

McLean County Museum of History



On the Museum Square

December 2016-January-February 2017

Lincoln and McLean Clubs Celebrate 25 Years in the Old Courthouse

On November 2, the McLean County Museum of History's McLean Club and Lincoln Club members celebrated the 25th anniversary of the McLean County Historical Society's move from the third floor of the John McBarnes Memorial Building into the Old Courthouse.



Guest panelists recount the history of the 1991 Museum move. (photo by Carol Koos)

Although the "new" Museum's permanent exhibits did not open to the public until spring of 1992, the restored courthouse opened its doors to the public in 1991 with an open house on the first weekend of November.

The 25th anniversary celebration included a slideshow of photographs from the renovation and the reminiscences of five people involved in the move: Executive Director Emeritus Greg Koos, who had taken over the reins from Barb Dunbar; Curator Susan Hartzold, whose first day of work at the Museum fell on Moving Day (September 29, 1991); Archivist George Perkins, who also represented the McLean County Genealogical Society; Museum Board member John B. Meek, whose Felmley-Dickerson Company contracted the renovation work; and Museum Board member Emeritus Nancy Froelich, who was chair of the McLean County Board when it voted to end all government operations out of the Old Courthouse and invite the Historical Society to move in.

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Farming in the Great Corn Belt Opens March 25

CHALLENGES, CHOICES, & CHANGE:

FARMING IN THE GREAT CORN BELT



OPENS MARCH 25, 2017

See story on page 10.

With thanks to our newsletter sponsor:



Christmas at the Courthouse

December 3 from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. See story on page 2.

On The Museum Square

Quarterly Newsletter

December 2016-January-February 2017 Volume 48, Number 4

Produced by Deb VanAntwerp and Jane Flanders Osborn



McLean County
MUSEUM of HISTORY

and

Cruisin' with Lincoln on 66

Visitors Center



200 N. Main St., Bloomington, IL 61701

Phone 309-827-0428 Fax 309-827-0100

www.mchistory.org

Located on the corner of Main (Rt. 66)
and Washington Streets,
the Visitors Center and Museum entrance
is located on Washington Street on the
south side of the Museum Square

HOURS

9 a.m. - 5 p.m. Monday, Wednesday, Thursday,
Friday, Saturday

9 a.m. - 9 p.m. Tuesday (Free)

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Brad Briney, Second Vice President
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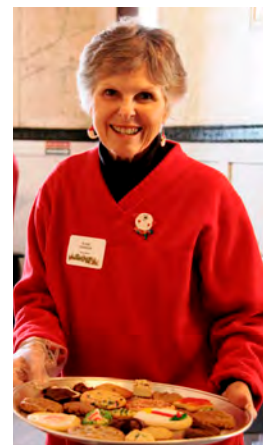
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Join Us for *Christmas at the Courthouse*



As early as the 1850s, the influx of German immigrants to the area helped grow the Bloomington-Normal community's enthusiasm for Christmas celebrations. Today, the Museum's *Christmas at the Courthouse* has become one of the community's most popular annual Christmas events. Each year on the first Saturday of December, the Museum's celebration kicks off when the Bloomington-Normal Jaycee's Christmas Parade ends at the foot of the Museum's steps and Santa comes inside for some warm holiday cheer.

On Saturday, December 3, after the Jaycees Parade, families can take free photos with St. Nick, make crafts in the Museum galleries, sample homemade cookies and listen to music in the Governor Fifer Courtroom, and enjoy both Board member Mike Matejka's modern toy train and face painting provided by Wild Style, traditional favorites with local children.

Performances this year will feature the acoustical styling of Marcos Mendez, the Bloomington High School Quartet, the Sunshine Bells, Loving Missionary Choir, Sound of Illinois Chorus, storytelling with Dr. Mike Lockett and the Tale Spinners, and the State Farm Employee Activities Association Chorus (SFEAA).

Enjoy the Christmas celebration from 11 a.m. until 4 p.m. This event is the Museum's way of thanking our mem-

bers, friends, and sponsors for their continued support of the Museum's mission. Without our members and our sponsors, we would not be able to provide free educational programs to 8,200 local students and senior citizens each year. Join us for this opportunity to celebrate another successful year of preserving and sharing local history education.

For holiday shoppers looking for unique gifts, the *Cruisin' with Lincoln on 66* Visitors Center has locally-sourced books, food, art, apparel, and collectibles; plenty of Route 66 and Lincoln-related items; and other gifts that are sure to delight. Also be sure to look for our new McLean County Museum of History Christmas ornament!

Looking for more holiday fun? On Friday, December 2, from 5 p.m. until 8 p.m., the Museum will also offer free admission during the Downtown Bloomington Association's "Once Upon a Holiday" event. Enjoy celebrity readings of "Twas the Night Before Christmas," with retired State Farm executive Willie Brown at 6 p.m. and WGLT's Laura Kennedy at 7 p.m. Marcos Mendez will also perform live music and refreshments will include adult eggnog, hot apple cider, and cookies.

Contact: 309-827-0428
www.mchistory.org

End of Year Gifts:

A Perfect Time to Make Charitable Donations with Lasting Impact

With 2017 just around the corner, we want to thank our members, donors, and friends for supporting the many programs, exhibits, and lectures that make the Museum a valuable cultural and educational resource for the community. This has been a banner year for the Museum. January saw the opening of our first new permanent exhibit gallery, *Making a Home*, followed closely by the opening of *Abraham Lincoln in McLean County* in May. In June we announced at our annual *History Makers* Gala that the *Extending Excellence* campaign committee had surpassed its \$3 million fundraising goal. We also saw an increase in the number of Museum visitors and people served through our educational programming. It is only with the generous support of our members and friends that these things were possible!

Now is a great time to consider a year-end tax-deductible gift, particularly if your membership lapsed during the *Extending Excellence* capital campaign. It is our annual fund that pays for day-to-day expenses and allows us to serve more than 8,200 local students and senior citizens every year. This is also a perfect opportunity to visit our special website and make a one-time donation before December 31, 2016 or set up membership with a recurring weekly, monthly, quarterly, or annual gift to the Museum.

Timing is paramount if you'd like to deduct your year-end gift come April. Please date your check on or before December 31, 2016 and mail it with a postmark on or before that date. Gift checks mailed with that postmark will be counted for 2016 regardless of when they are received. You can also hand-deliver your check and enjoy a quiet break during the holiday rush by visiting our galleries and Library. Your gift by credit card can also be processed very easily via our website on or before December 31, 2016. Credit card gifts sent via postal mail will be processed on the date they are received, so please allow plenty of time to mail them before the deadline.

Planned giving is also an ideal way for Museum supporters to have a lasting impact. The Museum now offers charitable gift annuities for those who want to support the Museum while establishing a reliable retirement income supplement. Contact us for more information. As with any major financial decision, consult your financial advisor to decide if a charitable gift annuity is right for you.

Contact: Lauren Lacy at llacy@mchistory.org or 309-827-0428

Website: mcmh.networkforgood.com

Your Gift Can Be Doubled with the State Farm Matching Gift Program

We'd like to remind you of State Farm Companies Foundation's recent change to its charitable gift matching program. As of 2016, the foundation will now match charitable gifts to all eligible non-profits, including the Museum.

If you're a State Farm associate who's made a donation to the Museum in 2016, please log onto cybergrants.com/statefarm/gives to request a matching gift of up to \$1,500.

If you have any questions about the process, we'd be happy to help.

Contact: Lauren Lacy at llacy@mchistory.org or 309-827-0428

Friend, Foe, or Who Knows?: The History of US Foreign Relations

Mark your calendars now for the Museum's fifth Presidents' Day Open House on Monday, February 20, 2017 from 12:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m.

In this age of smart phones, airplanes, and the 24-hour news cycle, it can be easy to forget just how big the world really is — and that the U.S. is only one small part of it. So come prepared this Presidents' Day 2017 to travel the globe as we explore the history of U.S. foreign relations!

From George Washington to Barack Obama, the story of U.S. diplomacy is one of diverse challenges, tough choices, and lots of change. What countries does the United States count amongst its friends? What about its enemies? Join in the festivities to find out more!

Family-friendly activities will include a mock election, crafts, games, and some sweet treats to help celebrate the nation's past presidential leaders and their foreign policies. This event is free and open to the public. All ages are invited to attend.



Contact: Hannah Johnson at education@mchistory.org or 309-827-0428

Movies Under the Dome: **Young Mr. Lincoln**

What to do this Valentine's Day? Looking outside the box...of chocolates? Invite your valentine via a romantic custom conversation heart (may we suggest, Go dome with me?) to the Museum for the third installment of *Movies Under the Dome!* Join fellow love birds and Lincoln enthusiasts on Tuesday, February 14 at 7:00 p.m. in the Museum's Governor Fifer Courtroom for a showing of the 1939 classic *Young Mr. Lincoln*, directed by John Ford and starring Henry Fonda as the nation's future sixteenth president. This program is free and open to the public.

Set in the 1830s, the film explores the tragic story of young Mr. Lincoln's first love — Ann Rutledge, his later decisions to move to Springfield and become a lawyer, and the struggles he endured defending two brothers against a murder charge in his very first trial.

Although a work of historical fiction, many of the key people in Lincoln's life, including the future First Lady Mary Todd (played by Marjorie Weaver) make an appearance in the film.

Prior to the program attendees will be able to explore the Museum's newest



permanent exhibit, *Abraham Lincoln in McLean County*. The exhibit outlines Lincoln's work as an attorney in McLean County and on the Illinois Eighth Judicial Circuit, illustrates his pivotal role in the anti-slavery movement and the formation of the new Republican Party in Illinois, and details the circumstances of his nomination for president in 1860.

The exhibit also features revealing reminiscences from the residents of McLean County that highlight the lasting connections Lincoln made with the people of this community. Rarely seen, Lincoln-related artifacts from the Museum's archival and object collections will also be on display before and after the film. During a short intermission, local historian and author Guy Fraker will speak briefly about Lincoln's connection to McLean County and the lasting impact its residents had on him. Other activities for the evening will include a Valentine's themed photo booth and a drawing for prizes.

To kick off your romantic evening under the dome, the Museum encourages you to dine at one of the variety of restaurants in Downtown Bloomington before the show. Make a reservation at your favorite eatery or try a new one!

Young Mr. Lincoln is rated PG. Soda, bottled water, and popcorn will be available for purchase before the film.

Contact: education@mchistory.org or 309-827-0428

History Reads Book Club — 2017

History Reads is a joint program presented by the McLean County Museum of History and Bloomington Public Library. This program is free, open to the public, and is regularly held in the Governor Fifer Courtroom on the second floor of the Museum. Copies of each book will be available for checkout at Bloomington Public Library or may be requested via interlibrary loan through your local public library.

February 7:

Lincoln's Forgotten Friend, Leonard Swett by Robert S. Eckley

May 2:

Labor, Loyalty, & Rebellion: Southwestern Illinois Coal Miners and World War I by Carl R. Weinberg (chosen to commemorate the 100th anniversary of the United States entering WWI)

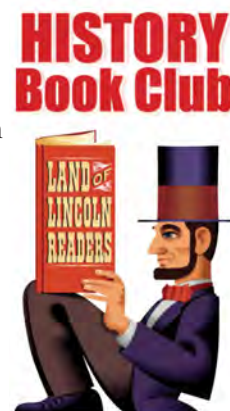
August 1:

Funk of Funk's Grove: Farmer, Legislator, and Cattle King of the Old Northwest, 1797-1865 by Helen M. Cavanagh

November 7:

Dime Novel Desperadoes: The Notorious Maxwell Brothers by John Hallwas

- All meetings are held on Tuesdays at 7:00 p.m.
- Attendees are invited to explore the Museum before or after the meeting.
- Free parking is available at the Lincoln Parking Deck located one block south of the Museum on Front Street.



Contact: 309-827-0428 or education@mchistory.org or Karen Moen at reference@bloomingtonlibrary.org

Local Preservation Group Helps Restore Priceless 1873 'Bird's Eye' View of Bloomington

International Questers, a nonprofit organization dedicated to the study, conservation, and preservation of historical objects, donated \$1,500 to the McLean County Museum of History for the restoration of a priceless 1873 "bird's eye" view of Bloomington. Half the donation came from Illinois State Questers and the other half from the local Jesse Fell Chapter, the latter raised by way of garage sales. This significant donation to the McLean County Museum of History was undertaken by the Jesse Fell Chapter to commemorate its 50th anniversary.

The Questers Chapter and the staff of the McLean County Museum of History recognized this important gift in a ceremony held on Monday, October 10 in the Museum's Governor Fifer Courtroom.

"The Museum had long wished to restore this beautiful print, but as a not-for-profit organization we have limited funds for such work," said Museum Librarian Bill Kemp. "With the generous support of Questers we are now able to ensure that this invaluable historical print will be enjoyed by many generations to come."

"This project also shows how important it is for local heritage organizations to partner together to accomplish amazing things," added Kemp.

The total restoration cost was \$1,920, with the Museum paying the \$420 difference. Timothy Kent Gallery & Framing of Bloomington then helped reframe the bird's eye under non-reflective, "conservation" glass that will protect it from harmful ultraviolet light. An additional \$250 donation from the Questers' Jesse Fell Chapter helped the Museum pay for the reframing.

What is a bird's eye?

The Bloomington bird's eye, drawn by Augustus Koch and published in 1873 by the Chicago Lithographing Co., measures 26 by 36 inches.



Beth Whisman, with Jesse Fell chapter of Questers Kaye Andrews, Sarah Kellum, Elaine Dunbar, and Beverly Jennings. On right are Questers Terri Clemens, Pat Hiser, Kathy Whitworth, and Elsie Schalk with Bill Kemp.

Wonderfully detailed "bird's eye" views of towns and cities were all the rage in the latter half of the 19th century. Drawn by itinerant artists and then sold as commercial prints, these aerial views offered hometown residents a unique perspective of their community—much like Google Earth does today. Published as poster-size lithographs from hand-drawn sketches, they showed not only the street grid, but also each and every house, school, church, factory, commercial block, and railroad depot, many realistically rendered with regards to building size and architectural style.

The recently restored bird's eye offers a wealth of information about Bloomington in 1873. On the city's west

side, points of interest include the surface operations of the McLean County Coal Company, the old fairgrounds, and the Chicago & Alton Railroad shops. To the east one can see the David Davis mansion (completed just a year before) and the Illinois Central Railroad (today's Constitution Trail.) On the north side there's Franklin Park, as well as an accurate depiction of the 1869 Civil War memorial that once occupied its center. If you own a Bloomington home that dates to 1873 or before, chances are that a good likeness of it appears in this lithograph.

The 1873 Bloomington's bird's eye, which for many years hung in the Museum's Library/Archives Reading Room, was beginning to show its age. During its 143 years it had been subjected to the damaging vagaries of sunlight, humidity, mold, possible water damage, and "off-gassing" from the old frame's wood backing.

"Pre- and post-restoration photographs of the bird's eye offer dramatic evidence as to the success of this project," Kemp said. "Much of the staining and spotting



Questers members point out details in the newly-restored lithograph.

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Second Annual Route 66 Miles of Possibility Conference a Success

The second annual Illinois *Route 66 Miles of Possibility* conference, held October 20-23 in Bloomington-Normal at the Museum and the Ensenberger building, was a resounding success, with over 90 in attendance.

The conference was chaired by local Route 66 preservationist Terri Ryburn and organized with a steering committee of local and regional Route 66 enthusiasts and tourism professionals. Ryburn said, "The committee was proud to showcase the Bloomington-Normal community to visitors from as far away as Texas and New Mexico. They worked hard to put together a conference that appealed to a wide variety of people."

This year's presentations focused on Route 66 economic development, preservation, promotion, research, and education. Conference session topics included: leveraging tourism; public arts promotion; building a tourism product in Pontiac, Illinois; rescuing "muffler men"; restoration of key sites; writing public history; and untold stories of American Indians and Route 66.

The *Miles of Possibility* conference is meant to bring about an understanding of the value of our local and national Route 66 heritage and to preserve sites and stories that connect us to this history. The positive feedback from this four day event was a strong indication that collaboration between multiple

communities along the Mother Road is imperative to the survival of this national resource.

Bill Kelly, executive director of the Illinois Route 66 Scenic Byway, based in Springfield, described the event as being very effective and said, "The McLean County Museum of History was a great setting for presentations and discussions about the business of Route 66... Communities that attended are now better equipped to more fully take advantage of the unique asset that is the Mother Road."

The conference was also a great opportunity to showcase the Museum, network with other tourism professionals, and share all there is to see and do in the McLean County area, both during the day and at offsite activities each evening. Ryburn noted, "Many attendees commented on the beautiful, historic buildings where the conference was held, including the Museum, the Ensenberger building, and the Normal Theater."

The first *Miles of Possibility* conference was held in Edwardsville, and the next conference will take place in Joliet. The intention is for the conference to be held annually, and to rotate its location between the three (Red, White and Blue) corridors of Route 66 in Illinois.

We would like to especially thank our volunteers and our conference sponsors: State Farm Insurance Company, The



Ellie Alexander gives a talk on Pontiac tourism. She noted that co-operation from the top down is the key to success in attracting visitors.



Aimee D. Awonohopay of American Indian Alaska Native American Tourist Association (AIANTA) visits with internationally acclaimed Route 66 author Jim Hinckley.

Bloomington-Normal Convention and Visitors Bureau, the Town of Normal, the City of Bloomington, the Illinois Office of Tourism, the Museum staff, and the conference committee. Geoff Ladd, Lawanda Henry Matson, Samantha Morehead, Steve Nalefski, Ed Quiano, William Thomas, and Jeff Woodard were the committee members.

Local Preservation Group Helps Restore Priceless 1873 'Bird's Eye' View of Bloomington

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are gone and the restored print is so much clearer and brighter. It's a night-and-day comparison, really."

The restoration work was completed by the Graphic Conservation Company. Situated in Chicago's South Loop, this nationally recognized firm operates a state-of-the-art, 8,000 square foot paper conservation laboratory.

High-profile projects undertaken by the Graphic Conservation Company include restoration of a copy of the

13th Amendment signifying the end of slavery and signed by President Lincoln; a copy of the Gettysburg Address; Frank Lloyd Wright blueprints; and an 1895 work by French artist Henri de Toulouse-Lautrec.

Questers is an international organization founded in 1944. Today there are approximately 11,000 chapters in the United States and Canada with 41 chapters throughout Illinois.



Librarian Bill Kemp discusses the restored work with members of the Jesse Fell chapter of Questers International.

The bird's eye will soon be re-hung in the Museum Reading Room for all to enjoy.

2017 Evergreen Cemetery Walk

This year, 3,357 people attended the *Evergreen Cemetery Walk*. Of that, 1,836 students and chaperones attended free of charge because of our event sponsor, Evergreen Memorial Cemetery, with additional support from CEFCU, Museum Board member emeritus Willie Brown, and the generosity of Museum members.

Doug Williamson (center) is one of over 40 volunteers who make this annual event possible. They research, serve as box office volunteers, guide the tours, assist with creation of the guide script and character biographies, and even bake cookies! This event would not happen without them.



This year's unofficial theme for the Evergreen Cemetery Walk focused on monuments designed and crafted by two of this year's feature characters; Hamer Higgins and Jacob Jung, Sr. Portrayed by Kevin Wickart and Nick McBurney respectively, Higgins and Jung's firm, H.J. Higgins and Co. (later incorporated as Higgins, Jung, & Kleinau Co.) created thousands of "monuments of character" for anyone at any price. Their monuments can be found all over Evergreen Memorial Cemetery and in other cemeteries throughout Illinois, the Midwest, and even as far away as Canada.



Students listen to John Jackman (played by J. Michael Grey), a career railroad man and 15-year superintendent of machinery for the Chicago and Alton Railroad Shops, who was also an amateur actor performing in plays to raise money for local organizations.



The 2016 Evergreen Cemetery Walk staff and cast hope you enjoyed the event and look forward to seeing you next year!

Ethel Murray (portrayed by Claron Shbarrieff) was an activist and community leader. Her early work life was spent cleaning businesses and homes for many local families including Hazle Buck Ewing, but Murray later became a nutritionist through the University of Illinois, spent at least 10 years working for the Department of Children and Family Services, and was a lifelong member of the Civic Women's Club. Murray's story was preserved in much of her own words because of the Bloomington-Normal Black History Project. Among the many documents, records, and photographs contained in this collection, are dozens of oral histories of African American community members such as Murray. The Museum is fortunate to be the repository for this trove of historical information.

Meet the New Visitors Center Assistant



Maureen Blair

What does your position involve?

As assistant to the Visitors Center Manager, I am on duty Thursdays, Fridays and Saturdays. I work with the volunteers to welcome guests, provide information, and assist in keeping the Gift Shop stocked.

How did you end up at the Museum?

I started volunteering more than ten years ago at the recommendation of a friend, Pat Barr. She had never steered me wrong in the past, and obviously didn't in this case either.

What's the difference between working here as a volunteer and as paid staff (other than getting paid, of course)?

My scope of understanding; things that I had a view of as a volunteer I now understand from a different vantage point.

What's the most interesting aspect of your job?

Right now, just about everything, since I am learning new things every day. But if I had to pick one thing, I would have to say working with the volunteers and getting to know the people that I have interacted with mostly in passing over the years.

What's the biggest challenge facing the Museum today?

Meeting the expectations of the diverse people that come into the Museum.

What are you most excited about when it comes to the Museum's future?

I am excited about the diversity of people who come through our doors... I don't always feel prepared for them so if we can get to the point that we serve a broader group more easily I would love that!

What do you like to do to "kick back" and have fun away from work? I enjoy spending time with family; my partner Al and I both come from large families and spend a lot of time in the Chicago area. I also always have some kind of project that I am working on and right now it is a gingerbread house for Festival of Trees.

Intern in the Library/Archives



Kylie Eastman is a junior History major at Illinois State University. During her fall semester internship in the Stevenson-Ives Library/Archives she spent much of the time organizing and inventorying the Edgar and Rachael Lundeen Collection. Kylie is from the small town of Manteno, Illinois, which is about ten minutes north of Kankakee. She went to Manteno High School and was a part of the band, choir, and show choir. She took Tae-Kwon-Do for eight years before leaving for college, and still tries to attend classes when she goes home. Kylie has her second degree black belt, so watch out!

In her free time she likes to sing, read, and play her ukulele—"badly," she tells us! Kylie's cherry red ukulele is named "Hanni." She is also part of an all-women's music fraternity at ISU,

Sigma Alpha Iota.

Kylie enjoys young adult science-fiction novels, and wants us to know that she doesn't like "sappy chick books because they bore her to tears." Kylie is also an animal lover who has two cats and dogs at home. She loves all things Disney and is not ashamed of it. She is very close with her family and they go to Disney World at least once a year. "It's our happy place," she reports. Her favorite movie? It's a tie between *The Boondock Saints* and *The Three Musketeers* (the one with Kiefer Sutherland and Charlie Sheen.)

Kylie has enjoyed her intern experience so much that she'll be back with us next semester, doing work on our photography collection with Digital Humanities Curator Torii Moré.

Lincoln and McLean Clubs Celebrate 25 Years in the Old Courthouse *(continued)*

Together, the panel recounted how staff, volunteers, and donors all worked together to make the move a success, from the initial \$2.5 million campaign to save the Old Courthouse, to the renovation process, to the enormous task of moving the Museum's entire collections and the Genealogical Society's records into the new building. Attendees also had an opportunity to add their own recollections. Meek laughed as he described the mess workers found when they removed carpeting from the tile floors. Perkins added to the story, telling of volunteers and staff who used toothbrushes to clean between the tiles where glue had been used beneath the carpet.

Attendees included longtime Museum friends, board members, and supporters such as Adrienne Osborne Ives and Museum Board member emeritus Barbara Franklin Allsup, who used the opportunity to remember some of those who are no longer with us but were instrumental in the campaign to turn the Old Courthouse into the Museum's new home. Allsup specifically applauded the memory of Bruce Callis and Timothy R. Ives, while Koos and Meek remembered the work of Fred Dolan, Elmo Franklin, and Harriet Fuller Rust. Each of these generous Historical Society members contributed lead gifts that helped start the renovation project. The names of all the donors who made the move possible are forever honored on a plaque on the east side of the building. A similar plaque will be installed after the final exhibit gallery opens following the ongoing *Extending Excellence* capital campaign.

This silver anniversary year isn't the only milestone Museum members have to look forward to — next year will mark the 125th anniversary of the foundation of the McLean County Historical Society in 1892. Celebration plans are already under way — keep an eye out for more information!

Ashael Gridley's statue wearing proper safety gear.



Creation of a doorway between the library stacks and the reading room.

Volunteers Speak, Part 2: *10+ Years with the Museum*

Several months ago we shared feedback from some of the 38 volunteers who have served at the Museum for more than a decade. They greet and assist our patrons; help to preserve, document, and display our collections; and provide quality service in every department of the Museum. We are so fortunate to have them on our Museum team!

We had asked for their perspective on volunteer service at the Museum—why they do it and what it brings to them. This issue, we are sharing the last of that feedback.

Why did you begin volunteering at the McLean County Museum of History?

I was drawn by the architecture of the building more than the history. I've gotten more into the history and enjoy

finding out new things about McLean County and Illinois.

► *John S.*

I was working on my "family tree."

► *Vicki O.*

What keeps you coming back?

It's my job!

► *Vicki O.*

The friendships I've made here, a sense of pride I've found in the Museum and its mission, and a renewed interest in history.

► *John S.*

What's your favorite volunteer activity? Why?

Working at the reception desk/Visitors Center, because I get to meet new people.

► *John S.*

Raiding the candy in Deb's office! ;-)

► *Vicki O.*

How does volunteering at the Museum affect your life?

People think I know "everything" about McLean history!

► *Vicki O.*

It keeps me active and involved.

► *John S.*

We welcome you to give your own input, whether you've been a volunteer for many years, a few months, or you're just considering a volunteer position with the Museum. Write or email us (or stop by Deb's office to nab some candy) and let us know what you think! Feedback is the best way for us to keep up with the needs of the program as the Museum and Visitors Center change and grow.

Farming in the Great Corn Belt Opens March 25

Mark your calendars today for the grand opening of the Museum's next new permanent exhibit, *Challenges, Choices, & Change: Farming in the Great Corn Belt*. Housed in the Franklin Family Gallery on the first floor, the exhibit will open to the public on Saturday March 25, 2017 and will feature artifacts, images, video, digital interactives, and hands-on activities to connect visitors to McLean County's rich farming and agriculture history. Festivities will begin at 1 p.m. with a talk by the exhibit's guest curator Don Meyer, followed by a ribbon cutting and refreshments.

Meyer and Museum Curator Susan Hartzold collaborated on this unique



exhibit that tells the story of farming as it was done by McLean County farmers over many generations. Meyer is a veteran McLean County agricultural extension adviser and lecturer at Illinois State University's Department of Agriculture.

"There was so much that we wanted to explore. Condensing nearly 200 years of farming into this one gallery was very challenging," Meyer said.

Hartzold noted that another challenge was how to tell a global story on a local level. "It was very important for us to tell McLean County's own farming story, so a tremendous amount of time and effort went into identifying images,

experiences, and stories of farmers across the area. The result is that we are able to reveal the difficult choices they had to make in order to be productive and profitable," Hartzold said.

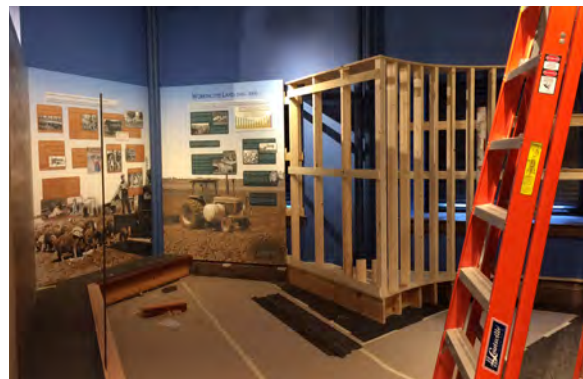
The exhibit incorporates a number of hands-on and digital interactives to engage visitors. The Museum's Digital Humanities Curator Torii Moré helped Hartzold define how technology could be used to show large equipment and explain sophisticated concepts while being efficient with the gallery's limited space. "The digital interactives interspersed throughout the exhibit do a good job of visualizing and demonstrating the drastic changes farming has gone through since frontier farmers first arrived, including the size of farms, urban sprawl, technology and equipment, and even the types of crops grown," Moré explained.

Farming was the reason the first European settlers who came to McLean County in the early 1800s chose to do so. They arrived after thousands of years of farming by native people. Like those early residents, McLean County settlers faced constant change and numerous challenges. The Illinois prairie was rich when they arrived, but it also was difficult to break and much of it was swampy. Farmers worked hard to get the most out of their land and to maintain it. Meyer points out they worked smart too — using a wide variety of resources in order to insure that their work was productive and profitable.

Challenges forced farming innovations, change

The costs of land, equipment, buildings, livestock, and supplies were another challenge they faced. After the railroad arrived in McLean County, so too did new equipment, as well as an influx of immigrants. These immigrants provided a greater labor force, but they also created more competition for farmland.

Equipment advances meant a transition from the use of hand tools and horsepower to tractors. With the introduction of computer technology and larger equipment, prices skyrocketed.



Natural forces also had a major impact on their successes and failures, as is true with today's agriculture. As time passed, shifting markets and economic forces dramatically changed what McLean County farmers produced and where and how those commodities reached regional and world markets.

Regardless of the many generations that have passed, and the many challenges and difficulties they have faced, the McLean County farmers' passion for their work is evidenced by their determination, resourcefulness, and innovation. The exhibit will explore innovations from draining fields and equipment to Funk Brothers hybrid seed and the conditions that led to today's two-crop commodities of corn and soybeans. The exhibit will create an environment with sound and lighting that takes the visitor outdoors and it will include a small theater that is housed in a real grain bin.

We are proud to partner with COUNTRY Financial, GROWMARK, and Illinois Farm Bureau to mark the opening of the new exhibit as the Illinois Farm Bureau wraps up its Centennial Celebration this year. We hope you will join us for the grand opening festivities on Saturday, March 25, 2017. Watch your mail in the new year for more details about this free program!

Of Charities and IRAs

Charitable giving in the U.S. rose 4.1% last year, reaching an all-time record of \$373.25 billion. That's also a record in inflation-adjusted dollars, reports the Giving USA Foundation in its annual report on philanthropy. During the two-year period of 2014 and 2015, giving rose by double digits, 10.1%. Individuals, estates, foundations, corporations—all contributed to the robust growth in philanthropy.

How giving has grown

Charitable gifts from all donor groups rose smartly in 2015, reaching a new record. Individuals led the way, providing over 70% of the giving.

Donor group	2015 total giving (billions)	% increase from 2014
Individuals	\$264.58	3.8%
Foundations	\$58.46	6.5%
Estates	\$31.76	2.1%
Corporations	\$18.45	3.9%

Source: Giving USA Foundation and the Indiana University Lilly Family School of Philanthropy; M.A. Co.

Religious organizations are the largest beneficiaries of this giving, receiving \$119.30 billion. Education comes in a distant second, at \$57.48 billion, followed by human services with \$45.21 billion.

The charitable IRA rollover

One reason for the growth in giving may be the growth in assets—as the stock markets touch new highs people can afford to be more generous. Prices were also strong in the art world, leading to an increase in donations of valuable artworks, books and manuscripts. Another factor might be that as top marginal tax rates have increased, the value of charitable deductions for top taxpayers has grown as well.

A popular charitable giving tax break has been made permanent, one that has been dubbed the “charitable IRA rollover.” Those who are over age 70½ may want to consider the gift of a direct distribution from their IRAs. Up to \$100,000 may be transferred to charity in this manner. Couples may transfer up to \$200,000 if each partner has an IRA. In contrast to normal IRA distributions, amounts transferred directly to charity won't be included in ordinary income (and so no charitable deduction is appropriate).

The definition of who is permitted to take advantage of this tax strategy dovetails perfectly with those who are required to take required minimum distributions (RMDs) from their IRAs. So some taxpayers simply opt to direct their required minimum IRA distributions to charity, because the distribution requirement will be satisfied, even though the amounts distributed aren't included in taxable income.

Extra tax advantages

In some sense, the income tax exclusion for a transfer to charity from an IRA might not seem like such a big deal. After all, one always has been allowed to follow an IRA withdrawal by a charitable contribution and claim an income tax deduction. However, the full benefit of that deduction is not available to all taxpayers.

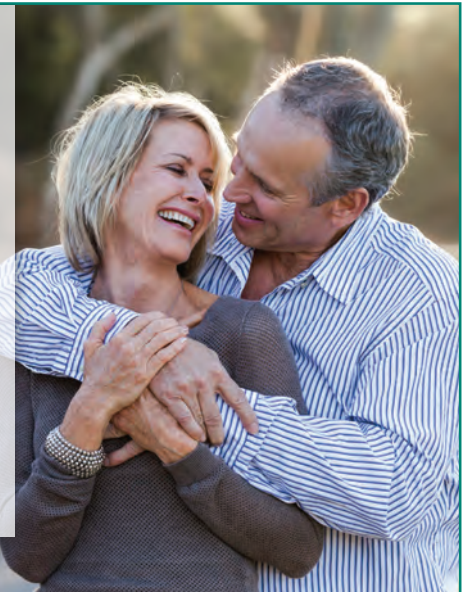
- Nonitemizers. There are a great many taxpayers who do not itemize their deductions, even in the upper tax brackets.
 - Big donors. Percentage limits on the charitable deduction mean that some donors can't take a full charitable deduction in the year that they make a gift.
 - Social Security recipients. An increase in taxable income may cause an increase in the tax on Social Security benefits for some taxpayers. The direct gift from an IRA avoids this problem.
- Accordingly, if you are 70 ½, you should consider a charitable gift from your IRA if:
- You do not itemize tax deductions;
 - Your charitable deductions have been maximized; or
 - You do not need the additional income made necessary by your required minimum distribution.

As welcome as this tax planning opportunity is, every taxpayer's situation is unique. See your tax advisor before taking any action.

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We would be glad to help with any financial planning needs you may have. Give us a call today.

McLean County Museum of History Welcomes Our New Members!

Monica Adams
William and Dianne Arbogast
Nancy Armstrong
Steven and Marlys Barwick
John Blair
Nancy Dauber
Michael Gorman
Linda Hargesheimer
Jim and Sharon Jaeger

Kenneth and Sara Kellum
Joanne Knipmeyer
Catherine Metsker
Don Ottinger
Daphne Pierce
Mrs. Erin Ripley-Gataric
Robert and Karen Starckovich
Mary Van Allen

Museum membership is an act of philanthropy that supports local history, preservation, and education for the entire community. Each membership also offers direct benefits to you and your family with free admission to the Museum and Library/Archives, 10% off in the gift shop, member price for event tickets, and our Time Travelers reciprocal membership that offers free and discounted admission to hundreds of sites across the U.S.

Join today at
www.mchistory.org

Donations to Collections

New to Library/Archives

Archives

Lincoln brochures, including "The Home of Abraham Lincoln," undated, and other related Lincoln items (the Museum collects commercially printed Lincoln-related ephemera, including brochures); donated by Sam and Jeanette Douglass

Two Sounds of Illinois Barbershop Chorus programs, 73rd and 74th annual shows, 2015 and 2016; donated by Jim Stahly

Various farm-related paperwork, including a receipt for the purchase of a tractor and a two-bottom plow, 1930, by Edward Hartzold; two receipts for hogs sold at Peoria Producers Commission, by Henry Hartzold; and other family items; donated by Robert Hartzold

Various, including tickets to local plays and concerts, 1974-1978; Central Illinois Chapter of the ACLU and Prairie Pride Coalition materials; LGBT Film Festival, 2014 and 2015, brochures, posters, tickets, and newspaper articles; and other items; donated by Margot Mendoza

Letter, December 26, 1877, from U.S. Senate office of David Davis; note written by Frank Orme; and other items; donated by Greg Koos

Dedicatory program, March 26, 1917, for Bloomington High School building on East Washington Street; April 21, 1938 issue of *The Aegis*, BHS student newspaper; donated by Julie Busse

Minor K. Bunn, Bloomington general store ledger, 1856-1933; donated by Laura Walden

Three ledgers from Warren Craig's business, Craig Canvas Service, 1946 to 2003, ledger entries by wife Joybelle Craig; donated by Shirley Craig

Books / Published Materials

Bloomington High School "Alumni Aegis," 1864-1906; donated by Delores Karr

Wings and Things, undated World War II memoir by Gene Peterson, B-17 bomber pilot; donated by Margie Knutson

Photographs / Images

Two picture postcards, YMCA, downtown Bloomington, and Kelso Sanitarium, North Main Street, Bloomington; donated by Sam and Jeanette Douglass

Four picture postcards, including an East Washington Street view and the old Bloomington Coliseum; donated by Julie Busse

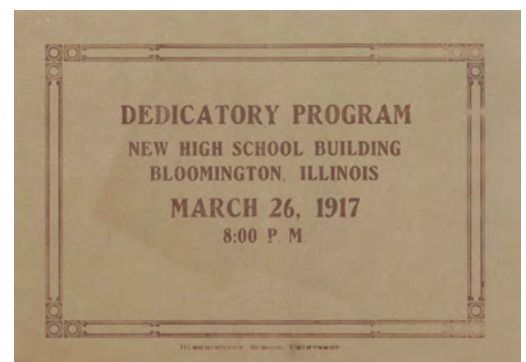
Library/Archives/Collections Spotlight

Dedicatory Program, 'New' BHS, 1917

This rare March 26, 1917 program for the "new" Bloomington High School on East Washington Street was donated to the Museum by Julie Busse. Although we already held one copy of this program, Julie's copy was in much better condition. Regardless, both are now held in the Bloomington High School Collection.

This program includes a list of speakers that day (such as David Felmley and John W. Cook, both of Illinois State Normal University); a list of the BHS faculty and Board of Education members (Hortio G. Bent was the board president); and architect (Arthur L. Pillsbury, naturally.)

The newer (and current) BHS opened in 1959. The East Washington Street building became the junior high. BJHS then moved to its current location at the corner of Empire St. and Colton Ave. in 1990.



Donations to Collections

New to the Collections

Heberling's Palm Soap, c. 1920; Bevan's cottage cheese jar, c. 1930; Bloomington Bottling Works bottle, c. 1910; Bloomington souvenir napkin ring, c. 1910; Bloomington/Normal USA long sleeve t-shirt, c. 1980; Bloomington/Normal home of State Farm t-shirt, c. 1980; Funk's Brothers seed bag, c. 1960; donated by Nancy Callis

Pencil drawings by Franklin McMahon featured in *Vic & Sade*, a book about the radio show of the same name, c. 1960; donated by Johanna Darrah

Objects left at the Moving Vietnam Wall, August 28, 2016; donated by Evergreen Memorial Cemetery

Printing block and label for Funk's Soybeans, c. 1965; donated by Glaida Funk

Sono-Mag Corporation tape meter, c. 1970; donated by Robert Goodrich

Black corrugated plastic drain tile, c. 2016; donated by Joseph B. Hartzold

Woman's brown ribbon knit dress, c. 1935; donated by Willis and Carlisle McCord

Collections Featured Artifact

Tape Meter – donated by Robert Goodrich



The Museum recently received this Sono-Mag Corporation tape meter from Robert Goodrich. The meter was used in conjunction with tape test cartridges to ensure proper alignment, and was purchased by Goodrich directly from the Bloomington-based company in the 1970s.

Goodrich was the chief engineer for several radio stations in Colorado, Wyoming, and Utah. He worked with Mike Flood, one of the company's field engineers, to get Sono-Mag's automation system in place. Goodrich attributes the Sono-Mag Corporation with the

quality of sound his listeners experienced on air.

Bill Moulic founded Moulic Specialties Company along with his brother and father in 1949. This company had several government contracts that focused on development of multimeters for the Air Force as well as radio attached air raid sirens. In 1968, it became Sono-Mag Corporation. They developed a carousel that would automatically rotate tape cartridges for radio stations. By 1970, the DP-1 became the most used automation system digital programmer in the United States. This new system allowed for four rotating tapes at one time. Sono-Mag Corporation was located at 1005 W. Washington Street in Bloomington. Goodrich, who had a close working relationship with the company, came to Bloomington multiple times to visit at the invitation of Bill and Mike.

A Moment in History

SEPTEMBER 19, 1996



Susan Hartzold dresses a form using items from the Barbara Dunbar Textile collection on September 19, 1996, just five years after joining the McLean County Historical Society as an assistant curator. Susan was part of the team of staff and volunteers in 1991 that helped move the Museum from its former home in the John McBarnes Memorial Building to its current home in the 1903 McLean County Courthouse. The Museum Board of Trustees honored Susan on September 21, 2016 for her 25 years of excellence as Curator of Collections and Exhibits. Her work includes designing, constructing, and curating more than 40 unique exhibits, several of which earned the American Association for State and Local History's Award of Merit. Her latest work can be seen in the brand new exhibits *Making a Home* and *Abraham Lincoln in McLean County*. She is collaborating on three more galleries which will complete the Museum's new permanent exhibit, including *Farming in the Great Corn Belt* which is scheduled to open March 25, 2017. Please join us in congratulating Susan on her 25th anniversary with the Museum!

Calendar of Events — ongoing programs and upcoming events

Second Thursday of every month until May, 2017

Lunch and Learn at the Museum

Bring your brown bag lunch to this series, which features engaging and enlightening topics for discussion. Join us each second Thursday of the month from now until May for a new topic to explore and discuss. The programs will be held in the Museum's Governor Fifer Courtroom from 12:10-12:40 p.m. each time. These programs are free, open to the public, and sponsored by Illinois Wesleyan University, the McLean County Museum of History, and the Collaborative Solutions Institute.

Please check the calendar for specific monthly topics.

December 2 5:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.
Once Upon a Holiday First Friday

Join the Museum staff for a free, fun, and festive evening for the whole family around the Christmas tree as we host celebrity readings of the classic poem "Twas the Night Before Christmas" at 6 p.m. and 7 p.m. There will be holiday music, homemade cookies, hot apple cider, egg nog, and more! The ground floor Visitors Center gift shop will be open for your holiday shopping. For more information about this event and a complete list of participating locations, please visit the Downtown Bloomington Association's website at www.downtownbloomington.org

December 3 11:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.
Christmas at the Courthouse

Join the Museum staff for this annual holiday tradition. Enjoy live holiday music, homemade cookies, children's crafts and activities, and St. Nicholas for the kids! See page 2 of this newsletter for more details.

December 8 12:10 p.m.
Lunch and Learn: Lincoln in McLean County

Bill Kemp, McLean County Museum of History librarian and co-curator of the Museum's newest exhibit, will address the role race and racial prejudice played during the epic political contest and moral struggle over the future of slavery in America.

December 24 and 26
Museum Closed for the Christmas Holiday

December 31, 2016 and January 2, 2017
Museum Closed for the New Year's Holiday

January 12 12:10 p.m.

Lunch and Learn: Science Fiction Made into Science Reality

From 3D holograms to "Tractor Beams" and "Sonic Screwdrivers," even time travel—science has turned some of the fantasies of science fiction into experimental realities. Come enjoy a few videos illustrating these concepts. Gabe Spaulding, Ames Professor of Physics at Illinois Wesleyan University, will be the presenter.

February 7 7:00 p.m.
History Reads Book Club

Join the Museum and Bloomington Public Library for the first installment of the *History Reads* Book Club for 2017. The discussion will be held in the Museum's Governor Fifer Courtroom. For more information, please see page 4 of this newsletter.

February 9 12:10 p.m.

Lunch and Learn: Attraction to Crime and Criminals: Exploring People's Interest in Crime Stories and Attraction to Prisoners

Amanda Vicary, Assistant Professor of Psychology at Illinois Wesleyan University, will explore the reasons behind women's interest in the true-crime book genre, including why it is more appealing to women than it is to men. A similar topic—people writing to prison inmates for romantic purposes—also will be discussed.

February 14 7:00 p.m.
Movies Under the Dome: Young Mr. Lincoln

It's time for the third installment of the Museum's new film series featuring performances with McLean County connections! Along with a screening of the show, the program will include a display of rarely-seen thematic artifacts from the Museum's

archival and object collection, as well as commentary from a local historian. This program is free and open to the public. See page 4 of this newsletter for more information.

February 20 12:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m.

President's Day Open House

This program is free and open to the public. For more information, please see page 3 of this newsletter.

February 11 10:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.

Under the Dome Knit In

Knitters and crocheters—mark your calendars for another year of *Under the Dome Knit Ins*! Dates for the 2017 Knit Ins will be February 11, May 20, August 12, and November 18 from 10:00 a.m. until 1:00 p.m. in the Museum's Governor Fifer Courtroom! The Museum welcomes all knitters and crocheters to come down and create charity items or work on your own project. Keep an eye out in our February monthly mailer where we will announce charities that we will be making items for in 2017. Light refreshments will be provided. This program is free and open to the public.

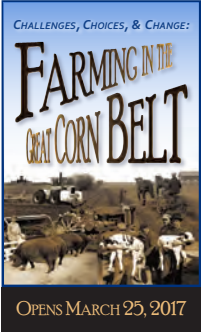
February 25 1:00 p.m.

Community Reads: Latino Heartland: Of Borders and Belonging in the Midwest

Illinois State University's Latin American and Latino Studies Program and the McLean County Museum of History are teaming up to host a community visit from author and scholar Dr. Sujey Vega, who will use her book *Latino Heartland: Of Borders and Belonging in the Midwest* to explore the Midwestern experience of Latinos/Latinas settling in new or nontraditional areas of the United States.

The community is encouraged to read her book before the event and join in the conversation after her presentation. Copies of the book can be borrowed from both the Bloomington and Normal public libraries and will be available for purchase at the Museum, Babbitt's Books, or Barnes and Noble at ISU. This program is free and open to the public thanks to the Sage Foundation Fund at Illinois State. Look for more information in the February issue of the monthly mailer.

EXHIBITS



Challenges, Choices, and Change: Farming in the Great Corn Belt Opening in March!

This unique exhibit will tell the story of farming as it was done by McLean County farmers. It follows a nearly 200 year timeline, using images and experiences of area farmers to tell their stories and revealing the difficult choices they had to make in order to be productive and profitable. Gallery interactives will demonstrate the drastic changes farming has gone through since frontier farmers first arrived, including the size of farms, urban sprawl, technology and equipment, and even the types of crops grown.



Cruisin' with Lincoln on 66

Located on the ground floor in the Visitors Center, this panel exhibit features many local Route 66 landmarks past and present. It allows visitors to compare and contrast travel, dining, and lodging in Abraham Lincoln's time with that of the Route 66 heyday. The Visitors Center is free and open to the public during regular Museum hours.



Challenges, Choices and Change: Making a Home

From the arrival of native people to the immigration of Asian Indians and Latinos in the late 20th century, this exhibit explores the experiences of individuals and families who came from all over the world to make McLean County their home. Their stories reveal the many challenges this diverse group of people faced after their arrival — stories of determination and hard choices, of maintaining traditions and inventing new ones, stories of how their lives unfolded and changed — stories of making a home.



Abraham Lincoln in McLean County

This exhibit examines Lincoln's work as an attorney in McLean County and on the Illinois Eighth Judicial Circuit. It defines his pivotal role in the anti-slavery movement and the formation of the new Republican Party in Illinois, and makes clear the circumstances of his nomination for president in 1860. Through revealing reminiscences from the residents of McLean County, it explores the lasting connections Lincoln made with the people of this community.



Encounter on the Prairie: Work

This exhibit examines the many occupations and industries throughout the history of McLean County. It contains many photographs and objects associated with McLean County businesses, including many of the goods produced locally. While in the gallery, step inside the "prisoner holding cell" to await your trial in the courthouse.



Encounter on the Prairie: Politics

In this exhibit you will gain insight into our political history through government, war, and education. Notable political figures such as Abraham Lincoln, David Davis, and Adlai Stevenson are highlighted, as are common people who have called McLean County home. Their stories teach the importance of education in the community and detail our involvement in military conflicts — from the Indian Wars through World War II.

McLean County Museum of History Staff

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Executive Director

Susan Hartzold
Curator of Collections and Exhibits

Bill Kemp
Librarian

Candace Summers
Director of Education

Torii Moré
Curator of Digital Humanities

Jeff Woodard
Director of Marketing and Community Affairs

Lauren Lacy
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MYSTERY HISTORY



For the latest Mystery History baffler, do you know roughly when this handsome building was erected and where it was located? And can you name any occupants over the years? If you think you know the answer, contact Librarian Bill Kemp by email at library@mchistory.org, or by phone at 309-827-0428. Good luck!

Last issue's "Mystery History" photograph proved too inscrutable for our band of reliable sleuths. No one correctly identified the aerial photo, a neat view of the construction of Bloomington Housing Authority apartment units in the far west side neighborhood of Sunnyside way back in 1953. The view, taken from the Ralston Purina plant (now Cargill), looked south and showed new units being erected on the block bound by W. Olive Street on the north, Erickson Street on the east, and Illinois Street on the south. Several well-thought-out guesses involved Illinois State Normal University and postwar housing for veterans on the GI Bill and their families. Alas, we don't give out "style points" for speculation—however educated said speculation might be!