

Summer 2016  
Newsletter #6

## ART SHOW IS HUGE SUCCESS!

When we started to consider an Earlville-Only Art Show as a fundraiser we had no idea how many talented artists would be revealed! Our only criteria was that the artist must have resided in Earlville at some time and that the artwork was limited to paintings or drawings.

Artists were solicited through Facebook posts and newspaper articles as well as word-of-mouth. During our research into artists of the past, we discovered Oliver Dennet Grover, an artist whose works were well-documented in the art community. In addition to his celebrated paintings of the Italian countryside, he is also known for painting the mural on the ceiling of the Blackstone Library in Chicago.

The majority of the exhibits were from amateur artists. The best part of the event was listening to the conversations among the 100+ attendees as they were amazed by the talent and surprised to discover “who” the artists were!

On the day of the event (May 1st, 2016) we had over 100 paintings from 30 artists. The event raised nearly \$1500 for the Historical Society—far beyond our expectations! The profits from the Art Show were used to purchase a laptop, printer and flat-screen TV for the Museum. These items will be used for inventory, presentations, copying pictures and documents, and viewing the many community interviews that have been recorded! Thank you to all of our volunteers and attendees!



### MUSEUM

136 S. Ottawa St.  
P.O. Box 683  
Earlville, IL 60518

### HOURS

Summer  
Saturday 10am-2pm  
Sunday 12pm-2pm

Anytime by appointment

Call:  
815-246-9778  
Or  
815-246-7076

[www.earlvillehistory.org](http://www.earlvillehistory.org)  
[earlville.history@yahoo.com](mailto:earlville.history@yahoo.com)

“Like” us on Facebook!



### Meetings

Starting in August our meetings will be on the second Thursday of the month at 6:30pm at the Museum. Meetings will change back to Saturday mornings during the winter months.

### 2016 Officers

Pres	Rich Goodbred
VP	Stan Meloy
Sec	Karen Wold
Treas	Carol Landers

## History of the Museum Building...

Did you know that our Museum building at 136 S Ottawa St. dates back to 1901? It was a Hardware Store then and remained a Hardware Store until 2013 when it was purchased by the Earlville Community Historical Society. The west end of the second floor was a welding and tin shop over the years, while the east end of the second floor has been an apartment as well as offices for attorneys and dentists. There is a hand-pulled elevator that went from the basement to the second floor (no longer functioning), and, at one time, there was a door to the alley so that supplies could be loaded directly into the elevator from the outside. Stop in and visit us, and we'll point out some of the unique features of this great old building.

A list of the owners or tenants of the building are as follows:

1901-1917	George Binder's Hardware
1917-1947	Frank Hughes' Hardware
1947-1953	Large and Johnson's Hardware
1953-1987	Large's Hardware
1987-2004	Flick's Hardware
2004-2005	Hatland's Hardware
2005-2009	Barrow's Hardware
2013	Earlville Community Historical Society Museum



### Earlville's Centennial 1963

Thanks to Volunteers Cindy Cook and Judy Konitzer who have been working on a display with pictures and memorabilia from the 1963 Centennial Celebration. If you have any interesting stories, movies, etc that you would like to share (we'll make copies), please email us at [earlville.history@yahoo.com!](mailto:earlville.history@yahoo.com)





## 'Spite Fence' Causes Uproar in Community

(as reported by the Earlville Leader November 4, 1937)

*Battle Still Going On; Gregg is Victor So Far.*

A wooden "spite fence" about eight feet high has created more excitement and interest in this community in the past week than anything has done in long, long time.

For nearly a week now, the battle was raged with first one side, then the other gaining the advantage with investigations by the sheriff with arrests and justice of the peace hearings, with nightly attacks on the fence and shotgun defenses of the structure.

Today the fence, still stands, badly leaning on one end, but standing just the same. And today the town is just as excited about the whole thing as it would be about a major election. For there are those who say the fence must come down, and there are those who are just as determined that it shall remain. And so the battle is about ready to go into its second week.

The whole thing started weeks ago after W. W. Gregg had purchased the Steve Lanka house on Stilson Avenue at the junction with Route 34. Mr. Gregg had the property surveyed, and it was discovered that the Gregg property line was farther north than had been indicated. In fact, the line ran through Mrs. Dollie Faust's cistern and the greater portion of her garden was on the Gregg property, so it is claimed. Then the battle started. No one knows just how, but this much has been visible to the public observation: Mr. Gregg tore up the garden on his property, filled in the cistern and then erected the eight foot high fence along the property line. The fence was within a few inches of Mrs. Faust's house and shut off the view from the lower story windows except at the very top of them.

Then came Halloween and pranksters gazed upon the fence with anticipation in their eyes. It was a perfect Halloween stunt to take that fence down. *(continued on page 4)*

## THANK YOU!!

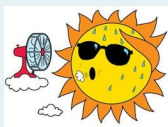
A big SHOUT OUT to a couple of Earlville High School Volunteers who provided strong backs and knees during our clean-up day at the Museum. It was hot, humid and musty work, but they did it all with a smile. Thanks Hayden Bomstad and Meghan Harness! Your time and effort were **greatly appreciated!**



*"Nothing makes me feel so old as having to scroll down to find my year of birth...."*

## EHS Alumni Meeting

The Museum was happy to welcome the EHS Class of 1966 and Class of 1956 for their pre-party prior to attendance at the Annual Earlville Alumni Mtg. We had one “small” snag in that our air conditioner broke 2 days before the event! YIKES! Thanks to Dave Grey who came to our rescue with a portable unit making it bearable on the hot, humid day.



Needless to say, we are now looking to replace the air conditioner as well as the very old furnace that serves our building. **All donations are welcomed!**

## ‘Spite Fence’ *(continued)*

But Mr. Gregg had other ideas and prepared to defend it against the assaults of the enemy. The attack was launched, if you can believe the stories you hear, and the attacking parties found themselves aided and abetted by gunfire. A few posts were sawed off, but the fence was so close to Mrs. Faust’s house that demolishing activities were severely limited there. The east end of the fence leaned over badly, but the Gregg’s still held their main objective.

The news spread, and Sunday night when the attack was renewed scores of people were on hand to watch the battle from the safety of cars or the school grounds across the street. The assault began. Gregg’s began a gunfire defense, and then turned to the strong arm of the law in the person of LaSalle county’s Sheriff Desper, who nobly responded with a force of deputies with all the implements of men in search of desperadoes.

But the attacking party withdrew in good order ahead of the sheriff’s rescue party and another night’s battle was o’er. The sheriff did do a little searching and checking of license plates, but the most he caught was some kidding and a few razberries.

The “spite fence” was now more than a kids’ Halloween prank. It had become a community-wide issue and the topic of every conversation. One faction took the slogan “The fence must come down” and others took the attitude of leaving it alone and avoiding trouble. Monday night came and with a new attack and another bombardment from the shotgun. One youth, Charles Kuntz, somehow or other got shot in the leg and as a result, made some threats. But Gregg’s defense was still too much and the fence withstood the attack.

The Tuesday, the Greggs went on the offensive.

Warrants were sworn out for Charles Kuntz, Mrs. Faust and four local youth whom the Gregg’s maintained had been seen in the vicinity. Back to Earlville came Sheriff Desper to “get his man” a feat which he accomplished easily.

Tuesday afternoon before Justice of the Peace Koenig in Ottawa the accused were hauled to face the charges. The defenders called no witnesses, had no lawyers. The Greggs called in character witnesses and others and testified in defense of their charges, which the defendants denied.

*(continued on page 5)*



## 'Spite Fence' *(continued)*

Results: Charles Kuntz was placed under \$1,500 peace bond for one year "because of the remarks he made after being shot."

Mrs. Dollie Faust was placed under \$500 peace bond "because she had threatened Gregg's life."

Bruce Carter was freed because there was absolutely no evidence against him. Robert Starks was freed for a like reason. (*The Ottawa paper also lists Robert Strong and Howard Cramer*)

One other youth pleaded "not guilty" but was assessed a fine without benefit of legal advise during the proceedings. Another youth pleaded guilty and paid a similar fine. It looked as though the Greggs had won their battle, but last night the fence was again the object of attack and more than ever does the warfare hold the community's attention. For there are still those who say, "we'll get that fence!"

But the fence still stands, somewhat the worse in spots for the punishment it has taken from saws on one side and gunshot on the other. And the community watches in a state of excitement to see what, if anything, will happen in the coming week.

*According to a short article in the Earlville Leader (11/11/1937) - "The purchase of a three foot strip of land by Frank Donovan, son of Mrs. Dollie Faust, ended the Earlville Spite Fence Dispute" and "Both factions are happy at the settlement and the misunderstanding has been completely ironed out."*



## Earlville Rangers Baseball

As many of you may remember, the Earlville Rangers baseball team provided lots of entertainment and community spirit over the years. The team was formed by Charlie Wilson sometime around 1903. He played and later managed the team. We are seeking more information about the team's origin as well as team pictures throughout their 70+ years of play. And, we'd really love some stories, memories, etc. from players as well as the fans who followed the team.

Email us at [earlville.history@yahoo.com](mailto:earlville.history@yahoo.com)



## Museum Visitors From Far and Away!

The number of guests visiting the Museum grows each month—most from out-of-town, out-of-state, and NOW, out-of-country! We were happy to welcome several guests from Australia who were in town during funeral services for the Holliday family. Thanks for making us part of your visit.

PS—We'd love to see some more LOCAL guests stop in, too, HINT, HINT.....

## Cemetery Records

We are taking on a big task in trying to compile a “searchable” spreadsheet for the Precinct Cemetery (and eventually the other church and small family cemeteries in our area). Completing this will help to move us closer to assisting families who are performing genealogy searches. In addition, we are slowly creating and adding to Family Folders. If you have done a genealogy search of your family we would love to make a copy and place it in our files.

## What's Next?

- This fall we plan to dismantle, rearrange and organize many of our displays while cleaning and painting the first floor of the Museum.
- Our volunteers are currently preparing to do some wall repair and build some cabinetry in our kitchenette/storage area at the west end of the first floor.
- We will also get back to developing some more of our “portable” displays so that we can bring them to groups and organizations in order to peak interest in the Museum.
- We'd love to host small groups or clubs at the Museum so if you are a member of a n organization, card club, etc. drop us a note using our email address—[earlville.history@yahoo.com](mailto:earlville.history@yahoo.com).

## Calendar



Aug. 11	ECHS Mtg
Aug. 25	EBA Mtg at Museum
Sep.	ECHS Mtg.

## Training for Volunteers

We are always in need of volunteers to help us fill out our schedule of open hours on the weekends at the Museum. We are staffing with 2 volunteers each shift so you will always have someone else with you. The shifts are usually just 2 hours during our hours of operation. If you'd like to help out (and at the same time learn a little more about our community) please drop us an email—[earlville.history@yahoo.com](mailto:earlville.history@yahoo.com)—or call Kris at 815-252-9380 or Anna at 815-985-3763.