

Fall/Winter 2017
Newsletter #10

2018 MEMBERSHIP DRIVE!!

The Earlville Community Historical Society and the Museum stay alive through memberships, donations and fundraising activities. We are a not-for-profit organization, and we do not receive funding from any other source. It is only through your generosity that we can continue to make improvements to the Museum and preserve the history of our great little community.

Dues for 2018 will be collected starting in November, so ***if you are an ANNUAL member (paying dues each year), it's time to renew!*** If you are already a Lifetime Member, this does not apply to you. We are grateful for all memberships and all donations, big and small!

Attached to this newsletter is a Membership Form. Please note that (after many years of no change) the dues have been increased this year. Please include the form with your check so that we can make sure that we have your information correct. If you have an email address, please be sure to include so that we can send you our newsletters electronically.



LET'S KEEP THESE NUMBERS GROWING!

	2015	2016	2017
TOTAL MEMBERS	95	112	147
Annual Members	32	32	32
Lifetime Members	63	80	115

MUSEUM

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

HOURS

Saturday 10am-2pm
Sunday 12pm-2pm
CLOSED JAN.-MAR.

Anytime by appointment
Call:
815-246-9778
815-985-3763

www.earlvillehistory.org
earlville.history@yahoo.com

"Like" us on Facebook!



Meetings

Our meetings are currently being held at 9am on the first Saturday of every month. Next meeting will be Saturday, Dec. 2nd, at the Museum.

2018 Officers

Pres	Rich Goodbred
VP	Stan Meloy
Sec	Karen Wold
Treas	Kris Goodbred
Directors:	Tracy Smith Bill Mitchell Larry Maly

STILL LOOKING FOR INFORMATION ABOUT YOUR HOUSE!



We are currently researching the history of many of the homes in Earlville. If your house was built between 1908-1940, chances are it may have been a "Sears-Kit Home". You can look online at <http://www.searsarchives.com/homes/byimage.htm> to see house styles based on the years. We'd love to hear from you—especially if you lived in one of the older homes in town. Please email us at: earlville.history@yahoo.com



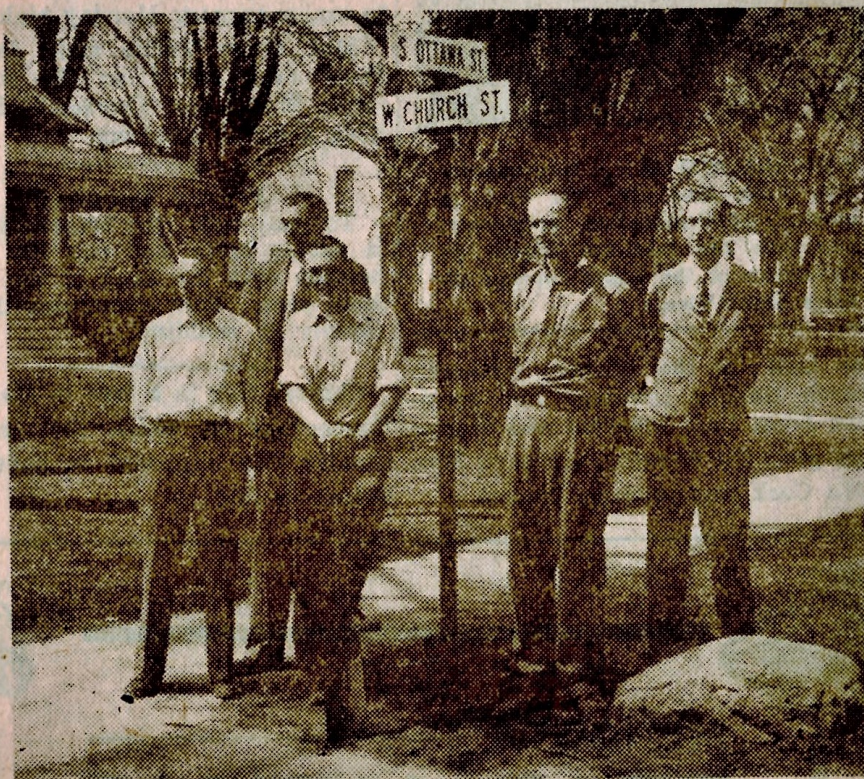
Do you belong to a small club or organization? Why not have your next meeting at the Museum? We can accommodate up to 20 people, and we'd even serve you dessert! After your meeting is done, we provide a great opportunity to look around at the displays. We'll even do a short presentation if you desire. We recently hosted a local book club and a card club. Drop us an email if you have a group and are interested!

DID YOU KNOW??

...that the traffic (and parking) ran both directions on Ottawa and Railroad Streets at one time? In 1950, it was Doc Nichols who made the suggestion to the City Council that the streets be made one-way for the safety of its citizens.

April 14, 1949.

Earlville's First Street Sign



EARLVILLE'S FIRST STREET SIGN was installed Tuesday morning by Mayor Chas. W. Dyas and members of the Chamber of Commerce street sign committee. All of the signs for the project have been ordered and will be installed as soon as possible. The group as pictured above include, from left to right, Earle E. Frame, Dr. O. H. Fischer, Mayor Dyas, Robert P. Weidner and Leonard G. Streed.

CALENDAR SALES!

We took a chance with our first-ever calendar sales this year. The response was overwhelming! At the time of the printing of this newsletter we have only a few left. If you are interested in purchasing one please use our email:

earlville.history@yahoo.com

or call Kris at 815-252-9380

Cost is \$15 per calendar (add \$2 if requesting shipping)

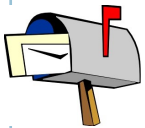
Thanks for your support!

LaSalle County Magazine of History—New Publication!

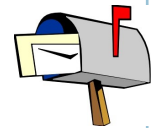
You'll want to stop by and pick up (or order online) a copy of a newly published magazine, *LaSalle County Magazine of History*. The magazine is a five year project authored by Chet Wold. Chet grew up in Leland, studied at University of Illinois and has always had an interest in local history. He also serves as the web-master for our ECHS website.

The purpose of the magazine is to promote, share, and preserve the history of this county. The feature article is about the French missionaries at Starved Rock, written by Mark Walczynski, the historian for the Starved Rock Foundation. Another feature is Keith Harris' story of a World War II bombing raid that he took part in. Keith lived on a farm outside of Earlville and returned here after the war. The story was recorded to cassette tape and remained undiscovered until he passed away in 1980. It was later transcribed by his family and is presented in the magazine courtesy of his son Alan Harris. Also included is the little-known history of the two monuments at Shabbona Park. This story will be told in installments. Part one is included in this issue.

The magazine is currently being sold at Starved Rock Visitors Center, Westclox Museum, Seneca Historical Guild, and at the museum in Earlville and is also available on the website www.LaSalleCountyHistory.com, the companion site to the magazine. The cost of the magazine at the Museum is \$10.



History of Earlville's Postal Service



The first Post Office in Earlville was established in 1844 and located in a log cabin owned by Charles Sutphen, one of the first settlers in this area. The location is presumed to be on south Ottawa Street on or near the current Hamel residence on the west side of the street. Sutphen became the first official postmaster of Earlville. Sometime around 1893 the Post Office was moved to an area in the Wallace Hotel.

There was no "rural delivery" until 1897 when the U.S. passed a law enacting rural free delivery. Prior to that time, the farmers all came to town to pick up their mail. It is recorded that Earlville's own C.C. Strong may have been the first person to suggest rural free delivery in his letter to the Postmaster General in 1891. Business owners were very much opposed to rural delivery, however, stating that it could hurt business by eliminating the need for farmers to come to town once a week to pick up mail. The first Rural Route wasn't established in Earlville until 1901.

In 1902 the Post Office moved to a new location on the north side of Railroad St. Today that location would be the west side of the laundromat building.

(continued on Page 4)

History of Earlville's Postal Service *(Continued from Page 3)*

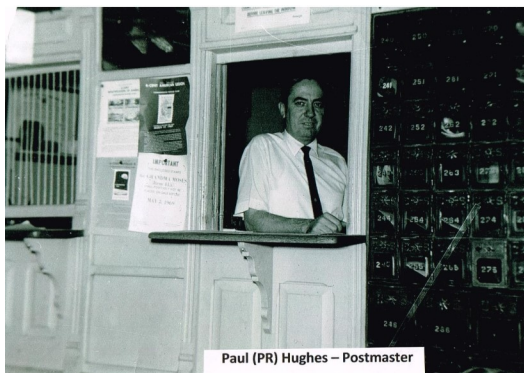
Post offices were considered a safe place for working class families to invest their money, and the Postal Bank opened in Earlville in 1912 with E.B. Tabor serving as Postmaster. Residents had no trust for private banks and were hiding money in their mattresses. Another Postal Bank opened in 1933 as an option for investing while banks were closing. When the FDIC was created the need for Postal Banks decreased. All Postal Banks were closed by 1967.

In 1950 it was determined that there was a need for a new Post Office because of insufficient space. New locations that were considered included Nunemacher's Store, the City Hall building, and Dodge Park. A survey was conducted among residents asking about selling city property. The citizens said "no" to selling Dodge Park and "yes" to selling City Hall. Despite the outcome of that survey, the City Council passed (and the Postmaster General approved) the purchase of a portion of Dodge Park (where tennis courts are located) for the new Post Office. However, we can find no information on what happened to that plan. The Post Office remained in the same location for another 20 years.

Earl Batterham served as rural carrier for 50 years and retired in 1956. He was the only carrier who had started by delivering mail via horseback. Other carriers at that time were Clyde Harger and Louis Schrecengost.

During the early 1960's when P.R. Hughes started working at the Post Office, all mail was brought and sent via train. Cliff Imel was hired to bring the mail from the train to the Post Office. Packages came on a "slow" train that would stop at the depot, while the other mail came by "fast" train. The mail was in a bag that was thrown onto a hook as the train passed by. There were plenty of times that the bag missed the hook scattering letters all over the tracks. It wasn't until 2 years later that mail started to be delivered by truck. Postage was 3 cents for a letter and 1 cent for a postcard at that time. The four Rural Routes included four grocery stores (in addition to the four that were located in town) – Rollo, Shabbona Grove, and two in Harding.

Finally, in 1970 the Post Office was moved to a new building on northwest corner Winthrop and Main Streets. Two other locations had been considered with one being the CB&Q Stockyard location on Water St. east of the Locker Plant. The Post Office did business in the Railroad Street location on Dec. 31, 1969, and moved into their new location on New Year's Day, 1970. Ben Brower's tow truck was used to pick up and reset the safe in the new building. Postmaster P.R. Hughes and his rural carriers, Cliff Imel, Red Leonard and Ed Carter, worked all day and most of the night to complete the move so that they could be open for business in the new location on January 2nd, 1970.



Paul (PR) Hughes – Postmaster



Retired Post Office Employees
Red Leonard; Paul Zimmerman, Theda Bower
Ed Carter, Phoebe Thompson, Cliff Imel

BUB AND HIS BOYS PROGRAM

Over 100 people crowded into the Earl Township Building on September 20th to hear Ernie Basler's presentation on his years with Bub and His Boys. The attendees were completely entertained and taken back in time as Ernie shared his experiences with the band over 40+ years. Our thanks to Ernie, to Jerry Englehart who chaired the event, and to our member volunteers who helped with all aspects of the program.

If you know of a speaker or have an idea of a program you would like to see presented, please let us know!



.....are always needed and welcomed!

If interested in lending a hand and learning about Earlville please contact us at:

earlville.history@yahoo.com

Calendar of Events



Dec	2	ECHS Meeting
Dec.	3	EBA Xmas Festival
Dec.	17	Last Day Museum Open
Dec. 18-Mar 31		Museum Closed except by appointment

2018

Apr.	7	ECHS Meeting Museum Opens
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What's New at the Museum?!

During the months of Oct/Nov we had a special display of items from the Harding/Freedom Township area. It featured pictures and history related to the school, church and the general store that was a fixture in Harding for many years. There was also information on the "Lost Towns of the Prairie" - Gouldtown and Munsontown—as well as the Indian Creek Massacre and eventual dedication of Shabbona Park.. Thanks to members—Karen Wold, Kent Sellers and Jerry Englehart for securing the items and creating the display

Keeping with the Christmas and Santa theme during the month of Dec we are displaying antique toys donated or loaned by several of our members. The windows as well as a special area in the Museum feature toy riding cars and horses as well as small metal toys and games from days past.

If you have ideas for future special displays, let us know!

Ernie Smith' Sinclair Filling Station (1923-1933) Can you name the location?



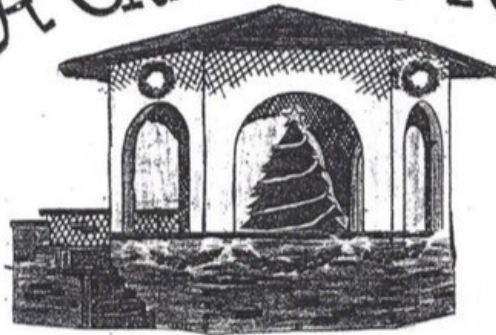
(*Answer on Page 6)

**EARLVILLE
BUSINESS
ASSOCIATION
CHRISTMAS
FESTIVAL**
Sun, Dec. 3rd



Bring your family and enjoy some old-fashioned Christmas fun in the park. Be sure to stop by the Museum and get your picture with Santa compliments of KZ Studios!

EBA Christmas Festival



December 3, 2017

4:00-7:00 PM

SANTA ARRIVES 4PM - FREE PHOTOS WITH SANTA AT HISTORICAL MUSEUM FROM 4-7PM
Sponsored by KZ Studios

TREE LIGHTING AT DODGE PARK 5PM

CHRISTMAS CAROLS AT PARK WITH COMMUNITY CHOIR AND PUBLIC

FREE AT PARK:

CARRIAGE RIDES - SMORE MAKING - COFFEE - HOT CHOCOLATE

SIGN UP AT AMERICAN LEGION FOR PRIZES TO BE DRAWN AT PARK AT 6:30pm

GRAND PRIZE \$500 (18 + older)
KIDS PRIZES MANY GIVE AWAYS (17 + under)

COAT DRIVE FOR OUR COMMUNITY DROP OFF LOCATIONS:
First State Insurance and Sandy's Shear Magic and Park on Dec 3rd 4-7pm

**Answer to Photo—Ernie Smith's Sinclair was located on the SE corner of Union and Ottawa St. facing Union (currently Casey's). Part of this building was later used as gift shop, beauty shop and realty office.*

NEW OFFICERS FOR 2018

The Earlville Community Historical Society would like to thank our 2017 officers especially those who have accepted their office again for 2018. We'd like to welcome Kris (Cole) Goodbred as the new Treasurer and Larry Maly as a new Director. Kris replaces Carol (Stockley) Landers and Larry replaces Bruce Carter, both who have served the ECHS for a number of years. Thank you for your work on behalf of the organization! A full list of the officers can be found on the front page of this newsletter!

Thank
you!

Earlville Community Historical Society

A Not-For-Profit 501(c)3 Organization

MEMBERSHIP FORM

New Member

Renewal

Membership Type/Dues (after initial payment, dues are collected each Nov/Dec for following year)

Individual (\$15.00 *per person* - annually)

Business/Institution (\$50.00 annually)

Family (\$30.00 annually)

Individual Lifetime (\$150 *per person* - one-time payment; no annual dues)

Business/Institution Lifetime (\$300 – one-time payment; no annual dues)

Member Information

Name(s) _____

Address _____

City/State/Zip _____

Phone _____ Email Address* _____

**To avoid postage costs we would like to send newsletters to your email account.*

Do you have a Facebook Account? Yes/No

If yes, please “like” our Facebook page by searching for:

Earlville Community Historical Society

Send this form and your dues to the following address:

Earlville Community Historical Society

Attn: Membership

136 S Ottawa St.

PO Box 683

Earlville IL 60518

Eff. 11/11/2016