent back to prepare for that front line duty in Dieterich, Illinois. Kip shared a number of photos of individuals, and the one above of a machine gun truck. The machine guns were stored in racks in the space behind the soldier. As they got very hot when fired, each barrel was connected by a tube to a bucket of water. Kip said he could no evidence that these gun trucks made it to France with the men. Dieterich was the smallest town in the country to supply an entire company.



Gas masks issued in France



Company cook with his stove, ready to set up shop in the field

Information about the men's battlefield experiences was informed by field diaries and by maps created from memory years after the fact. The gas masks were to protect against chlorine and mustard gas. The filter in the chest pouch had to be kept wet. The unposed picture of the cook (above) with his equipment is a rarity, Kip said. Most such photos were Army-issue and featured the stove, but the man who used it.

RECENT EVENT - 1ST QUARTER 2018

Historic Lecture # 4

February 8, 2018 @ 7:00 PM



Jason Sandschafer presented the 40 year history of an Effingham icon, Niemerg's Steak House.

When you hear someone say, "we're going to Niemerg's" or "Niemerg's is doing our meal," there is never any doubt about the identity of the establishment or the caterer.

Jason explained why the restaurant is so successful, and why the catering service is seamless and seemingly effortless.



The restaurant opened without much fanfare in the fall of 1978. Gene Niemerg and Dennis Sandschafer were two young men who took a big risk to start this kind of business from scratch. High overhead costs are the typical reason family-owned restaurants fail. Overhead refers to expenses not directly related to materials and labor. That includes letting people in the community know where you are and what you do by marketing and advertising, both of which tend to be expensive. At Niemerg's, word of mouth and quality meals got the community's attention. Jason explained that in the early years, employees were instructed to park out front in the morning to make it look "busy". Later in the day, they moved their cars back further, so arriving customers would have a place to park. Over time, the menu changed, but prices stayed reasonable.



All those wonderful coconut crème and French silk pies are made on site down in the basement by experienced women who learned how to bake from their mothers.

Employees tend to be long-term, with most of them staying for nine years or more. Student workers are common, and siblings tend to follow each other into the workplace. The business supports education with an employee scholarship program.

RECENT EVENT - 1ST QUARTER 2018

Historic Lecture # 5

March 8 @ 7:00 PM

The Spanish Flu Pandemic of 1918-1920 was the topic in March. Nurse Historian **Linda Ruholl** explained why the flu was so lethal, and explored the various factors that fanned the fires of the pandemic, as well as the combination of circumstances that favored its spread. The total number of people lost is unknown, because statistics in some areas are unreliable or nonexistent.

The flu wasn't Spanish, but the label stuck because Spain made an honest attempt to report the extent of spread of infection within its borders. Spain was neutral in WWI, so had less incentive to appear strong on the international scene. The European countries involved in World War I hid the extent of their respective morbidity and mortality. TransAtlantic and transcontinental travel, especially that of large groups of soldiers, transferred the virus from one place to another with great speed.



The index case in the United States was detected at the Army's Fort Riley in Kansas in March of 1918.

The first cases noted in Illinois were at the Navy's Great Lakes Training Center on Lake Michigan in September of 1918 (see left).

Within in a week or so, the flu was all over Illinois, most likely carried down state by visitors to the naval installation.

In 1918 alone, the Spanish flu killed 97 people in Effingham County. The reason is unknown, but detailed statistical analysis supports the hypothesis that the death rate in Effingham County was higher than in any of its contiguous counties. Families were destroyed in some cases. If both parents were lost, the orphans were separated and placed with relatives, or sometime with neighbors.

In local graveyards, clusters of stones reveal a collection of deaths close together. A case in point is the three Hospital Sisters of St. Francis who died within days of each other in October of 1918. Typically OSFs are buried at Crucifixion Hill near their motherhouse in Springfield, but these three Sisters are buried shoulder to shoulder at the east end of St. Anthony Cemetery.



It is hard to comprehend the ways in which the flu deaths diminished the networks of life in the local community. Between June and December of 2018, the Effingham area lost several soldiers (stationed in the U.S. and overseas), an art teacher, a lawyer, a hotel proprietor (and his wife), an auctioneer, several farmers, a mail man, as well as many beloved children, husbands and wives, and mothers and fathers.

**March = Women's History Month
Women's Living History @ the
Effingham Public Library
Workman Room
March 22, 2018**

Right across the road from the Museum, a group of Eastern Illinois University students portrayed six very different women from our collective past. Although quite diverse, they had one characteristic in common - they made a difference in the trajectory of history. The status of women in particular, and Americans in general, was better in some way due to their efforts. Prior to coming to the Effingham Public Library, the presenters practiced their talks in front of children in the Charleston School System.



Clara Mattheesen portrayed **Ruth Bader Ginsburg** (1933-), a current member of the Supreme Court. Ginsburg encountered resistance in law school; professors told her she shouldn't be there, because she was taking up a seat that could have occupied by a male. After graduation, no one would hire her, so she clerked for a judge. She went to Sweden, learned Swedish, and did a study of Swedish civil law. While there, she discovered women were not discriminated against in the work force in that country. She returned to the US in 1965 and entered the teaching profession. She founded the Women's Civil Rights Project, and argued six gender cases in front of the Supreme Court, winning five of them. President Clinton appointed her to the High Court. She does not intend to resign. Ginsburg successfully battled cancer and never missed a day during her treatments.

Graduate student Myrtle Castro portrayed **Maria Corazon "Cory" Aquino** (1933-2009). Although she attended college in New York and studied law in the Philippines, Aquino considered herself a housewife with five children for many years. But then her husband was increasingly outspoken against strongman Ferdinand Marcos, and the dictator had him shot. After that, Mrs. Aquino ran for President, and became the first female leader for her country. She restored democracy and civil liberties to the Philippines.



Kanae Coffee, a sophomore at EIU, depicted **Virginia Foster Durr** (1903-1999), a woman born into a wealthy Southern family. At first, she took racism for granted, simply part of her day-to-day life. Her first glimmer of the facts came when her mother told her she could no longer celebrate her birthday with the black children on her grandmother's plantation. Her awakening continued when she spent time with a black classmate at Wesley. Durr was outspoken about voting rights when she and her husband lived in Washington, DC during the Korean War era. Her husband supported her efforts, and lost his job because of it. They moved back to Alabama. She worked with black and white civil rights advocates there. In 1955, she went with the black lawyer to bail Rosa Parks out of jail when Parks refused to give up her seat on the bus. Durr lived to be 96, and the flags in Alabama flew at half-mast on the day of her funeral.

Other EIU students played the roles of **Barbara Gittings** (Laure Eberle) , **Jacqueline Cochran** (Shelby Hummel), and **Varina Howell Davis** (Miranda Smith).

Creating Order with Acid-Free Storage



Volunteers with the ECCCMA work to store donated artifacts safely and efficiently. Items are accessioned, photographed, and tagged, and then placed in acid-free storage containers. The museum uses the computer program, *Past Perfect* to keep everything straight, a process that is extremely labor intensive. The term acid-free refers to paper that will not react with the contents of the container, which could cause them to deteriorate. This symbol denotes acid-free: ∞

Several work days were held over the recent winter months to organize the boxes on the third floor so that anyone looking for a particular item is able go to the right shelf, locate the box, and access the item. The third floor is entirely devoted to storage, and cannot be opened to the public for safety and security reasons.

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

Museum Upcoming Event Calendar

Friday, April 6	Ada Kepley Concert: Freddy and Francine, 7PM						
Tuesday, April 10	General Meeting 6 PM, followed by Board Meeting						
Thursday, April 26	Lincoln and His Times Celebration , 6:30 PM in collaboration with Lake Land College						
Sunday, April 29	Salute to the Greatest Generation , 2PM						
★★	★★	★★	★★	★★	★★	★★	★★
Fri-Sat, May 4-5	Artisan's Fair with Quilt Show, Second level						
Tuesday, May 8	General Meeting 6 PM, followed by Board Meeting						
★★	★★	★★	★★	★★	★★	★★	★★
Tuesday, June 12	General Meeting 6 PM, followed by Board Meeting						
★★	★★	★★	★★	★★	★★	★★	★★
Tuesday, July 10	General Meeting 6 PM, followed by Board Meeting						
Saturday, July 14	Ladies Tea - details to be announced soon!						
★★	★★	★★	★★	★★	★★	★★	★★
Tuesday, August 14	General Meeting 6 PM, followed by Board Meeting						
★★	★★	★★	★★	★★	★★	★★	★★
Tuesday, September 11	General Meeting 6 PM, followed by Board Meeting						
Tuesday, September 25	Louisa May Alcott Program in collaboration with Effingham Public Library						
Saturday, September 29	Old Settler's Reunion						
★★	★★	★★	★★	★★	★★	★★	★★
Tuesday, October 9	General Meeting 6 PM, followed by Board Meeting						
Saturday, October 13	1872 Courthouse Celebration & Grand Ball						
★★	★★	★★	★★	★★	★★	★★	★★
Thursday, November 8	Historic Lecture # 1 , 2018-2019 Series						
Tuesday, November 13	General Meeting 6 PM, followed by Board Meeting						
Saturday, November 24	Hometown Christmas						
Friday, November 30	Christmas Open House at the Museum - evening						
★★	★★	★★	★★	★★	★★	★★	★★
Sunday, December 2	Christmas Open House at the Museum - afternoon						
Tuesday, December 11	General Meeting 6 PM, followed by Board Meeting						
Thursday, December 13	Historic Lecture # 2 , 2018-2019 Series						

4th Annual Celebration of Lincoln and His Times

Medical Lincoln:

The Health of our 16th President



Thursday,
April 26, 2018
7:00 p.m.

Doors open 6:00 p.m.

Special music begins at 6:30 p.m.

Effingham County Courthouse Museum

110 E. Jefferson Ave., Effingham

Dr. Linda Ruholl, Presenter

Free Event!

Gettysburg 150th Anniversary Book will be given away

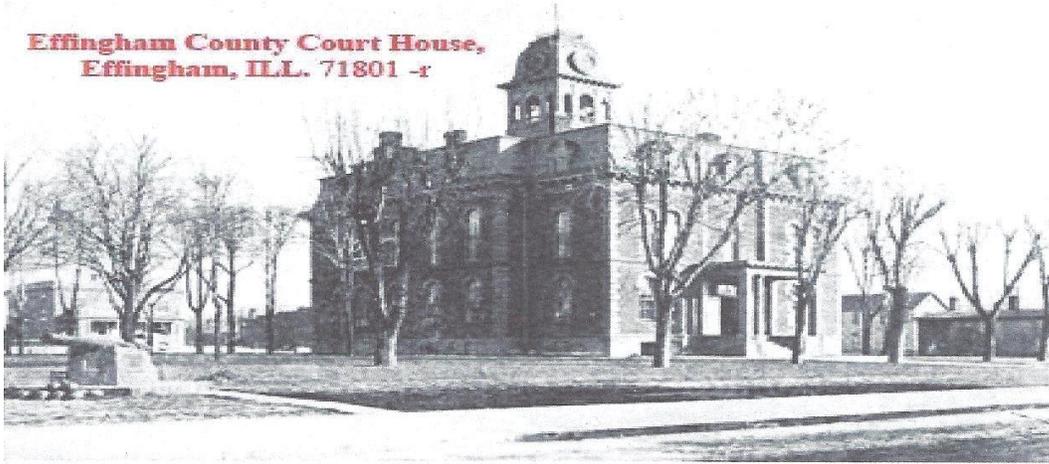
Presented by the Effingham County Cultural
Center and Museum Association and
Lake Land College.

For more information, call the museum
217-540-8655.



LAKE LAND
COLLEGE

Effingham County Court House,
Effingham, ILL. 71801 -r



Effingham County Museum Presents a Salute to the "Greatest Generation"

Date: Sunday, April 29, 2018

Time: 2-4 PM

Location: Effingham County Courthouse Museum Effingham, IL

Explore the museum from 2-3 PM

Special Presentations from 3-4 PM (light refreshments served)

WWII exhibits will feature items from the European Theater, Pacific Theater, and the Home Front

Attendees from the "Greatest Generation" will be honored. Guests may also honor the memory of those who are no longer with us from the "Greatest Generation"

Questions? Contact the museum or Jane Ries 217.821.2427 or email janeries55@gmail.com

