



ON THE SQUARE

The Magazine of the McLean County Museum of History

Volume 56 | Issue 3 | Fall 2024

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McLean County 1832 - 2020**

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Cover Photo

This photo features Jeni Bratcher portraying legendary opera singer, Marie Litta, to an eager audience at the first annual Evergreen Cemetery Walk in 1995. The Museum digitized this photo for the *Public Life in McLean County* collection, available through the Illinois Digital Archives. Explore more than 166,000 images, such as this one, by visiting bit.ly/MCMHIDA. To learn more about the Museum's ongoing efforts to save y(our) history and make it more accessible for all, please visit mchistory.org

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as of August 15, 2024

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Museum membership is an act of philanthropy that supports local history, preservation, and education for the entire community. Membership also offers direct benefits to you and your family with free admission to the Museum, Library & Archives, plus discounts in the Visitors Center & Gift Shop, special member pricing for events, this magazine, and a Time Travelers reciprocal membership that grants you free and discounted admission to hundreds of sites across the country.

From the Desk of Executive Director Emig

I am grateful to have inherited excellent practices from my predecessors—the leaders, staff, and volunteers who built this Museum from the ground up. One such practice is that our college interns traditionally interview each staff member about their role at the Museum. This summer, intern Madison Hieser asked me how my (quite varied) past has informed my work today. Reflecting on this question, I became hyperaware of how multidisciplinary approaches amplify our work.

Indeed, museums worldwide are becoming increasingly multidisciplinary in how we engage the public in doing history—bringing the past and present to life through a variety of various creative modalities. At the core of our work, we are collectors and storytellers.

Laura Lott, former president and CEO of the American Alliance of Museums, writes, “Sometimes we forget about this power that storytelling has... Facts only become relevant to people when they know what story they tell. Some of the most exciting, pioneering work on this front is in approaches that tell multiple stories, allowing many perspectives to create a nuanced account...” (*Museum*, March/April 2023). The impact of storytelling was tangible when circus historian Maureen Brunsdale gave a talk about her recently published book, *In the Shadow of the Big Top* (2023), last August. Brunsdale brings to life the story of Antoinette Concello, a circus legend who trained in Bloomington. Brunsdale writes, “When [Antoinette] started flying under Eddie Ward, it had been a time when female aerialists were mainly employed as flashing decoration on the pedestal board. But Antoinette was different from the very beginning.” Don’t you want to read more?

In this issue of *On the Square*, you will read several stories, all of which benefit from a multidisciplinary lens. For example, our new Spanish language tour of the “Making a Home” gallery on a recently developed platform, Tourient, provides bilingual access to the stories of several immigrants and migrants who made their homes in McLean County.

You will read about “A Deadly Deception,” a groundbreaking exhibit that dares to tell the story of the deceit promulgated by the UNARCO Plant in Bloomington that resulted in over 100 fatalities. And, of course, you will read about the 30th anniversary of the Evergreen Cemetery Walk, which, after significant deliberation, the Museum staff and board decided will be the final Evergreen Cemetery Walk.

We did not make this decision lightly, as this award-winning endeavor has been our signature program for decades. Our decision is related to multiple factors, including shifts in volunteerism, school capacity to participate, significantly rising costs, administrative challenges, and the need to focus our resources on opportunities for the community at large. In other words, our focus will continue to be—inexorably—on how best to preserve and share this community’s stories. You can read more about this grand finale and our plans for the future on page 12, where our indefatigable Senior Director of Education, Candace Summers, writes more intimately about the end of this era and what comes next.



Julie M. Emig
Julie M. Emig, Ed.D.

How has McLean County Historically Voted in Presidential Elections?

by Bill Kemp

The Museum maintains a record of McLean County presidential vote totals going all the way back to 1832, two years after the county's establishment. The 1832 contest pitted Democrat Andrew Jackson against "National Republican" (and soon-to-be Whig) Henry Clay. As with the national race, Jackson triumphed in McLean County, though the vote totals—275 for Jackson, and 127 for Clay—speak as much to the county's small population as to its political proclivities.

Regardless, we must keep in mind that in Illinois in 1832, only white males enjoyed the franchise. Black men in the "Land of Lincoln" were not given the right to vote until 1870, and for women it took even longer (a 1913 state act gave Illinois women the right to vote in some elections, including those for president).

Since 1856 and the Republican Party's first presidential nominee, John C. Fremont, there have been 42 contests pitting the "Grand Old Party" against the Democrats. Not surprisingly—given McLean County's historical support for the "Party of Lincoln"—Republican presidential candidates have won a majority of county votes in 36 of those 42 elections—about 85 percent of the time.

What six presidential elections, then, did the Democratic candidate come out on top in McLean County? It first happened in 1912, when former Republican President Teddy Roosevelt ran as the Progressive "Bull Moose" Party candidate, which split the Republican vote and helped ensure the election of Democrat Woodrow Wilson.

It was not until the Great Depression that McLean County voters once more favored the Democrats. During the Great Depression, Franklin D. Roosevelt received a majority of county votes in his first two presidential campaigns—1932 and 1936. Yet by 1940, county voters had returned to the Republican fold, backing businessman Wendell Willkie over FDR. The county stayed Republican in 1944, spurning Roosevelt again, this time for New York Gov. Thomas Dewey.

McLean County continued to support Republican presidential candidates until 1964, when Democrat Lyndon B. Johnson's bested Republican Barry Goldwater by a whisker. The two most recent Democrats to capture McLean County were Barack Obama in 2008 and Joe Biden in 2020. The fact the Democratic candidate was the top vote getter in two of the past four elections is evidence that a once dependable "red" county has turned increasingly competitive—or "purple" in today's pigmented political parlance.

Given McLean County's long-standing support of the "Party of Lincoln," it should come as no surprise that the Democratic Stevenson family of local and national fame is winless in four national elections, at least when it comes to the McLean County vote. Yes, it is true! Adlai E. Stevenson I (1835-1914) was the vice presidential candidate in 1892, as the running mate of Grover Cleveland, and again in 1900, with William Jennings Bryan as the Democratic Party standard-bearer. McLean County favored the Republican presidential ticket both times. Next up was Adlai's I's grandson, Adlai E. Stevenson II (the first name "Adlai" skipped a generation), who lost McLean County both times he ran for president—falling to Dwight D. Eisenhower in 1952 and 1956.

McLean County's presidential vote totals offer other tantalizing tidbits of local political history. An examination of strong third party runs, for example, can tell a lot about our past—not only politically, but economically and socially as well. Please note that only third party candidates who received more than 0.5% of the total votes in McLean County are represented in this data set.

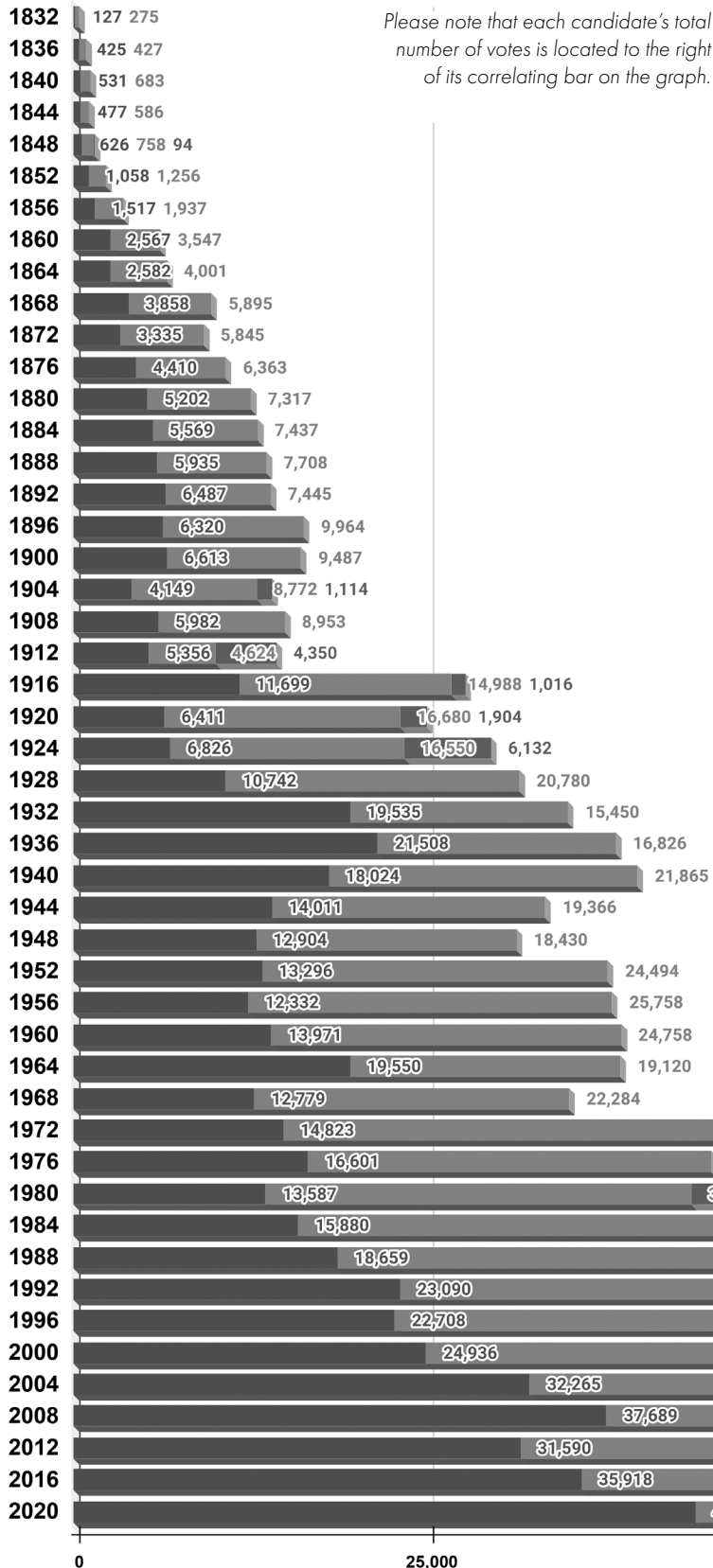
Only 18 out of the 46, less than 40%, of U.S. presidents have visited McLean County. FDR, pictured here with a WJBC microphone in front of him, and his trailblazing wife Eleanor Roosevelt to his left, visited on October 14, 1936. He gave a seven-minute speech to 20,000 people at the Chicago & Alton Railroad station on Bloomington's westside.



McLean County Presidential Election

Vote Totals 1832 - 2020

■ Candidate 1 Total Votes ■ Candidate 2 Total Votes ■ Candidate 3 Total Votes



Year	Candidate 1	Votes	Candidate 2	Votes	Candidate 3	Votes
1832	Clay	127	Jackson*	275		
1836	Anti-Van Buren	425	Van Buren*	427		
1840	Van Buren	531	Harrison (W)*	683		
1844	Polk (D)*	477	Clay (W)	586		
1848	Cass (D)	626	Taylor (W)*	758	Van Buren (FS)	94
1852	Pierce (D)*	1,058	Scott (W)	1,256		
1856	Buchanan (D)*	1,517	Freemont (R)	1,937		
1860	Douglas (D)	2,567	Lincoln (R)*	3,547		
1864	McClellan (D)	2,582	Lincoln (R)*	4,001		
1868	Seymour (D)	3,858	Grant (R)*	5,895		
1872	Greenly (LR)	3,335	Grant (R)*	5,845		
1876	Tilden (D)	4,410	Hayes (R)*	6,363		
1880	Hancock (D)	5,202	Garfield (R)*	7,317		
1884	Cleveland (D)*	5,569	Blaine (R)	7,437		
1888	Cleveland (D)	5,935	Harrison (R)*	7,708		
1892	Cleveland (D)*	6,487	Harrison (R)	7,445		
1896	Bryan (D)	6,320	McKinley (R)*	9,964		
1900	Bryan (D)	6,613	McKinley (R)*	9,487		
1904	Parker (D)	4,149	T. Roosevelt (R)*	8,772	Swallow (P)	1,114
1908	Bryan (D)	5,982	Taft (R)*	8,953		
1912	Wilson (D)*	5,356	Taft (R)	4,624	T. Roosevelt (P)	4,350
1916	Wilson (D)*	11,699	Hughes (R)	14,988	Hanly (P)	1,016
1920	Cox (D)	6,411	Harding (R)*	16,680	Christensen (F-L)	1,904
1924	Davis (D)	6,826	Coolidge (R)*	16,550	LaFollette (P)	6,132
1928	Smith (D)	10,742	Hoover (R)*	20,780		
1932	Roosevelt (D)*	19,535	Hoover (R)	15,450		
1936	Roosevelt (D)*	21,508	Landon (R)	16,826		
1940	Roosevelt (D)*	18,024	Willkie (R)	21,865		
1944	Roosevelt (D)*	14,011	Dewey (R)	19,366		
1948	Truman (D)*	12,904	Dewey (R)	18,430		
1952	Stevenson (D)	13,296	Eisenhower (R)*	24,494		
1956	Stevenson (D)	12,332	Eisenhower (R)*	25,758		
1960	Kennedy (D)*	13,971	Nixon (R)	24,758		
1964	Johnson (D)*	19,550	Goldwater (R)	19,120		
1968	Humphrey (D)	12,779	Nixon (R)*	22,284		
1972	McGovern (D)	14,823	Nixon (R)*	31,060		
1976	Carter (D)*	16,601	Ford (R)	28,493		
1980	Carter (D)	13,587	Reagan (R)*	30,096	Anderson (I)	4,691
1984	Mondale (D)	15,880	Reagan (R)*	32,221		
1988	Dukakis (D)	18,659	Bush (R)*	30,572		
1992	Clinton (D)*	23,090	Bush (R)	25,726	Perot (I)	10,282
1996	Clinton (D)*	22,708	Dole (R)	26,428		
2000	Gore (D)	24,936	Bush (R)*	34,008		
2004	Kerry (D)	32,265	Bush (R)*	45,978		
2008	Obama (D)*	37,689	McCain (R)	36,767		
2012	Obama (D)*	31,590	Romney (R)	39,638		
2016	Clinton (D)	35,918	Trump (R)*	37,081	Johnson (L)	4,803
2020	Biden (D)*	43,933	Trump (R)	40,502		

(D) = Democratic Party (P) = People's Party (also know as the Populist Party)
(R) = Republican Party (I) = Independent
(W) = Whig Party (L) = Libertarian Party
(FS) = Free Soil Party (F-L) = Farmer-Labor Party
(LR) = Liberal Republican

New Walking Tours Now on Tourient!

The Museum is excited to introduce our new mobile tour platform, Tourient! Enjoy McLean County History in the palm of your hand while you're out around town. Our easy-to-use tours will lead you from place to place with an interactive map; simultaneously, photos, text, and audio provide historical context to what surrounds you.

So far, we have two tours ready for your enjoyment – *Looking for Lincoln in Bloomington-Normal: A Tour Narrated by Abraham Lincoln* and the *Downtown Bloomington Architectural Tour*.

The *Looking for Lincoln in Bloomington-Normal* tour started as an audio CD tour developed in 2006. Lincoln impersonator Jim Keeran takes you from site to site, describing, in first person, the connection each place has to Lincoln. This updated tour includes additional images and one new stop: Lincoln's Funeral Train marker at the corner of N. Allin and W. Chestnut. We enlisted local radio personality WGLT's Charlie Schlenker to narrate that stop. Walk, bike, or drive in Lincoln's footsteps and rediscover Bloomington's significant impact on the nation's 16th president using this tour.

Museum intern Taylor Knoche, who worked under the guidance of Greg Koos during the summer of 2011, created *The Downtown Bloomington Architectural Tour*. Museum staff updated this tour in 2024 to build on her work, allowing users to explore downtown Bloomington's history in an interactive, mobile-friendly site.

We will unveil a Spanish-language audio tour of our *Making a Home* exhibit gallery in November 2024 and are also developing new tours to launch in 2025.

To explore our current Tourient tour offerings, please visit <https://mchistory.tourient.app/>.



Saving Santa

Livingston's department store was a mainstay in Downtown Bloomington for over one hundred years. In the latter part of the twentieth century, its larger-than-life display windows and innovative marketing tactics earned widespread recognition in the region. However, of all the displays and other dramatics, none were greater (in scale at least) than the two 14-foot Santas that Livingstons would hoist onto the store's awning every Christmas season.

Jeffrey Alan Wandell purchased the Santas in 1980 after Livingstons closed and displayed them at Jeffery Alans in Normal and Prairie Gardens in Champaign until they became too fragile for outside use. After years of sitting in storage, Wandell gifted the titans of twin cities nostalgia to the Museum. On Christmas Eve 2023, the Museum announced that the Livingston Santas would undergo significant restoration and return home to Bloomington-Normal once again.

This restoration project is a leap of faith. We are harnessing the power of nostalgia to preserve an iconic piece of downtown Bloomington history. The Santas link the past to the present and create an opportunity for the next generation to connect with those who came before. Reactions to social media posts during the first Santa restoration included the following, "These were so much a part of growing up in the 50s and 60s. Christmastime in Bloomington was such a special time. The sights and sounds are etched in my mind, and the Santas are a BIG part of that, Thank you!"

Initial funding estimates were \$35,000 for restoration and \$50,000 for site costs and ongoing care. Unanticipated costs arose, putting the restoration closer to \$40,000. We are grateful to Ace World Wide for donating transportation services for the Santas. The City of Bloomington has assumed the storage of the Santas, and the Town of Normal has also contributed to the project. Eventually, one Santa will be displayed in Downtown Bloomington and one in Uptown Normal during the holiday season.



To date, just over \$38,000 has been raised towards the project goal of \$85,000, including \$10,000 from Jeff Wandell, who kicked off the campaign. Our "end-of-year" funding appeal is for the Saving Santa initiative. At the time of printing for this magazine, local artist Andrew Jumonville has completed the restoration of the first Santa and has started on the second.

See photos from the restoration process on the next page.

The dedication ceremony for the Bloomington Santa will be on Saturday, November 30th, at 11:30 a.m. The Uptown Santa may not be on display until the construction of the underpass is complete. Display pedestals still need to be funded and built.

To learn more about the Saving Santa Campaign or to make a gift, visit bit.ly/Saving-Santa or contact Director of Development Norris Porter at development@mchistory.org. Opportunities for annual sponsor recognition and in-kind services are available. You can also leave a Livingston Santa memory for our archives at bit.ly/SantaMemories.

Photo Caption: January 4, 1979, one of the iconic Livingstons Santas is lowered off the awning for the last time. For over three decades, the department store hoisted them up and down every holiday season.

Santa, in the artist's workshop, ready for restoration.



Restored Santa stands alongside some of the folks who made this project possible: Andrew Jumonville, Russel Francois, Julie Emig, Jeffery Alan Wandell, and Norris Porter (left to right).

Development Updates

November is Member Appreciation Month! Museum Members will receive a 20% discount in our Cruisin' with Lincoln on 66 Visitors Center & Gift Shop AND at the shops at Miller Park Zoo and the Children's Discovery Museum. Plus, watch for news in October about a special member gift and exclusive experience.

We launched new benefits for all members and changed our price structure for entry-level memberships.

- New entry-level pricing for individual senior, and senior couple memberships
- Household memberships at the Davis level and above
- Fifer-Bohrer and higher levels will receive a compilation of the previous year's *Pages From Our Past Pantagraph* columns as a searchable PDF.

For more details, please visit mchistory.org/membership.

THANK YOU to this year's Presenting Sponsors! WGLT, Bloomington-Normal's Public Media, is once again our livestream sponsor. MCK CPAs is now sponsoring our Lunch & Learn series, and Illinois Farm Bureau is sponsoring our Museum at the Market initiative, which provides free Museum admission to the public during the Downtown Bloomington Farmer's Market. Ace World Wide is serving as Santa's reindeer.

New Exhibit Explores History of Asbestos & Workers' Rights

by Susan Hartzold

It typically takes Museum staff about three years to develop and install a new temporary exhibit. There are exceptions to every rule, and our newest exhibit, *A Deadly Deception: The Asbestos Tragedy in McLean County*, is one of those exceptions. Over a decade in the making, this exhibit explores the general history of asbestos. However, more importantly, it puts a magnifying glass on how the proprietors of a local manufacturing company, the Union Asbestos and Rubber Company (UNARCO), kept a lethal secret to maximize profits.

Mark Dunn, a Bloomington attorney, first proposed the concept in 2011. At the time, the McLean County justice system was awarding millions of dollars to the families of those who had lost a loved one to asbestos-related diseases. Dunn's topic was not one our Exhibit Advisory Committee believed would be a blockbuster, but we felt the compelling story needed to be told. Who better to do it than the McLean County Museum of History?

Bloomington attorney, James Walker, who represented many local residents in lawsuits against asbestos companies and their suppliers across the country, also came on board as an advisor. He shared depositions, documents, and court exhibits he had gathered over 30 years while representing local workers and their families who suffered and died from asbestos-related diseases as a result of their work at UNARCO. Two interns, Kat Luke and Ed Wittzig, were also hired to help with research and conduct oral history interviews with survivors, judges, and attorneys representing both sides of the hotbed of cases that passed through the McLean County courts.

Exhibit development continued to progress smoothly, but Dunn decided to resign from the project when he moved to Chicago. Despite the speed bump, the project was in good shape. We are grateful for his work in initiating and moving it forward.

At that time, Mike Matejka stepped into the role of co-curator, and work continued. Mike has co-curated several of the Museum's past labor-related exhibit projects and brought with him a wealth of knowledge on the history of UNARCO.

However, in 2013, the project paused when the Museum began working on new permanent exhibits, forcing us to sideline the asbestos exhibit until the five new exhibits were complete in 2019.

Then, in 2019, historic rains and a leaky roof damaged our third-floor exhibit galleries, revealing layers of lead paint. Each of the three galleries then needed to be abated, plaster repaired, repainted, and carpets replaced. That work would not be completed until 2022 — amid a global pandemic.

During the pandemic, we learned many lessons, including the importance of accessibility, which led us to emphasize collection documentation and prioritize the opening of the Merwin Gallery in conjunction with launching our Online Object Database. Once again, this postponed work on the asbestos exhibit. Once the Merwin Gallery was complete, we got back to work on the asbestos exhibit, knowing new data was now available and needed to be incorporated into our existing research.

Additionally, to ensure the exhibit met its goals of revealing the industry's deception, telling the stories of its victims, providing information on the hazards of asbestos, and teaching people how to protect themselves, we needed to convene a focus group. *Story continues on the next page...*



In March, we invited ten community members to a feedback session. Participants were given time to explore a scaled-down version of the exhibit and then asked questions regarding content, clarity, and presentation. Moderated by Julie Hile of the Hile Group, the feedback provided invaluable insight. It resulted in additions and changes to the exhibit design, content, and organization. We implemented these changes, and work began in June to install exhibit components and lighting, followed by artwork in July and interactives in August.

A Deadly Deception: The Asbestos Tragedy in McLean County tells a story larger than McLean County. It is a story of people being sacrificed and forced to endure toxic conditions and environmental hazards, all in the pursuit of profit. It is a story that's more universally common than we'd like to think.

This exhibit will shine a light on the disastrous outcomes that come with little oversight and regulations, all the while educating the public about the specific dangers of asbestos and honoring our neighbors who lost their lives. Stories like these must be told for the public to stay vigilant, keep each other safe, and hold large corporate entities accountable.

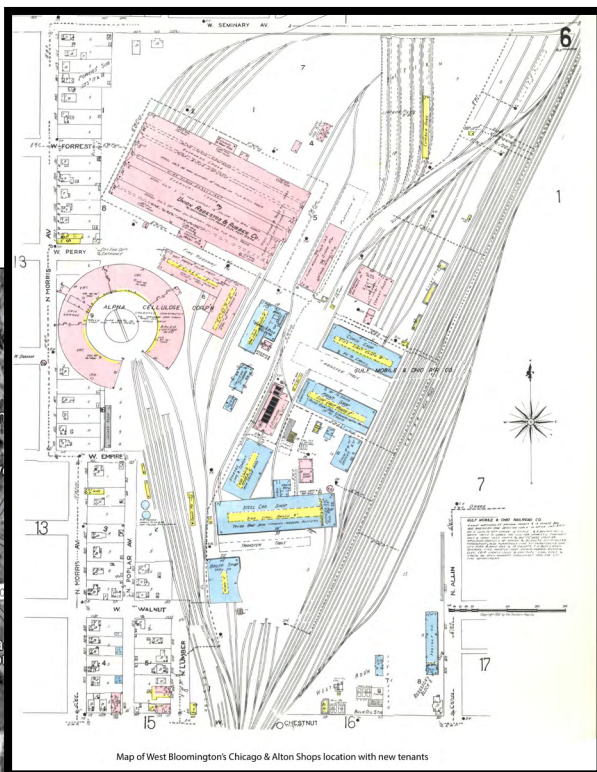
It is the Museum's mission to tell the diverse stories of the people of McLean County, and while sometimes those stories can be unsettling, we believe they can reveal important lessons for a better future.

Over a decade after we started, the exhibit will finally open to the public at 9 a.m. on Saturday, September 7, with a special presentation on UNARCO and the workers' experience by Mike Matejka at 1:30 p.m. He notes, "Workers are often the guinea pigs for environmental hazards. One only needs to add to that risk corporate duplicity and greed to understand how the asbestos tragedy was compounded in Bloomington, Illinois, and resulted in needless suffering and family dislocation."

We are grateful for Mike's contributions to this project and to LiUNA! Midwest Region Laborer's International Union of North America, this exhibit's presenting sponsor.



Bill Mau watches as asbestos material comes out of a machine. He died from asbestos-related disease in 1977 at the age of 47.



All Museum members are welcome to preview the exhibit on Friday, September 6, 2024 from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.

The UNARCO plant no longer stands but was once located at 1111 W. Perry St. The image to the left features an original rendering of the plant, juxtaposed on top of a current satellite image of the desolate site. To help orient the viewer, a Museum icon is placed on top of Downtown Bloomington.



Celebrating Three Decades of the Evergreen Cemetery Walk

by Candace Summers

The opening line of the 10th Anniversary Commemorative Playbill read "If there was ever a project that had a life of its own, it is the Evergreen Cemetery Discovery Walk. When the program began in 1995, no one had any idea that it would still be going strong ten years later."

But here we are, 20 years later, busily preparing for the 30th and final Evergreen Cemetery Walk.



Over three decades ago, leaders from the McLean County Museum of History, Evergreen Memorial Cemetery, Illinois Voices Theatre, and the McLean County Arts Center collaborated to create an engaging new program utilizing the voices of people from the past to share stories about our community's rich and diverse history, educating people on the importance of preserving cemeteries as a part of our collective history. Furthermore, by targeting students in particular, the event aimed to also curb the rampant vandalism happening at Bloomington's oldest and most historic cemetery.

What began as a single Saturday event with two school days of performances quickly blossomed into a full-fledged historical theater event, serving more than 3,000 people over the course of eight days each year. Upwards of 95,000 people (the majority of whom being middle school students) have experienced the Walk the last three decades, both in-person and virtually.

When I moved to the area twenty years ago, I knew nothing about McLean County history. I attended the Cemetery Walk for the first time in 2004 and was hooked. I knew then and there I wanted to be part of this event.

In 2005, the opportunity presented itself to join the Museum staff and I was thrilled to have a hand in the Cemetery Walk! It was already a highly respected and beloved event, thanks to the hard work of those who came before me, such as former Museum Director of Education Patty Bortz Wagner (one of the Walk's founders). I knew I had to work hard to continue to grow the event and build off their success.

Two years later, Laura Wheaton passed me the symbolic Cem Walk torch when I became head of the Museum's Education Department. Fortunately, I had a lot of great partners, collaborators, and volunteers who mentored and supported me so I could keep the fire burning bright, if not brighter, for another 17 years.

Mary Anne Schierman, retired Museum Director of Volunteers and Interns, was a mentor to me during my early years at the Museum and during the Cemetery Walk. She and former Director of Education, Laura Wheaton, wrote the book on how the modern Cemetery Walk came to function, and taught other institutions how to create their own event too. Mary Anne showed me the ropes, guided me, helping me to understand the importance of this event, and why we did it each and every year. She and I were equal partners in planning and implementing this event, giving it our heart and soul year after year. We were a well-oiled machine. She helped build my confidence as an educator and historian, helping put me on the path I am today. *Story continues on the next page...*





Judy Brown, former ILVT Artistic Director (and one of the Walk 's founders), showed me how history and theater can go hand in hand. She found the talented script writers and actors, and helped me understand the fine balance in historical theater where you allow just enough creative license to capture your audience's attention, but still stay true to the facts. Judy trained my "eye" for seeing the stories in the people we feature, and I am grateful that she, and many others through Illinois Voices Theatre, helped me develop my theatrical side.



Tina Crow, retired Office Manager of Evergreen Memorial Cemetery, was a partner and collaborator who worked quietly, but passionately behind the scenes. She always wanted the very best for those hallowed grounds and to help the community learn about the history contained within. Tina and the staff accommodated any and all needs that arose, from quickly setting up garages for indoor performances on account of rain, to helping change routes due to a funeral, or cleaning up sticks and acorns between performances, and so much more. I appreciate all that Tina did and all that the amazing staff continues to do.

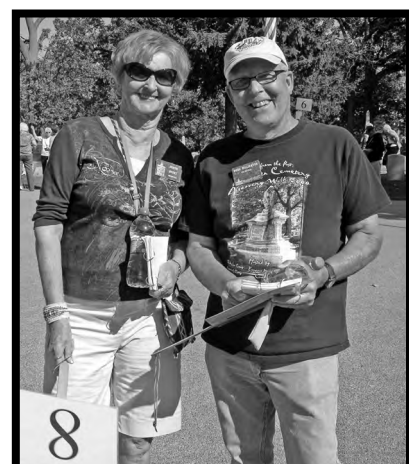
I have also had the privilege of working with hundreds of volunteers during my tenure. Every single one of them have left their mark on this event, and I'd like to think the Walk has left a mark on them too. **Over the last three decades, 503 volunteers have given more than 34,000 hours to ensure the Walk's success. Simply put, this event wouldn't happen without our volunteers.** And while I'd like to thank them all individually, it's nearly impossible to fit all their names on one page! However, I'd like to recognize several volunteers, in particular, who have had a lasting impact on the Walk during my time at the helm.

Nola Marquardt is our resident cemetery expert. She knows more about cemeteries and monuments than anyone else I know. The resources she compiled on local monuments, monument makers, and cemeteries has proved invaluable each and every year we have done this event. I regularly consult those materials as we create the guide script and put together supplemental materials for the teachers and students who participate.

Carol Straka, who has been with the Cemetery Walk since the very beginning, never ceases to amaze me with how she continues to "dig" up new potential characters for us to feature. Many times, when I come to my office and see a research packet or two sitting on my desk with new candidates for a future year of the Walk, I know that Carol has been there. She is responsible for finding many of the amazing people we have featured over the years, in particular women and people of color (who are often more difficult to feature or research due to the lack of proper record keeping over the years).

For over 20 years, Bill LaBounty gave many hours of his time each fall to put the playbill together. When I came to the Museum, I knew nothing about the printing industry, let alone layout and design. He taught me about paper type and weight, crop marks and bleeds, saddle stitches, and so much more -- all with a smile on his face. Everything I learned about printing, and still use regularly in my job, I learned from Bill LaBounty.

Doug Williamson and Judith Myers were mentors not only to me, but to so many others. They led trainings, wrote guide scripts, and were tour guides for many years. Doug especially never ceased to amaze me with the factoids he would find about funerary customs, cemetery history, monument makers, and everything in between. This dynamic duo had a contagious passion for history and for the Cemetery Walk.



I took all that I learned from these individuals, and countless others who I'm not able to list, to make the Evergreen Cemetery Walk what it is today.

All of the work we put into this event helped curb cemetery vandalism exponentially, not just at Evergreen Memorial Cemetery, but at cemeteries around the region. The Museum has been called upon to help shape other cemetery programs throughout Illinois, the greater United States, and even Canada. The power and impact of this award-winning event can be felt far beyond the boundaries of McLean County.

The Walk has also helped people understand the significant roles individuals from our past play in local, state, national, and international history. By exposing folks to the educational benefits of acting and the arts, we've been able to bring our history to light and to life.

I never ceased to be amazed by the stories we continued to uncover about the remarkable people who have lived in McLean County. Over the years, we have featured 211 individuals from various walks of life, some of whom are well remembered, but many would otherwise be long forgotten. From coal miners to university presidents, librarians to opera singers, sisters who survived the Tulsa Race Massacre to brothers who fought racism while serving in the Great War, to those who helped Abraham Lincoln become president, and so many more.

But as they say, all good things must come to an end. This was not an easy decision. The Walk is beloved by many in this community, including myself. I have been part of the Cemetery Walk my entire career at the Museum – for over 19 years.

The Museum is, above all, committed to our mission of preserving, educating, and collaborating in sharing the diverse stories of the people of McLean County.

This county, the largest in Illinois, is significantly more diverse than it was 30 years ago. If people are to continue connecting with local history, they need to be able to see themselves in the stories we tell and we must look for new avenues to engage our ever-evolving audiences.

The world is significantly different than it was 30 years ago. The Museum is significantly different than it was 30 years ago. And we're not alone in that. Organizations throughout the country are struggling to provide the same level of high-quality programming with the limited number of resources available to them. For example, our partners, Illinois Voices Theatre-Echoes, have decided to disband after this season. We share similar challenges: diminishing resources, rising costs, and changing audience needs.

What happens next? Well, you'll have to stay tuned. We're developing new programs to respond to our community's needs innovatively, just as we did 30 years ago.

The Museum will always champion the preservation of our local history. We will always collaborate with our community partners to make history accessible for all. We will always provide educational opportunities to meet the emerging needs of our community. And most importantly, we will never leave the legacy of the Cemetery Walk behind. It is a piece of history in its own right whose influence will continue for many years to come, all while we create new ways to preserve and share the past.



We will collect memories from this Walk and Walks past in the coming months. We hope you will join us in celebrating this monumental (pun intended) occasion by sharing your memories on social media using the #cemwalkmems, emailing them to education@mchistory.org, and of course, by coming out to the cemetery during those first two weekends in October.

This year's Walk features fan favorites from previous years, including:

- ISU's first librarian, **Ange Milner (1856-1928)**
- Bloomington businesswoman **Georgina Trotter (1836-1904)**
- Educator **Sarah Raymond Fitzwilliam (1842-1918)**
- Labor activist **June Crandall (1878-1910)**
- Clairvoyant **Sophia Huggins (1831-1903)**
- Reporter **Madame Annette (1865-19??)**
- Civic leader **Eva Jones (1930-1987)**

Plus, this year's Visiting Voices are Stake n' Shake Founders **Gus (1895-1954)** and **Edith (1896-1973) Belt!**

To learn more about this year's featured characters, please visit mchistory.org and click the "Research" tab. There you will find their complete biographies, along with over 200 other biographies of previously featured characters.

The Grand Finale of the Evergreen Cemetery Walk is happening October 5-6 & 12-13, with performances at 11 a.m. and 2 p.m. each day. Tickets go on sale September 10 online at mchistory.org, and in person at the Museum or Evergreen Memorial Cemetery. Museum Members will have an exclusive opportunity to get your tickets first, so make sure you're subscribed to our email list to access the pre-sale information. Tickets are \$18 for Museum Members, \$8 for Students, and \$20 for the general public.

Can't make it out to the in-person Walk? The Virtual Evergreen Cemetery Walk Grand Finale will be available to stream in November. Tickets for the Virtual Walk are \$25 for General Public Households and \$20 for Museum Member Households.

Questions? Email education@mchistory.org



New to Collections

PHOTOGRAPHS

- 52 tintypes circa the 1860s, featuring unidentified individuals and groups in a studio setting, discovered in attic above third floor of 118 W. Washington St. in Bloomington. *Donated by Russel Francois.*
- Brokaw Hospital (Nursing) Training School photos, 1921-22, once held by donor's grandmother, Bertha Gordon, a class of 1922 graduate. *Donated by Laura S. Gibson.*
- Gridley High School class of 1936, with 19 portraits. *Donated by Sharon Phelan.*
- Seven women (including donor's mother, Elsie Fort Schalk) in front of a Bloomington apartment building, on "Victory in Europe Day," May 8, 1945. *Donated by Sara Kellum.*
- Assortment of photos from Trinity High School, including students in caps and gowns on school steps, 1946; three first communion photos, St. Mary's Catholic Church, Bloomington, 1954, 1955, and 1956. *Donated by Jeff Collins.*
- Collection of family photographs related to Jean Quinn (1929-2017) and parents Forrest and Ruth Maguire Quinn. *Donated by Cindy Quinn.*
- Meadow Gold Dairy employees, undated; Snow & Palmer Dairy executive / board members, undated; other items. *Donated by Jeff Emmert.*
- Photo album of the Hasty family from the Colfax area, early twentieth century (album rescued by donor from public garage sale). *Donated by Sharon L. Durham.*
- Two large-format negatives of wrecked vehicle at S.F. Miller Garage, Bloomington (donor's great-grandfather "Doc" Miller was garage owner). *Donated by Rhonda Umstatt.*
- Set of photographs relating to George Kober's service in the Civilian Conservation Corps, 1935-36, 607th Co. at Camp Skokie Valley, IL. *Donated by Michael Kober.*
- Photographs including the construction of the Town of Normal outdoor stage (today's Connie Link Amphitheatre) along Constitution Trail, 2007. *Donated by Ruth Cobb.*
- Set of Farrell family photographs, early twentieth century. *Donated by Olive Swearingen.*
- Four photographs relating to Frank William King Jr., 1924-25, including group portrait of Pantagraph Printing & Stationery employees. *Donated by Karen Witt and the family of Frank William King Jr.*
- Collection of Engle family photographs, late nineteenth and early twentieth century—supplement to existing Engle Family Papers Collection. *Donated by Cindy Radford on behalf of Nancy Sauer.*
- Three photographs, circa 1922, John William Heafer (donor's father) as a small child, standing in front of 1501 E. Taylor St., Bloomington. *Donated by Don Heafer.*
- Set of Carlock Township / Community High School photographs, including class photos (1943, 1944, and 1946) relating to donor's uncle Bill Fowler and aunts Betty and Bessie. *Donated by Tiffanee Fowler-Armes.*
- Collections of photo albums, 1980s to early 2000s, related to Eugene Field School—faculty, staff, students, activities, holidays, and schoolwide events. *Donated by Jeff and Jane Collins on behalf of Eugene Field School.*
- Photo album of the restoration of 1413 E. Grove St., Bloomington; and other photos. *Donated by David Beich.*

BOOKS

- *An Outstate Missouri Family Connects with Canada's Capital: A Memoir of 1953*, by donor, 2024. *Donated by Michael D. Sublett.*
- McLean County Centennial, Volume IV, Transactions of the McLean County Historical Society (1936), inscribed to Mrs. John McBarnes, from Wayne C. Townley, society president. *Donated by Don Allers.*
- *The House at the Top of the Bottoms: A Boy's Life during the Great Depression* (2021) by Michael L. Lockett; and other titles. *Donated by Greg Koos.*
- Three years of *The Centrix*, Central Catholic High School's yearbook, 1969, 1970, and 1971. *Donated by Diane Hawk.*
- *GM&O North: A Pictorial Review of the Last Ten Years of the Gulf Mobile and Ohio Railroad in Northern Illinois* (1976) by Robert P. Olmsted. *Donated by Mike Matejka.*
- Member directory, Park United Methodist Church, Bloomington, 1971; and a collection of local cookbooks, including *Green-Leafers* (4-H) Holiday Favorites, December 1992; and others. *Donated by Joann Steinberg.*
- *The High Road to Honor* (1925) by Julia Scott Vrooman, inscription to Ross Paulson, signed by Julia and Carl Vrooman. *Donated by Linnea Anderson.*
- Member directory, North Bridge Baptist Church, Normal, 2008. *Donated by Shirley Craig.*
- *Asbestos, Medical and Legal Aspects*, 5th edition (2005). *Donated by James G. Walker.*
- Large-format, bound McLean County plat book, circa 1922. *Donated by Farnsworth Group.*

Continued on next page...

- Collection of booklets, brochures, and ephemera from the 1933 Chicago World's Fair—"Century of Progress." *Donated by Frank and Sue Kemp.*

OBJECTS

- Illinois Soldiers and Sailors Children's Home child-size chair, circa 1889-1931. *Donated by Candace Brown.*
- Prairie Pride Coalition promotional materials: tablecloth, drink holder, hand-held fan, all circa 2023. *Donated by Dave Bentlin.*
- Civilians Conservation Corps (CCC) Mess Kit and cup, 1934; CCC jar lid, circa 1936. *Donated by Kevin Lowery.*
- Illinois Central Railroad train conductor's ticket punch, circa 1900. *Donated by Linda Lacy.*
- Illinois State University eclipse glasses, 2024. *Donated by Beth and Norris Porter.*
- Hand-rhinestoned drag gown, circa 2000s. *Donated by Sharon Sharealike.*
- Mennonite College of Nursing print, 1999. *Donated by Tamara Olson.*

ARCHIVAL MATERIALS

- Set of blueprints, Phoenix (one-room) School, Towanda Township, remodeling project by Bloomington architect George Miller. *Donated by Ed Carmody.*
- Papers relating to U.S. Army Cpl. Vinel Rist Jr. (great uncle of donor), killed in action, February 12, 1951, in Korea. *Donated by Jeff Emmert.*
- Several issues of American Agriculturalist, 1891-92, held by donor's great-grandfather William Christian Detloff. *Donated by Karen J. Downen.*
- Compact disc, 33rd Illinois Volunteer Regiment Band, "A Tribute to Our Leader" (Gary Borling), recorded in 2001. *Donated by Kirby Reese.*

- Linden Lead 'Em 4-H Club scrapbook, 1949-1953, compiled by Dorothy Siebert, includes photographs and programs relating to camping, softball, and other activities. *Donated by Carol Ropp.*
- Additions to the George Kober archive file, including records relating to the Civilian Conservation Corps, 1935-36, and International Machinists union. *Donated by Michael Kober.*
- Collection of newspaper clippings, promotional material, and other items pertaining to the 33rd Illinois Volunteer Regiment Band, Civil War Weekend (1995-1998), and other "living history" related activities. *Donated by Ruth Cobb.*
- Additions to the Bloomington-Normal Black History Project Collection, including papers from the Black Family History Workshop, 1989; and conceptual site plan for Poetry Place, Sheridan School, Bloomington, no date. *Donated by Jack Muirhead.*
- Wide assortment of materials relating to local music, including vinyl records, cassette tapes, compact discs, flyers, newspaper clippings, and more covering acts such as Timothy P. and the Rural Route Three, Prairieland Dixie Band, and more. *Donated by Ruth Cobb.*
- "The Lake Runner," newsletter of the Lake Run Club, April 2000 to August 2009. *Donated by Mike Sennett.*
- Second and third releases—compact disc (2023) and cassette tape (2024)—of the "no below editions" record label of Bloomington, with donor and Lisa Lofgren serving as the label's art department. *Donated by Matt Erickson.*
- Research paper, "Why Is Sarah's Garden Significant?" and accompanying timeline, "Sarah's Garden & Life," compiled and written by donor. *Donated by Marcia D. Young.*

- Material relating to late artist Harold Gregor's painting, "Illinois Landscape #120" (1992), which hung in Barack Obama's U.S. Senate office and then the White House, including a color print of then-Sen. Obama standing in front of the painting, with a signed inscription of thanks from Obama. *Donated by Marlene Gregor.*
- Large collections of scrapbooks, binders, folders, VHS tapes, and other items from Eugene Field School, Normal, much of it related to the PTA and associated activities, 1930s to early 2000s. *Donated by Jeff and Jane Collins on behalf of Eugene Field School.*
- Booklet, 1956 general election voter's guide (Dwight D. Eisenhower vs. Adlai E. Stevenson II), distributed to employees of the Wire Division of U.S. Steel. *Donated by Patricia Radue.*
- Additions to the Whelan Irish genealogy correspondence collection, including photographs and greeting cards. *Donated by Mike Whelan.*
- Various items, including three-ring binder, "History of Planned Parenthood of McLean County," compiled by donor, includes typed history, correspondence, brochures, constitution and bylaws, and more. *Donated by Kay Wilson.*
- Several items, including four issues of "Diamond Notes," 1995-97, the newsletter of the Bloomington-Normal Girls Softball Association. *Donated by George Perkins.*
- Office of Civilian Defense certificate, January 1944, for Earl B. Erion. *Donated by Dale W. Bumpus.*
- December 1994 issue of Woman's Review magazine published in Towanda; and other items. *Donated by Terri Clemens.*

Continued on next page...

- Fall 2023 issue of *New Hibernia Review*, including donor's article, "The Greening of the Prairie: Irish Settlement and Farming in the Illinois Corn Belt." *Donated by Greg Koos.*
- Illinois Soldiers' and Sailors' Children's School (ISSCS) Historical Preservation Society newsletters, including August 1999 (first issue); ISSCS reunion booklets, 2011 and 2012; various items from Normal Parks and Recreation Department's High School Summer Theatre program, including playbills, 1970s to 2000s. *Donated by Ruth Cobb.*
- Memoranda book kept by the Rev. Caleb Hainline (1814-1901), Disciples of Christ / Christian Church, with December 1, 1890, entry on debate over music in worship. *Donated by Barbara Craig-Schniepp.*
- Addition to existing Margaret Fuller Club Collection—minutes book, September 2011 to June 2023. *Donated by the Margaret Fuller Club.*
- Accordion-style set of 18 postcard views of Bloomington, published by W.B. Read & Co., Bloomington. *Donated by Don Heafer.*
- Collection of materials relating to the Not In Our Town organization in the 1990s and 2000s. *Donated by Darlene Miller.*
- Compact disc, "The Stevenson Victory March" (Adlai E. Stevenson II presidential campaign, 1952 or 1956), vocals by donor's aunt, Betty V. McNamara. *Donated by Mike McNamara.*
- Collection of materials pertaining to donor's involvement in the Equal Rights Amendment campaign, mostly dating to 2018, including correspondence. *Donated by Sally Pancrazio.*
- Various items, including papers relating to Lester W. Kerfoot's (donor's grandfather) Civilian Conservation Corps service, 1934-35; route collection books and other related items from donor's time as a Daily Pantagraph carrier, 1969-74; and much more. *Donated by Kevin Lowery.*
- Three binders on Eureka Co. history, with an emphasis on labor relations, compiled by employee Roseanne Cornett (1948-2020); and other items. *Donated by Dan and Connie Hardesty.*
- Illustration of Dr. Stanley Thomas Cavins (profile in letters spelling out his name), with "Biasi's 1937" in the lower right). *Donated by Jim White.*
- Items relating to donor's mother, Goldie Edith Peyton Wilson (1917-2022), including autograph book; Gridley High School report cards, 1933-34 through 1935-36. *Donated by Sharon Phelan.*
- Wilson Official Score Book with two McLean County 4-H softball games—June 8 and July 17, 1952—featuring the Kickapoo Rangers (team's roster included donor). *Donated by Shannon E. Perry.*
- Additions to the Beich family and Beich Co. collections, including Paul F. Beich Co. promotional materials. *Donated by David Beich.*
- Paul F. Beich Co. posters and promotional items relating to the "Whiz" bar, as well as "School Chews" and a peanut bun; 1944 U.S. Government contract notice to employees regarding work hours and paid overtime, posted at the Beich Co. (donor worked at Beich / Nestle from 1962 to 2002). *Donated by Wendell Sutton.*
- Compact disc, "The Hearts Come Thru in '82," an account of the Bloomington Hearts men's fastpitch softball team's 1982 season, narrated by donor, longtime WJBC AM 1230 on-air personality. *Donated by Don Munson.*
- David Davis Mansion State Historic Site items, including Mansion Foundation newsletters, 2017-18; "Christmas at the Mansion" 2011 poster; and more. *Donated by John Elterich.*
- Jean Quinn (1929-2017) papers, including correspondence, notebooks, cards, and other items (Quinn, raised on a dairy farm in the Shirley area, attended Ben Funk School, and graduated from McLean High School). *Donated by Cindy Quinn.*
- Trinity High School, Bloomington, items, including speech at class breakfast, May 27, 1945. *Donated by Jeff Collins.*



Featured Artifact

Kevin Lowery donated his father Lester W. Kerfoot's Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) Mess Kit, circa 1934 earlier this summer. Kerfoot used it during his time in the CCC from 1932 to 1936 in Medford, Oregon. The CCC was a New Deal work program established in 1933, open to young, single men. The enrollees went to work camps across the country where they labored on public environmental projects including planting trees, constructing wildlife refuges, trails, water storage basins, bridges, and campground facilities. In exchange for their work, they received food, lodging, and pay, an extremely lucrative deal during the country's economic depression. Upon completing his service Kerfoot moved to Bloomington to be near family, and later married Ruth Eloise DeVore, setting down roots in the area.

Upcoming Events

September

Museum Closed for Labor Day Holiday

Monday, September 2

Unity Community Garden Tour Day - Ginger, Cover Crops, Vegetable Tips & More!

Thursday, September 5, 10-11 a.m. and 5:30-6:30 p.m. at Unity Community Center

Exhibit Opening: A Deadly Deception - The Asbestos Tragedy in McLean County

Saturday, September 7 at 1:30 p.m.

Bent Elementary 100 Superstar Years

Saturday, September 7 from 4-6 p.m. at Bent Elementary

Lunch & Learn: Arcadia - America's Playable Arcade Museum on Route 66

Thursday, September 12 at 12:10 p.m.

Latinx Immigration Stories Panel Discussion

Tuesday, September 17 at 7:00 p.m.

DAR America 250: Revolutionary War Marker Dedication and Reception

Saturday, September 21 from 1:30-3:00 p.m.

October

30th Anniversary Evergreen Cemetery Walk

Saturdays and Sundays October 5-6 and October 12-13 at 11 a.m. and 2 p.m.

Lunch & Learn: What's New at the Zoo with Jay Pratte

Thursday, October 10 at 12:10 p.m.

Lunch & Learn: Special Election Edition with Dr. Andrew Hartman

Friday, October 18 at 12:10 p.m.

November

Día de Muertos Celebración

Friday, November 1 from 5-8 p.m.

History Reads Book Club

Wednesday, November 6 at 7:00 p.m. at BPL

Exploring a 700-year-old Native American Village in McLean County with Dr. Logan Miller

Tuesday, November 12 at 6:30 p.m.

Lunch & Learn: What's Next for Rivian?

Thursday, November 14 at 12:10 p.m.

Knit In at the Museum

Saturday, November 16 from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Museum Closed for Thanksgiving

Thursday, November 28

Livingston's Santa Dedication Ceremony

Saturday, November 30 at 11:30 a.m.

December

Christmas Under the Dome

Friday & Saturday, December 6 & 7

Museum Closed for Staff Development

Wednesday, December 11

Lunch & Learn: Christmastime at Ewing Manor

Thursday, December 12 at 12:10 p.m.

LUNCH & Learn

McLean County at the
MUSEUM of HISTORY

2024 Fall Schedule

Every second Thursday of the month grab your lunch and join us at the Museum or online at youtube.com/mchistorymuseum to learn something new!

12 SEPT

ARCADIA- AMERICA'S PLAYABLE ARCADE MUSEUM WITH JOHN YATES

Learn why John chose to build an "arcade paradise" in McLean, Illinois, and his plans to open a fourth arcade, "Arcadia Unlimited."

WHAT'S NEW AT THE ZOO! MILLER PARK UPDATE WITH JAY PRATTE

Learn from Jay Pratte, director of Miller Park Zoo, as he shares expert insights about the Zoo, the animals, and new initiatives staff are working on.

10 OCT

18 OCT

SPECIAL ELECTION EDITION WITH ANDREW HARTMAN

Learn from Illinois State University History Professor Dr. Andrew Hartman's expert insights ahead of this historic election.

THE NEXT GENERATION AT RIVIAN

Learn more about what's happening at the Normal plant and in the community from Rivian's own Laura Ewan.

14 NOV

12 DEC

CHRISTMAS PAST AND PRESENT AT EWING MANOR

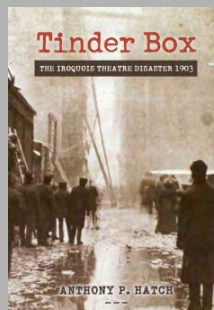
Learn about Christmases of yesteryear at Ewing Manor from Toni Tucker who will provide behind the scenes insights into holiday celebrations past and present.

Día de Muertos Celebration



free all ages event featuring
live music • community ofrenda • art-making
Friday, November 1 from 5-8 p.m.

History Reads Book Club is hosted quarterly in partnership with BPL and focuses on books about Illinois History. The final meeting of 2024 will be on November 6 at 7 p.m. to discuss *Tinder Box: The Iroquois Theatre Disaster, 1903* by Anthony P. Hatch.



To reserve a print copy of the book, contact the Help Desk at 309-590-6168 or reference@bloomingtonlibrary.org.

Christmas Under the Dome

Friday, December 6 from 5-8 p.m.
Saturday, December 7 from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m.

A free family-friendly event with
live music, crafts, refreshments, and Santa!

Please visit mchistory.org/events for more information on all our upcoming programs and events.



McLean County MUSEUM of HISTORY

200 N. Main St. Bloomington, IL 61701

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Mystery History Quiz

Last issue's mystery snapshot featured the construction of the Lake Bloomington public beach bathhouse during the summer of 1934. Once located along the lake's northwestern shore near the Davis Lodge, the public beach and bathhouse are long gone.

Those history sleuths who knew some or all of the answer included Thomas Cherry, Jim Gildersleeve, Jim Raymond, Michael Sublett, and Jeanne Wroan. Roger Elliott sent us a nice writeup on the history of the bathhouse. Thanks Roger. We also heard from Ed Lundeen Jr., who told us he lifeguarded there during his younger days!

Who out there can identify our newest mystery photo? What was this building? Where was it located? If you think you have the answers, reach out to Museum Librarian Bill Kemp at 309-827-0428 or bkemp@mchistory.org. As always, good luck!

