



History Matters!

**Newsletter of the Effingham County Cultural Center and
Museum**

Effingham, Illinois

Volume 7, Issue 2

April - May - June, 2020

New Artwork Display System @ Museum



A new system for exhibiting the work of Effingham Art Guild members was recently put into place on the west wall of the central hallway of Level I. The rails, rods and hooks are strong and flexible, allowing for various sized canvases and frames to be securely displayed. The system is similar to the one in use at the Effingham Public Library. It was funded by a Jordan grant via the Southeastern Illinois Community Foundation.

(Photo courtesy of Jane Ries)

MISSION STATEMENT

The **Mission** of the Effingham County Museum is to preserve our Historic Register structure, to collect artifacts from county history, and to use them to educate our local and external communities, while immersed in the broader context of American history. Our **Vision** is that the 1872 Effingham County Courthouse remains as an architectural gem that instills a sense of community pride and provides a venue to educate and showcase the history, art, and transportation of Effingham County. The parent organization for the Effingham County Museum is the Effingham County Cultural Center and Museum Association, Inc, which is a 501(c) 3 organization.

Regular Hours **MUSEUM Now Closed Temporarily**

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

Accessibility

The museum is wheelchair accessible from the east side entrance just off the parking lot. Toilet facilities that are wheelchair accessible can be found in the Gallery 1 of the first level and in the Northwest corner of Level 2.

Collection Building

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

Board and Officers

President	Delaine Donaldson
Vice President	Jane Ries
Secretary	LoElla Baker
Treasurer	Allen Westendorf
Members at Large	Jerry Katz
	Amy Gillespie
	Linda Ruholl
	Susan Hoelscher
	Dr. Ruben Boyajian, Emeritus

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Visit us on Facebook @:	Effingham County Courthouse Effingham Ill

1st quarter 2020 events

January 9, 2020 Historic Lecture: *Montrose-150 Years*

Kelly Thoele presented the history of Montrose, Illinois as the village prepares to celebrate 150 years. Kelly explained that possession was originally asserted by the French. After the Revolutionary War, Virginia laid claim to it. Although there were Native Americans in the area, no Caucasians actually settled there in the early days of Illinois' statehood.

The first road through Montrose and St. Francis Township was the Old National Road, which was laid out in the early 1830s. The first railroad was the Vandalia line, but it was not completed until 1868. The earliest settlers came around 1845. This included men like Abraham Marble and William Wallace. The land around Montrose was covered with heavy prairie grass and considerable effort was needed to make it farmable.



This was main street Montrose about 100 years ago. Some of the landmarks from the early days are still standing. One of them is the Crews Bank on the farm right of the photo.



Kelly presented the profile of many Montrose residents of note, some of whom have been forgotten. One such character is Lawrence Yates Sherman. He was a lawyer and a judge, and served in Illinois House of Representatives (1897-1905), and then as Lt. Governor from 1905-1900. He was the US Senator from Illinois from 1913-1921, although he did retire in 1920 because he could not hear the discussions on the Senate floor. Both his wives were from Montrose. First, he married Ella May Crews (of the Crews bank family). She died in 1893; then in 1908, Sherman married Mary Estelle Spitler. They had one daughter, Mary Virginia. After retirement, he lived in Florida. Upon his death, his body was brought back to Illinois and he is buried in Spitler plot in the Faunce Cemetery near Montrose.

1st quarter 2020 events

February 13, 2020 Historic Lecture: *AUSTIN COLLEGE*



Delaine Donaldson presented the fourth in the 2019-2020 Historic Lecture series on February 13. Austin College's creation was catalyzed by a meeting of forward-thinking men in 1889. The original group was composed of Dr. J. B. Walker, Professor W. H. Deets, Phil Crooker, and L. H. Bissell. Their intent was simply to make Effingham a better place to live.

Alfred Bliss was gifted orator, and his speeches convinced local people to sign up for a subscription service that would at least partially fund the school's operation.

The college's original charter was granted on January 4, 1890, under the name, Effingham Collegiate Institute and Conservatory of Music. Shortly thereafter, it was renamed the Austin College and Normal Institute, partially in honor of the Austin family's financial support, but also in acknowledgement that a major focus of the school's curriculum would be on teacher education.

Nellie Bliss White donated a four acre plot of land. It was near Bliss Park, and bounded by the streets College, Park, Lawrence and Clark. The cornerstone was laid on October 22, 1890 and the entire community celebrated the event. There was a parade lead the Masons that went past homes and businesses ornately decorated to commemorate the event. By July of 1891, construction was complete, and the community turned out again to tour the facility and to hear the dedication speech given by the President of DePauw University. People were particularly impressed by the interior decor and the well-equipped physics and biology labs.

Educational visionary W. E. Lugenbeel was hired away from a college in Indiana to serve as Austin College's first President. He in turn recruited faculty with impressive curriculum vitae, and developed standards for student conduct that assumed students would conduct themselves as ladies and gentlemen. Things went well for several years, and the college was deemed successful. About 80% of the students were from Effingham County, with others from the collar counties, and some from out of state. The first graduation was held in 1893, and the college quickly expanded its offerings and services in a number of ways.

Unfortunately, the Great Panic of 1893 led to the failure of 14,000 businesses in this country, and Effingham eventually felt the impact. Subscription money stopped flowing in. Attorney Henry Kepley tried to shore up the treasury by rallying for donations, but the positive effect was short-lived. In addition, widespread publicity about several student drownings at Lake Kananga bothered parents, as did the 1903 reports about fights between Austin College students and enrollees at the Illinois College of Photography. Things kept unraveling. A new President was hired, but the Rev. D. R. Bebout was unsuccessful in turning the tide, and Austin College closed for good in 1904. Nevertheless, Austin College was a grand experiment and source of pride and quality education in its time.

March 12, 2020 Historic Lecture: ST. ANTHONY HOSPITAL BEFORE THE FIRE



Dr. Linda Ruholl presented her research into the care given at St. Anthony Hospital before it burned in 1949. Most of her presentation was derived from her book-in-progress, *The St. Anthony Hospital Fire of 1949: Assessment, Analysis and Consequences*.

The starting point for this research is at the juncture of two books written by Hospital Sisters of St. Francis: a 100 year history of the Order by Sister Francis Cooke, and a 100 year history of St. John's School of Nursing by Sister Agnes McDougall. A distinct problem with these otherwise useful books is that they provide scant information about medical and nursing care provided at St. Anthony's from the time the Sisters got settled in Effingham in the late 1870s until the year the hospital was destroyed.

To fill this gap, Dr. Ruholl mined the materials at the Effingham County Museum and the Effingham County Genealogical and Historical Society, and integrated them with the many digital resources now available online. What emerged was a series of snapshots revealing the kinds of medical resources available locally during those years, and the manner in which those were resources were used to give medical and nursing care.

Some well known local residents spent their final days at the hospital. For example, Ada Kepley, the first woman in the United States to graduate from a school of law, died there in 1925. Ten years later, Teutopolis brick maker and wooden shoe craftsman George Deymann's days came to an end there when he was 88. Two hospital chaplains died two years apart and in the same room: Father O'Reilly in 1947 and Father Sandon in 1949.

It turned out that St. Anthony's was on the cutting edge in some cases, using techniques such as direct person-to-person typed blood transfusions early in the trajectory of their general availability nation-wide. The hospital structure enlarged to answer a demand for beds as local people came to know and trust the institution. Surgeons tackled difficult cases, and the religious and lay staff figured out how to complement that skill in the cause of their patients' long-term survival.

Still, there were many tragedies. Some of them had to do with trauma, home and farm accidents that happened because people didn't know how to properly store poisons or how to use hydrocarbon products like kerosene.

Infectious diseases were a challenge, as antibiotics did not become available until near the very end of the period. Viral infections ranged from rabies to polio. Three HSSF succumbed to the Spanish flu three days apart in October of 1918. There were patients with bacterial infections as well, including smallpox, staph and strep, tuberculosis, typhoid and tetanus. The year 1939 brought a spate of deaths from tularemia ("rabbit fever").

Dr. Ruholl summarized by saying that the years 1900 - 1950 was marked by hospitalizations for a wide variety of diagnoses. The care that was given was appropriate for the years in question. Overall, health improved over the years. Vaccinations were more available and more widely accepted. Antibiotic therapy made a big different when it finally arrived. Drugs and diet therapy mitigated the negative impacts on life expectancy from diabetes and heart disease. Most importantly, public education related to safety and staying healthy was presented in multiple ways in schools, home extension units, and by public health nurses.

AASLH

ANNUAL REPORT 2019

The Board of the Effingham County Museum is pleased to announce that the American Association of State and Local History's recent *Annual Report* reveals that we were one of only 42 museums in the country to be awarded StEPs certificates in 2019. Furthermore, we are one of just two museums in the State of Illinois.

StEPs is an acronym that represents **Standards and Excellence Program for History Organizations**. Each certificate requires the Museum to meet a set of specific standards, all of which are based on national criteria.

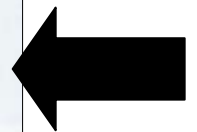
Organizations Earning StEPs Certificates in 2019

African American Cultural and Historical Museum, Ann Arbor, MI
 Alf Engen Ski Museum Foundation, Park City, UT
 Archaeological Repository of Colorado State University, Fort Collins, CO
 Bainbridge Island Historical Museum, Bainbridge Island, WA
 Bay-Lakes Council Scout Museum, BSA, Oostburg, WI
 Bellefontaine Cemetery and Arboretum, St. Louis, MO
 Berman Museum, Anniston, AL
 Bishop Baraga Association, Marquette, MI
 Black Heritage Society of Washington State, Seattle, WA
 Bosque Museum, Clifton, TX
 Butler County Historical Society, Hamilton, OH
 Cache Pioneer Museum, Logan, UT
 Cass County Historical Society, Plattsmouth, NE
 City of Greeley Museums, Greeley, CO
 City of Miami Black Police Precinct and Courthouse Museum, Miami, FL
 Cleo Redd Fisher Museum, Loudonville, OH



Dickinson County Historical Society, Abilene, KS
 Effingham County Cultural Center and Museum Association, Effingham, IL
 Evansville African American Museum, Evansville, IN
 Farmers Branch Historical Park, Farmers Branch, TX
 Fort Douglas Military Museum, Salt Lake City, UT
 The Griot Museum of Black History, St. Louis, MO

The Historical Cherryvale Museum, Inc., Cherryvale, KS
 Historical and Cultural Society of Clay County, Moorhead, MN
 Historical Society of Palm Desert, Palm Desert, CA
 Hyrum City Museum, Hyrum, UT
 Jack Jouett House Historic Site, Versailles, KY
 Jackson County Historical Society, Independence, MO
 Johnston Historical Society, Johnston, IA
 Kent-Delord House Museum, Plattsburgh, NY
 Lacey Historical Society, Forked River, NJ
 Lafayette Miners Museum, Lafayette, CO
 Luzerne County Historical Society, Wilkes-Barre, PA
 Manitowoc County Historical Society, Manitowoc, WI
 McHenry County Historical Society and Museum, Union, IL
 Navy Lakehurst Historical Society, Lakehurst, NJ
 Ogden Union Station Museum, Ogden, UT
 Pioneer Museum Fredericksburg, Fredericksburg, TX
 PBY Memorial Foundation, Oak Harbor, WA
 Tuckerton Seaport and Baymen's Museum, Tuckerton, NJ
 Uintah County Heritage Museum, Vernal, UT
 Union County Historical Society, Lewisburg, PA
 Vintage Automobile Museum of New Jersey, Point Pleasant, NJ



New Exhibits World War 2: Level 1 of Museum

Gallery 1



Local nurses who served in World War 2



Exhibits by Jane Ries



← **Joseph Richards**

↑ **Dr. Frank Weber, Teutopolis**

The photo on pages 7 - 8 - 9 - 10 - 11 are a mere sampler of the exhibits prepared for your viewing pleasure when the Effingham County Museum reopens.

New Vietnam Era Exhibits Gallery 4



Exhibits created by Jane Ries

New Ladies' Accessories Exhibit Gallery 4



New Celebrating Nursing 1900-1950 in Gallery 4



Exhibits created by Linda Ruholl & Cailey Dasenbrock

New Exhibits Second Level



Effingham agriculture created by Delaine Donaldson

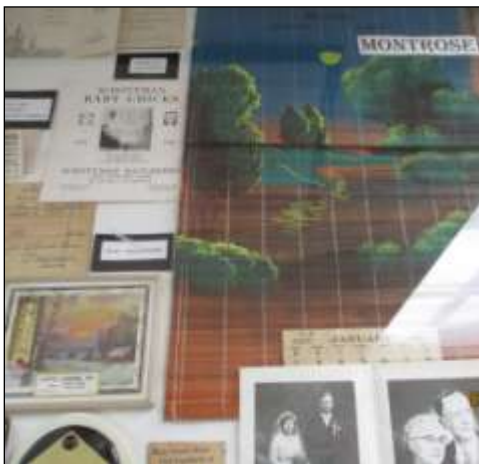


Effingham Post Office Time Capsule exhibit created by Delaine Donaldson

More New Second Level Exhibits



↑Homer Luttrell created by LoElla Baker



Montrose 150 Years created by LoElla Baker↑



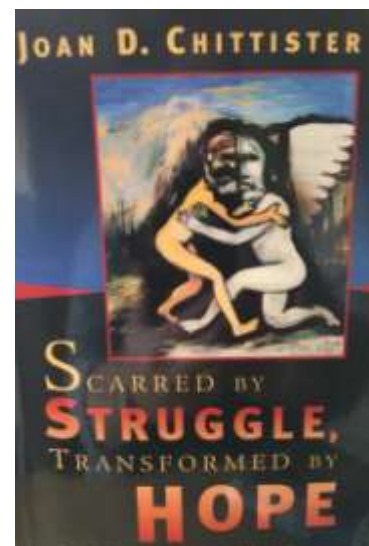
↑Centenary United Methodist Church created by Jane Ries

A Reflection from Newsletter Editor Linda Ruholl

This is an interesting time to be a historian, as we share a sense of bearing witness to history being made. Part of bearing witness is the role of observer. I have been watching the news keenly and observing the responses to COVID-19 at the local, state, and national level. Each in our own way, we at the Museum wonder what the long-term impact will be on us as individuals, and on the Museum as an entity. My sense is that the impact will be different from what we expect, but nevertheless, profound and long-lasting. Another part of bearing witness is reflection on one's observations. As one of those "older people", I am doing my best to "stay at home". In between discarding tissues, hand washing, and spraying counters, I've been doing a considerable amount of reading. In the case of the book to the right, that is re-reading, as it was originally published in 2003.

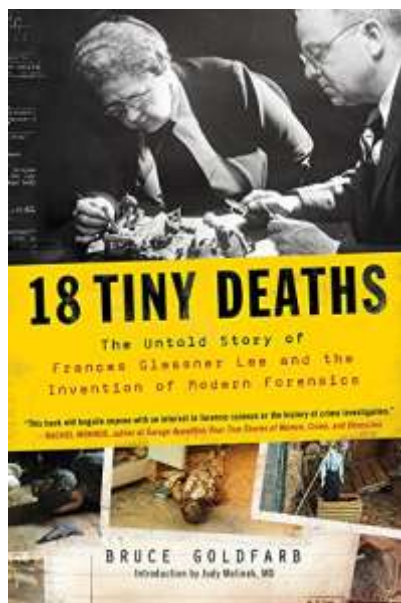
Chittister's thesis is that we never have it made - we will always struggle. We can take one of three approaches to conflict: We can whine it away; we can blame somebody and turn sour; or we can struggle with it, allow hope to transform us, learn from misfortune, and become better people. This process takes time - but we have time now, perhaps more than we want.

The post-modern artwork on the cover is disconcerting, but it is closely tied to the title. The painting was created by a Polish Holocaust artist, Samuel Bak. Although they were Jewish, he and his mother survived German occupation by periodically hiding in the basement of a Benedictine convent.



The chapters are short; a good way to start your morning prayer/reflection, if you have formed that habit.

March is Women's History Month, and I just finished the book at the left. The central thesis of this biography is perseverance. Frances Glessner is a native of Chicago, Illinois. She could have had a life of socialite leisure, as her family was well-to-do. Her father was the Vice President of Harvester International.



After a tonsillectomy at age 9, she developed a keen interest in medicine. Through family connections, she was able to go with some doctors as they made home visits. A couple of them even allowed her to assist with procedures. When her brother went to Harvard Medical School, she tracked his coursework. But in keeping with societal expectations, she got married and launched a family. That didn't work for her; there was a major mismatch between her husband's conservative approach to life and her interest in continual learning.

Eventually, she made it her mission to launch a forensic medicine program at Harvard University Medical School. Harvard didn't really want the program at first, but they did want her money. She had no college degree. The field of forensics was in its infancy, with no suitable curriculum upon which to base a course of study. So she started collecting books that contributed to what was an emerging field of science. By reading them, she taught herself about how medicine and law are intertwined. She found that the coroner role in the east was a political plum, handed out by patronage and much of the time, very corrupt. The "cause of death" on a coroner's death certificate bore little relation to the scene of death.

Harvard did eventually establish Forensic Medicine Program and Glessner's money paid for most of it. In the process, she created dioramas with death scenes that allowed detectives to hone their observational skill during workshops. There were 18 of them; thus the title of the book.

The Glessner family home in Chicago is a museum on the south side. Like the Effingham County Museum, that Museum is closed as we move into the Spring Season.

A Message from the ECCMA Vice President



It has been a busy time since we closed for the season at the end of December. Once we got all of the Christmas things packed away, we started working on accessions. Accessions are when we catalog donations of items to the museum. When you donate something to the museum, we want you to know that we take good care of it. The items are written down on a form, entered into our museum program (Past Perfect), tagged, photographed and entered into the Past Perfect program, and packed away in museum quality acid free boxes. This is a very time-consuming process but it is a wonderful thing to be able to search by keyword for items in our collection. In a month we did over 40 accessions. I continue to check past accessions to correctly tag and photograph items that were stored prior to our purchase of the Past Perfect Program.

Once we completed putting away Christmas, we started work on new displays. Since we are a county museum, we strive to show items and/or people from as many townships in Effingham County as possible. We are an all-volunteer staff, so we don't have the personnel to change all displays but do our best to give the museum a fresh look for our re-opening in March. Every single display in the museum has been done by one of us. We do it as a labor of love and hope that you like them. A lot of time and research goes into each display.

I continue to be busy doing our museum's Facebook page. If you use Facebook, check out our page, Effingham County Courthouse Museum, Effingham IL. I do a lot of research and have thousands and thousands of pictures on my computer at home to keep this page as informative as possible. In the morning, I share a picture and information from different locations around Effingham County. In the evening, I feature a military veteran from Effingham County. This allows us to keep in touch with people from all over who have a connection to Effingham County.

We had many events scheduled for April and May. These programs have been temporarily put aside due to safety concerns. We will let you know if and when they are available.

WWII on the Homefront by Phil Lewis

Annual Lincoln Program (in conjunction with Lake Land College)

Salute to the Military from the 1980s to Present

British Bulldog – Winston Churchill (presented by Effingham Public Library)

WWII V-E Day – Effingham County Was There (75th Anniversary of Victory in Europe)

Please know that no matter the circumstances, the Effingham County Museum will continue to tell the story of Effingham County one picture, one person, and one place at a time. Hang in there and know that we are all in this together. This too shall pass.





**“THOSE WHO
ARE IGNORANT
OF HISTORY
ARE DOOMED
TO REPEAT IT”**

was a statement emblazoned across the narrow cork bulletin board at the front of the classroom in Effingham High School's room 207 nearly every year from Fall semester 1966-Spring semester 1997.

The statement, a paraphrase of one made by philosopher and writer George Santayana over a century ago, guided me as a social studies instructor throughout the course of my teaching career. It is still the center of my purpose today as a member of the Effingham County Museum Board. I want visitors to the Museum to know about the wonderful heritage of this part of the State of Illinois.

That personal philosophy also is based on an article which President Kennedy wrote for American Heritage magazine more than half a century ago. He believed that history is a pleasure for its own sake, as well as being a means of judgment. I agree. He stated that the past judges the present; that knowledge of history is a “means of sympathy by which we related our own experience with the experience of other people who have gone before us.” History provides strength.

He concluded the article by saying, “All of this leads to this final conclusion about history. It is a means of responsibility, above everything else responsibility to those who came before us and struggled and sacrificed to pass on our present precious inheritance of freedom, responsibility to those who will come after us and to whom we pass on that inheritance.”

It is my sincere desire that when visitors come to the historic Effingham County Courthouse and see all of the exhibits which are there, they experience the feelings which J.F.K. stated so eloquently many years ago. I strive to encourage displays throughout the building which make the visit a learning experience for all who enter the Museum.