



History Matters!

Newsletter of the Effingham County Museum

Effingham, Illinois

Volume 9, Issue 3

3rd quarter, 2022

The ECM Exterior Painting Project



The refurbished south facade of the County Museum after the exterior was repainted. Additional information on pages 4-5.

THANK YOU to all who helped with this effort.

MISSION STATEMENT

The **Mission** of the Effingham County Museum is to preserve our Historic Register structure, to collect artifacts from county history, and to use them to educate our local and external communities, while immersed in the broader context of American history. 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 parent organization for the Effingham County Museum is the Effingham County Cultural Center and Museum Association, Inc, which is a 501(c) 3 organization.

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 Gallery 1 of the first level and in the Northwest corner of Level 2.

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
Vice President
Secretary
Treasurer
Members at Large

Delaine Donaldson
Jane Ries
LoElla Baker
Allen Westendorf
Jerry Katz
Amy Gillespie
Linda Ruholl
Phil Lewis
Dr. Ruben Boyajian, Emeritus

CONTACT INFORMATION

Street address:
Mailing address:

110 East Jefferson Ave., Effingham, IL
Effingham County Cultural Center and Museum
P.O. Box 324

Phone:
Editor email:
Web site:
Visit us on Facebook @:

217-240-2471 (leave message if no answer)
ecmgrantwriter14@gmail.com
www.effinghamcountymuseum.org
Effingham County Courthouse Effingham Ill

Board Reports

April 12, 2022 board meeting

The Board:

- *Approved the March minutes and the March Treasurer's report.
- *Learned that the dome painting on the second level now includes the Hospital Fire of 1949.
- *Heard that President Donaldson plans to make an appeal for more volunteer docents.
- *Learned that Patton Printing asked Delaine to speak about their anniversary on WXEY.
- *Heard that Delaine participated in the PAVE mapping project and gave voice to tourism goals.
- *Considered a potential donation of exhibit cases and artifacts from Cleo McManaway.
- *Decided to replace some light bulbs, with Allen, Jerry and LoElla working on the project.
- *Planned to set up for Dean Manuel's April 21 Historic Lecture.
- *Planned to host a Salem High School architectural tour with Delaine and Phil as docents.
- *Reorganized the Board with no volunteers coming forward to replace Delaine in the President's role.
- *Considered that November 12, 2022 is the 10th anniversary of the Museum's opening.
- *Heard Jane's report of the Museum's loan of 39 Depression era artifacts for EHS history student study.
- *Inspected a confidential Essential Knowledge of the Museum notebook constructed by Jane.
- *Heard information from Phil about National Road photographer Henry Bregstone at the ALPM.

May 10, 2022 board meeting

The Board:

- *Approved the April minutes and the April Treasurer's report.
- *Learned of changes R/T the *Effingham Daily News* phone numbers, proof reading and publication.
- *Heard that a Ruffner reunion planned at the museum has been rescheduled.
- *Heard that the Effingham County Board is cooperating with the painting project.
- *Learned that the Farmers Market starts the last Saturday in May.
- *Heard that a relative of Lewis Bissell visited and donated some of his photos.
- *Heard a report about SAHS history teacher Kelly Thoele and senior students visit on May 10.
- *Learned Jane will visit the Netherlands' American Cemetery and will put flags on local soldier graves.
- *Heard that Jason Roepke and his crew will start painting the building's exterior about May 23, 2022.
- *Considered the Ham Jam events on the courthouse grounds of July 22-23, 2022.
- *Learned that the Artisans' Fair has moved to the Tuscan Hills Winery.
- *Heard a current Membership report.
- *Learned that the repurposed fire resistant files will soon be moved from the basement to the first level.
- *Heard reports about the Back-to-Business grant and Landmarks Illinois grant.
- *Heard that Linda is doing a talk and poster at Evergreen LTC for Nursing Home Week.

June 14, 2022 board meeting

The Board:

- *Approved the May minutes (taken by Phil Lewis) and the May Treasurer's report.
- *Heard that the work to paint the building exterior began May 23.
- *Considered the collaboration among Roepke Painting, county tourism, county sheriff's office and Farmers Market during the painting project.
- *Heard a report about PAVE from Delaine, including information about the Heart Theatre.
- *Noted thank you letters from Kelly Thoele and from the EHS history department.
- *Learned that the Illinois Attorney General's office returned a year-old check and requested a replacement.
- *Decided to collaborate with EPL to host Debra Miller portraying Beatrix Potter at the Museum on September 27; Lisa Huston is the EPL contact.
- *Heard Delaine again express the need for more docents to provide assistance to visitors and to manage liability; he will ask for volunteers via email.
- *Discussed the potential for restarting general membership meetings.
- *Viewed a new wall exhibit on the first level featuring a letter from a salesman describing the hospital fire.
- *Heard a plea for ideas about dynamic programming.
- *Accepted a quote from Matt Stead to change out the current bulbs to LEDs on Levels 1 and 2, and discussed potential lighting changes on Level 3.
- *Discussed plans for the upcoming November 10th anniversary open house.

The ECM Exterior Painting Project



The Mission of Effingham County Museum is, in part, to **preserve** the building itself. Our Structures Management Policies explicitly call for building preservation.

Painting of exposed surfaces is a classic means of exterior **preservation**, and the building had not been repainted for many years.

The project to renew the paint began on May 23 and concluded on June 25, 2022. The work was carried out by Jason Roepke and his crew of Dave Roepke Painting.

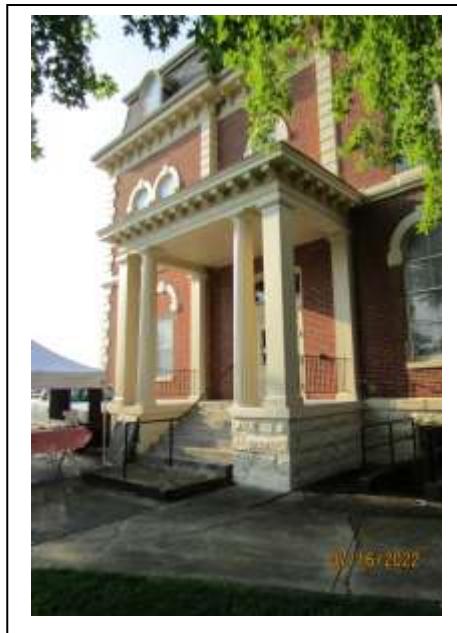
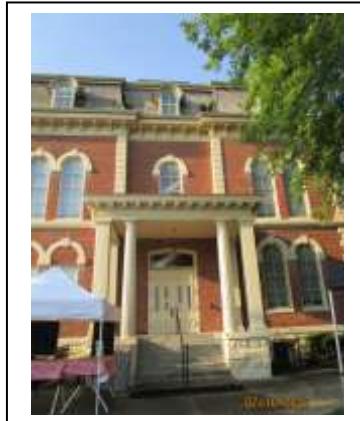
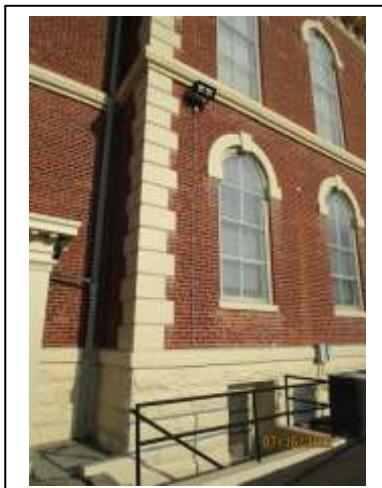
There were 5 or 6 days of delay due to rain, but otherwise the project proceeded in a linear fashion. On each of these days, from two to five workers were present, and more than 500 man hours were devoted to the project. Sherman Williams paint was applied. The color was custom matched to the color already present.

The first phase of the project involved appropriate cleaning with a washer to remove dust and dirt and other debris. After that, irregular areas were manually scraped and sanded. Caulking smoothed out irregularities. A coat of primer was applied next, followed by two coats of paint. Because of the size of the building, much of the work was completed "in the air," on one of three lifts. The capability of these devices ranged across a reach of 40, 60 or 130 feet.

The cost of the project was \$75, 760. Because the building is owned by the county and leased to the Museum, prevailing wage law applied. The Museum is a 501 (c) (3) organization which is supported primarily by dues, donations and an endowment. Two specific grants were directed to the project. The Midland Bank Foundation contributed \$10,000, and Landmarks Illinois granted \$4,000. Many Museum Association members also helped, with donations coming in from 70 individuals and local businesses.

The City of Effingham and the County of Effingham collaborated to ensure the success of the project. For example, police vehicles normally in the center of lot overnight moved over closer to Route 45. The truck and lift stored on the parking lot were positioned so they did not interfere with the Farmers Market on May 28, or on June 4, 11, 18 and 25. Roepke Painting and the Effingham County Museum are deeply appreciate of this high level of cooperation.

Additional Views of the ECM Exterior Painting Project



2nd Quarter 2022 MUSEUM PAGES



Effingham County Museum historians create a new Museum Page every other week. These are the columns from the April-May-June issues of the *Effingham Daily News*.

DELAINE DONALDSON

April 18, 2022

The Brightest Spot in Town

The history of the Heart Theatre was reviewed, highlighted by a colorful photo of the theatre while it was still in operation. Various ads from the 1940s illustrate the central place it had in the community at the time.

June 13, 2022

The Letter

Delaine shared his research based on a letter written by a salesman immediately after the 1949 hospital fire. In graphic detail, this man described what he saw, heard, and smelled during that experience.

PHIL LEWIS

May 16, 2022

Fred Benke: ICP Graduate and Local Postcard Publisher

This article contains information about Phil's entry into historical research, and then segues in Fred Benke's story as a locally-educated photographer who specialized in structures suitable for postcards.

JANE RIES

April 4, 2002

People in Watson - Photos by Art Rice

This article included photographs of specific individuals living in Mason and included information about their life and times.

May 30, 2022

Effingham County and the Great Depression

Jane shared information from her deep dive into the County's history during the hard times of the 1930s, and placed them within the context of the American experience during those years.

LINDA RUHOLL

May 2, 2022

Come See This History at the Effingham County Museum

This article contained multiple photographs of objects in the new 2022 exhibits at the museum, and provided some background information about them and their sources.

June 27, 2022

Effingham County and the Codification of Medicine

Linda used the life of James Newton Matthews of Mason as an exemplar to illustrate how the Illinois legislature created a legal standard for medical practice that was eventually emulated nationwide.

Home Extension Tour March 17, 2022



The ladies in these photographs are members of the University of Illinois Home Extension group who attended their annual state convention in Effingham on March 17, 2022.

They were very happy to be meet in person again because Covid restrictions kept that from happening in 2021. The group came to the Museum for a tour conducted by Phil Lewis and Delaine Donaldson. This activity is an example of the ways the Museum fulfills our mission to **"educate our local and external communities while immersed in the broader context of American history."**



2023 Membership Drive

The Museum Association had 284 paid up members from 194 households as of June 30, 2022.

We experienced a 6% increase in membership this year, THANK YOU!

The 2023 year's membership drive started July 1, 2022.

If you paid your membership on or after July 1, 2022 it counts toward 2023.

If you would to renew now, use the form below.

Mail the form with your check Allen Westendorf, Box 324, Effingham, IL 62401

Please print your email clearly, so that you can receive the quarterly newsletter and announcements.

Membership renewals will be mailed to all Association Members with a valid address.

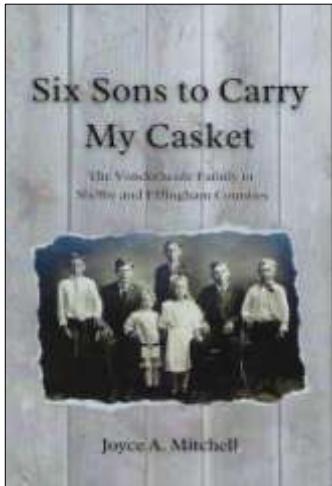
All 2022 members will receive a mailed copy of the 2021-2022 Annual Report, which is being compiled at this time.

	Friends of the Courthouse Annual Membership	<input type="checkbox"/> BUSINESS - \$ _____
DATE	FOR CALENDAR YEAR	<input type="checkbox"/> INDIVIDUAL - \$25.00
NAME	<input type="checkbox"/> FAMILY - \$50.00	
ADDRESS		
CITY	STATE	ZIP
PHONE	CELL	
E-MAIL		
Payment method: <input type="checkbox"/> CASH <input type="checkbox"/> CHECK # _____		Payable to ECCMA
Would you like information on becoming a donor?		<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Effingham County Cultural Center and Museum Association, Inc. P.O. Box 324, Effingham, IL 62401~ www.effinghamcountymuseum.org		

The group is a 501(C) 3, not-for-profit organization which exists exclusively for charitable and educational purposes. As such, donations are tax deductible.

Book Review

by Nurse Historian Linda Ruholl



Six Sons to Carry My Casket: The Vonderheide Family in Shelby and Effingham Counties

by

Joyce A. Mitchell

Precision Printing, Lenexa, Kansas
©2022

\$15.00 + postage



Email contact for Joyce:
olathemitchell@att.net

As I am an avid reader and a long-time collector of books, I've examined the work of many local authors. It's fun to explore the various genres and styles reflecting their craft. I've always appreciated it when the Effingham Public Library allows authors to share their latest production at the library, because it gives me a chance to put a face with the author's product. Joyce did a local book signing in Shumway, so I didn't get to see her face, but she is depicted above during a visit to Genealogy section of the library.

This book by Joyce Mitchell is unique. Across all the similar works I seen locally since the 1970s, this volume is the best. Joyce straddles several boundaries - this is a book of genealogy and also a family history. In addition, it is a well crafted qualitative collection of lived experiences of the Vonderheide family.

I reflected for awhile on my experience with the book before I asked Joyce's permission to review it in this public venue. I also shared with her my rationale for claiming her book has superior merit. Here's why I rate it highly:

***Footnotes are present.** Joyce cites her sources. Almost every page has at least one or two citations that tell the reader where she got the information stated in the narrative. If the source is a book or newspaper, Joyce directs us where to find it. If it is an interview, she tells us who she talked to and when. The same is true for letters. This supports the research concept of **VALIDITY**. Validity refers to truth; is this information the "real deal"; is it accurate? Some historians refer to this concept as INTERNAL CRITICISM.

***Multiple sources are cited.** Joyce recognizes that sources don't always agree. If there are variations in two or three pieces of printed material or in several voiced recollections, she tells us that. Accuracy about past events is hard to attain in every place and at all times. So the family historian and/or genealogist do the best s/he can. This approach addresses the research concept of **RELIABILITY**. Some historians label it as EXTERNAL CRITICISM.¹

***The writing is clear and approachable.** Joyce never bores the reader; the narrative flows smoothly from page and page and from chapter to chapter.

***The book is indexed at the end by surname.** There is probably nothing more stressful to an engaged reader at the end of a book than the lack of an index; it means you will have to search for a surname page by page. Stress raises the blood pressure and it is possible that unindexed books are one of the less recognized factors underlying hypertension among family history enthusiasts.

***The book includes family group sheets on pages 175-194.** Family group sheets are a big deal for genealogical researchers. Joyce is allowing multiple descendants from various branches of the Vonderheide clan to benefit from literally years of her research - complete with footnotes, to enhance their **VALIDITY**.

***The book is nicely packaged and is enhanced by a professionally produced cover.** The cover design was done by Maria Vonderheide. Maria collaborated with the Effingham County Museum in 2017 when she was part of a CEO class in high school. She produced and sold a coloring book, *Effingham County Sites and Sights*, and later donated 10% of the proceeds to ECM. Museum volunteers are very happy to see Maria's progress as a designer, as well as her continued interest in local history.

¹ Bridgid Lusk, "Historical Methodology for Nursing Research", *Image, Journal of Nursing Scholarship*, Vol 29, No 4 (1997): 353-359.

Repurposing Fire Resistant Files at ECM



Several factors came together at the Museum recently that led to an interesting, but challenging, repurpose/recycle project. The first factor was the need for at least one fire-resistant file. In our journey toward accreditation, we've created policies that direct us to safeguard important accession papers and financial documents in a safe place unlikely to be destroyed by a natural disaster or human hands. A fire resistant file (FRF) is such a place.

The second factor was cost: Fire resistant files are expensive devices; lighter weight U-line versions run \$1650 each, and heavier Victor Fire Master files are \$2999 each. Neither of those prices includes freight.

But then it turned out that there were several older fire resistant files in the basement, which had been donated to the Museum about ten years ago when a local bank was updating its equipment. These had been set down on bricks in the basement storage by museum volunteers, and those folks agreed on one thing: the files were extremely heavy and they didn't want to ever move them again. There was no record of their weight, but similar files weigh in

at 350 - 550+ pounds each, depending on the manufacturer.

Thus three factors came together: a need, high costs and great weight. After consideration, the museum volunteers tentatively decided to repurpose the used files and efficiently move them to the first level of the museum. Numerous concerted efforts by national and local business and a couple of volunteers made it happen.

***Sierra**, a customer representative of the files' manufacturer, was able to assure us that these older files did not contain asbestos, an unfortunate and dangerous constituent of some older FRFs.

***Justin**, a locksmith from Barlow's, replaced the lock on one file and obtain keys for the other.

***Mark**, of Bierman Welding, modified a proposed design for a set of rolling platforms and produced them at his business. This was necessary because no current commercially-available platform could safely support files of this size and weight.



***Menards** of Effingham had in stock the 360° wheels to be installed under the platforms, rated to support the FRF's weight, as well as capable of locking after the file was situated.

*That lead to the challenge of getting the files from the basement to the first floor. One Museum Association member and a friend of his took on the task. **Corey J. Dasenbrock** (left) and **Luke Althoff** (R) maneuvered the files onto the rolling platforms and brought them upstairs. Both of these men are military veterans. They served in the U.S. Army and both were discharged with the rank of E-5. Corey did one tour in Iraq and Luke served there twice. Each attended Southern Illinois University-Carbondale. Both men are charter members of Freedom 68, a local 501 (c) (3) that strives to meet the unique needs of the post-Vietnam era veteran population. The Museum honors all veterans and now has more than one reason to thank these two men for their service.

*Our Structure Management Coordinator, **Lo Ella Baker**, took on the task of making the files presentable and removing all traces of their stay in the basement. She was successful, as you can see in the upper left corner.

*All of this was accomplished at a cost of less than 1/10th of similar new files.

Non-accessioned Research/Teaching Resources

As part of the Collections Management Policy *4.9 Special Collections* we adopted in 2021, ECM committed to making some non-accessioned resources freely available to students and adults on days and times when the museum is open.

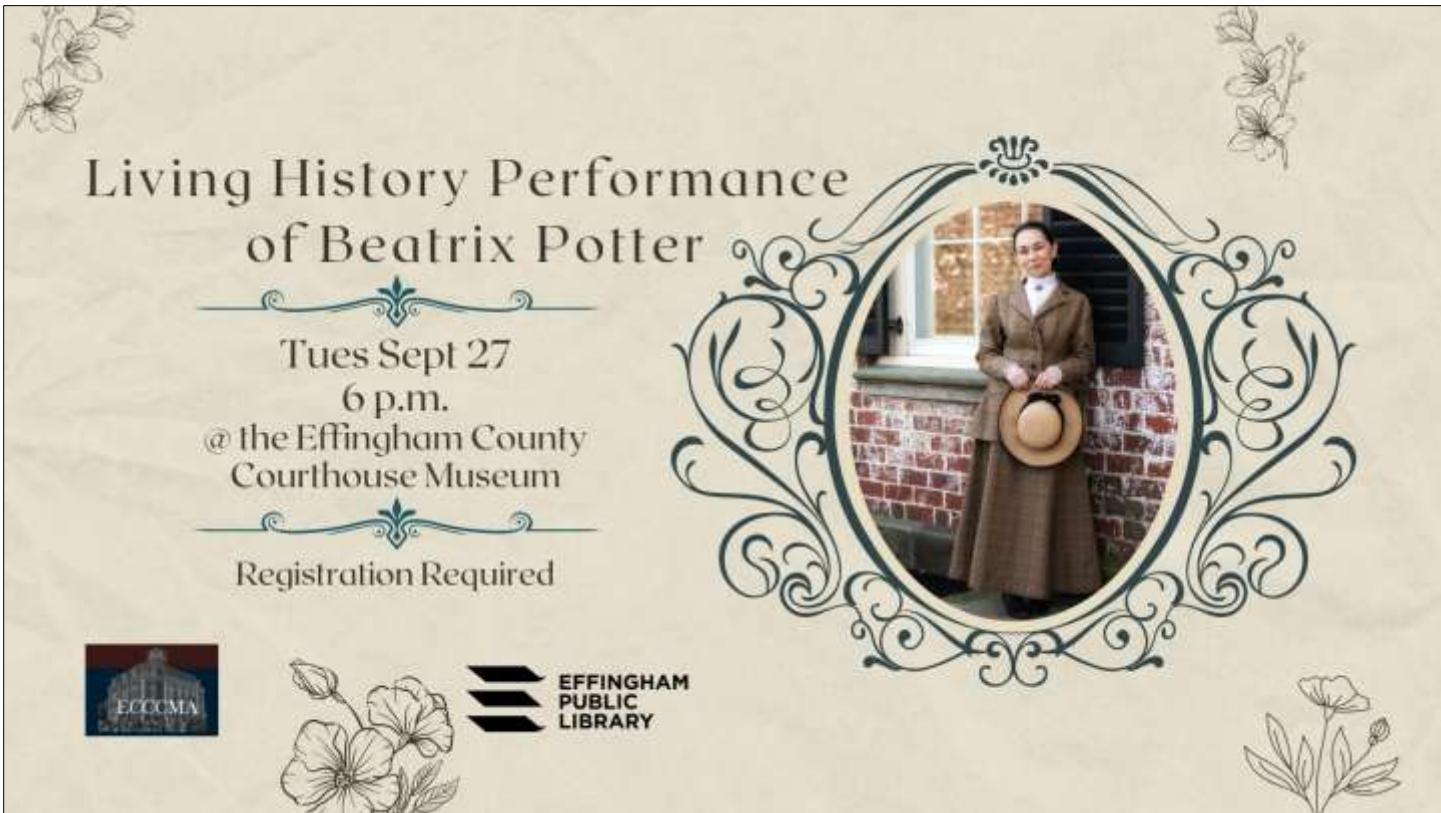


Topics in this file set are listed below. Most are associated with Effingham County. However, our Mission is to educate "within the broader context of American history", so some contextual files are also present. The files are stored in an unlocked drawer in Fire-Resistant File Cabinet #2 (pink) on Level 1, north end.

Contents will be updated frequently - the best way to determine "what's there" is to come see for yourself.

Files available - 08.01.2022		
<i>Effingham material</i>	<i>Effingham material</i>	<i>Contextual material</i>
Altamont	Illinois College of Photography	9-11
Beecher City	Mason	Civil war
Dieterich	Montrose	Grant, US
Doctors of Effingham County	Railroads	Gulf war
Effingham, City of-general	St A fire adult death certificates	Kennedy, JF and family
Effingham, County of-general	St A fire publications	Lincoln, A.
Effingham schools	Shumway	Vietnam war
Fitch, Albert	Teutopolis	
Edgewood	Watson	

Upcoming Program on September 27 at ECM



In order to register for this free program, go to:

<https://effinghamlibrary.libnet.info/events>

There is a limit of 40 participants

Background information about Beatrix Potter:

This well-loved English writer lived from 1866 to 1943. She is well known for her books and illustrations of characters like Peter Rabbit. Like Peter, she loved her parents very much. But, also like Peter, she was persistent in her efforts to get around barriers, particularly societal strictures that kept women from working and contributing to science. Her botanical drawings are still in use today. Come learn about Beatrix's multiple creative contributions to literature, science, toys and games.

Background information about Debra Ann Miller, who will portray Beatrix Potter:

Deborah is a seasoned actress with more than 30 years of experience performing in front of live audiences, as well as on TV and in films. She is a graduate of theatre department at Michigan State University. Since 1997, Deborah has toured with Michael Krebs' *With Lincoln Production*. She has performed at the Lincoln Museum in Springfield and at the US Capitol.