

It's Membership Time!

If you have an ANNUAL (renewable) membership to ECHS it will be due on January 1st. We sincerely hope that you choose to renew! Checks can be mailed to ECHS, PO Box 683, Earlville IL 60518. This does not apply to LIFETIME memberships which are nonrenewable. Do you have a friend or family members who would appreciate receiving our newsletters? Why not purchase a membership for them at Christmas this year? Please use the form attached to the back of this newsletter. Thanks to all of our members for their steadfast support of the Museum! We couldn't do it without you!



Member Appreciation Holiday Open House



Sunday, December 4th
6p-8p
Museum

Please join us for sweets and appetizers along with some holiday libations as a thank you for all of your support during the year!

EBA Christmas Festival!

Sunday, December 4th
3pm-6pm
Downtown Earlville

ECHS will again be hosting Santa's workshop in the shed next door where Zink Photography will be taking pictures with Santa free of charge.

MUSEUM

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

HOURS

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

Anytime by appointment

Call:

815-246-9778

815-985-3763

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

"Like" us on Facebook!



Monthly Meetings are on the 1st Sat. of the month (April through December) 9a.m. at the Museum

2022 Officers

Pres	Rich Goodbred
VP	Stan Meloy
Sec	Karen Wold
Treas	Kris Goodbred
Curator	Anna Svendsen

Directors:

Larry Maly
Sandi Engel
Kent Sellers



History of Banking in Earlville



With the recent sale of the Pioneer State Bank to the NuMark Credit Union, we thought that it might be a good time to look at the history of banking in Earlville. In 1933, President Roosevelt declared a one-week bank holiday in an effort to stem bank closures during the Depression Era. This led to the failure of over 9,000 banks in the U.S. including those in Earlville at the time. Below is an overview of the financial institutions in Earlville.

The first bank, the **Exchange Bank**, was formed in 1866 by early pioneer, Charles Munson, who sold it the same year to W.R. Haight, and subsequently to A.J. Grover and William Wilson. It was originally located “in Room 2 of Pool’s Building” which would be north of the currently closed bowling alley on Ottawa St. The location was changed to No. 7 Union Block (the bank building that most of us remember on Railroad St). The Exchange Bank closed ~1884.

David A. Town created the **City Bank of D.A. Town & Sons** in 1887. D.A. Town was a successful lawyer and businessman. The bank was destroyed by fire, and although it reopened, only lasted for 11 years. It was located at No. 4 Union Block, approximately where First State Insurance is located today. **See photos on next page.*

There were 3 long-term banking institutions in Earlville—all with similar names but not related.

In 1885, the **FIRST NATIONAL BANK** opened its doors in the “Schmidt Building” (one store east of Sandy’s Shear Magic). It eventually moved across the street to No. 7 Union Block, and, in 1920, erected a new building in that location. **See photos on next page.* In 1933, the bank was forced to close during the Great Depression. The building was sold at auction for \$6,600 in 1937 to E.W. Malley and F.J. Genter.

The **EARLVILLE NATIONAL BANK** opened in 1905 on the west side of Ottawa Street about where Coss’ grocery store was located. **See photo next page.* It was eventually moved into the corner of the Wallace House Hotel. The officers included Ezra Goble, Robert Whittaker, C.C. Strong and I.H. Parrish. Like the other banks in 1933, it was forced into closure during the Great Depression.

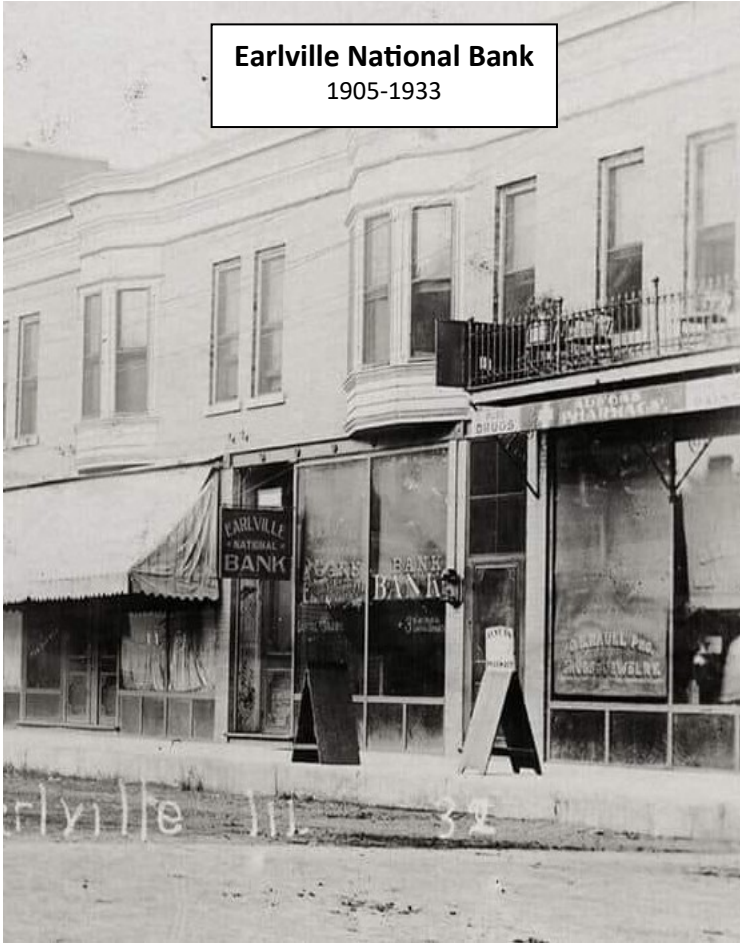
Following the 1933 bank closures two new businesses opened to assist the farming community with financing loans. The **Earlville Exchange** (1936-1937) was a short-lived financial institution, but **Earl Finance**, created by local businessmen Harold J. Miller and James Rowe, continued in the finance business as part of the Miller-Rowe Insurance until the 1970s.

The **NATIONAL BANK OF EARLVILLE** was organized in 1937 when banks were finally able to reopen—having no connection to the previous banks. Much of the credit for the organization, the plan and the selling of stock went to Harold J. Miller. It was necessary to obtain \$65,000 through subscriptions by the November 8th deadline, and the community responded quickly to exceed that amount. Robert A. Strong was the high bidder, paying \$116.50 per share. The new Board of Directors included Edward McManus, W.H. Duckels, Harold Miller, E.W. Malley, John W. Robinson, Dr. E.H. Rayson, C.C. Svendsen, F.J. Genter, Lester W. Weidner, James W. O’Donnell and Frank Whitman. E.W. Malley was elected president. The new bank purchased the previous site of the First National Bank on Railroad St. from E.W. Malley, owner of the property, for \$9,000. In 1980, under President James Bann, a new facility would be built on the NE corner of Winthrop and Main St. where it remains today. In 2014, the bank name was changed to **Pioneer State Bank** to reflect the change from a federally chartered bank to a state chartered bank.

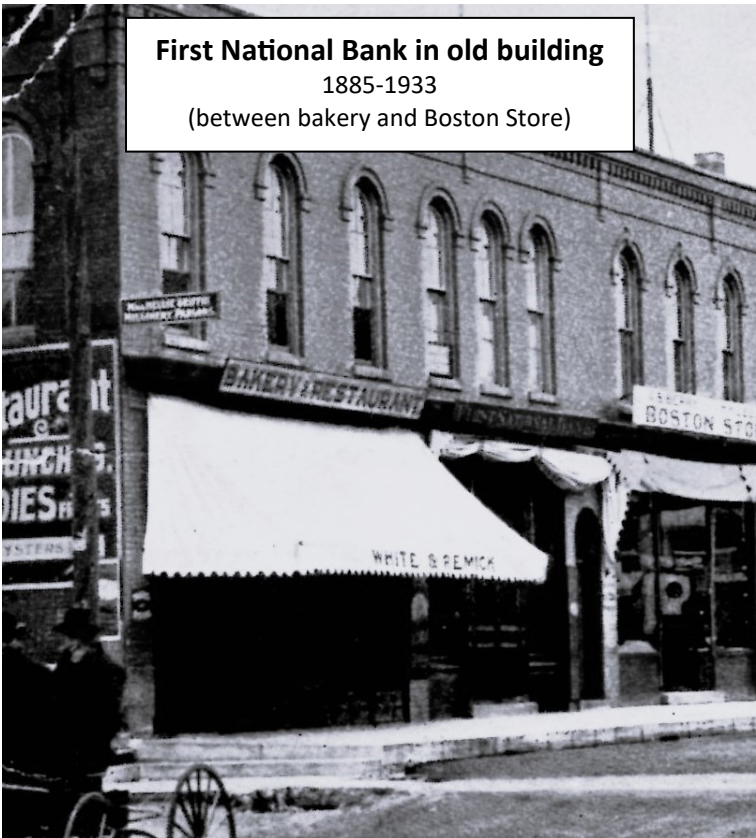
In 1922, after 85 years in business, the Pioneer State Bank (previously National Bank of Earlville) sold to Numark Credit Union starting a new age of banking in Earlville.



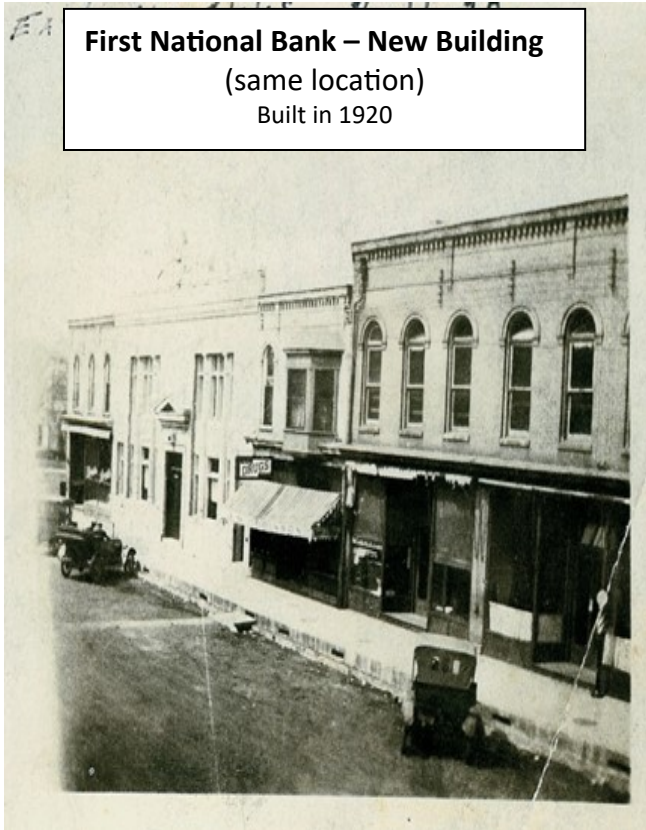
City Bank
1887-1898



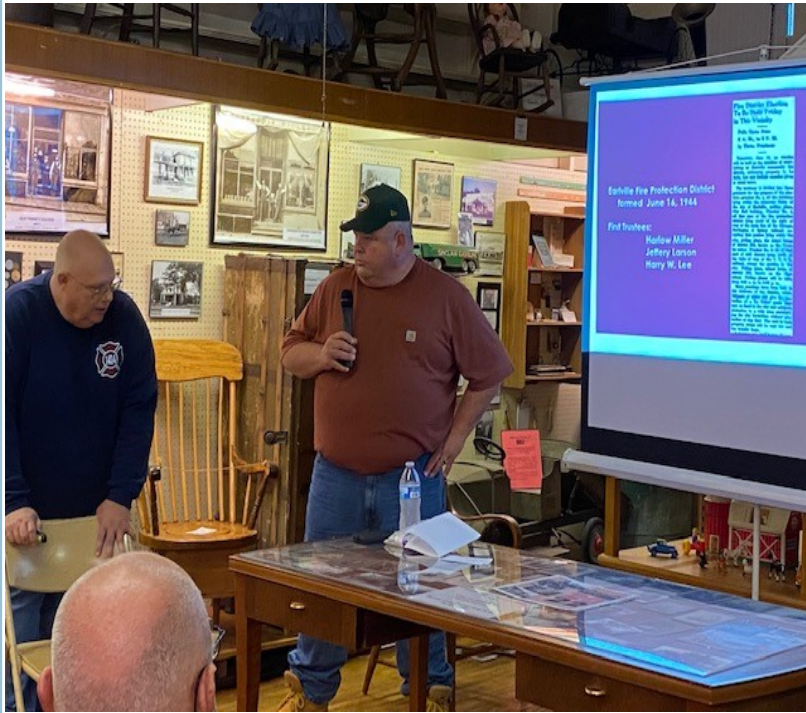
Earlville National Bank
1905-1933



First National Bank in old building
1885-1933
(between bakery and Boston Store)



First National Bank – New Building
(same location)
Built in 1920



History of the Earlville Fire Department

Thanks to Randy Simpson and A.J. Wold for their fun and informative presentation on the History of the Earlville Fire Department. The presentation can be viewed through our YouTube channel "Earlville Community Historical Society".

We appreciate the time and effort it took to do the research on this. It was so great to see some of the current and retired firemen at the presentation. Thanks so much for all you do to keep us safe!

If there are other programs on local history that you would like to see, please let us know!



CALENDAR OF EVENTS

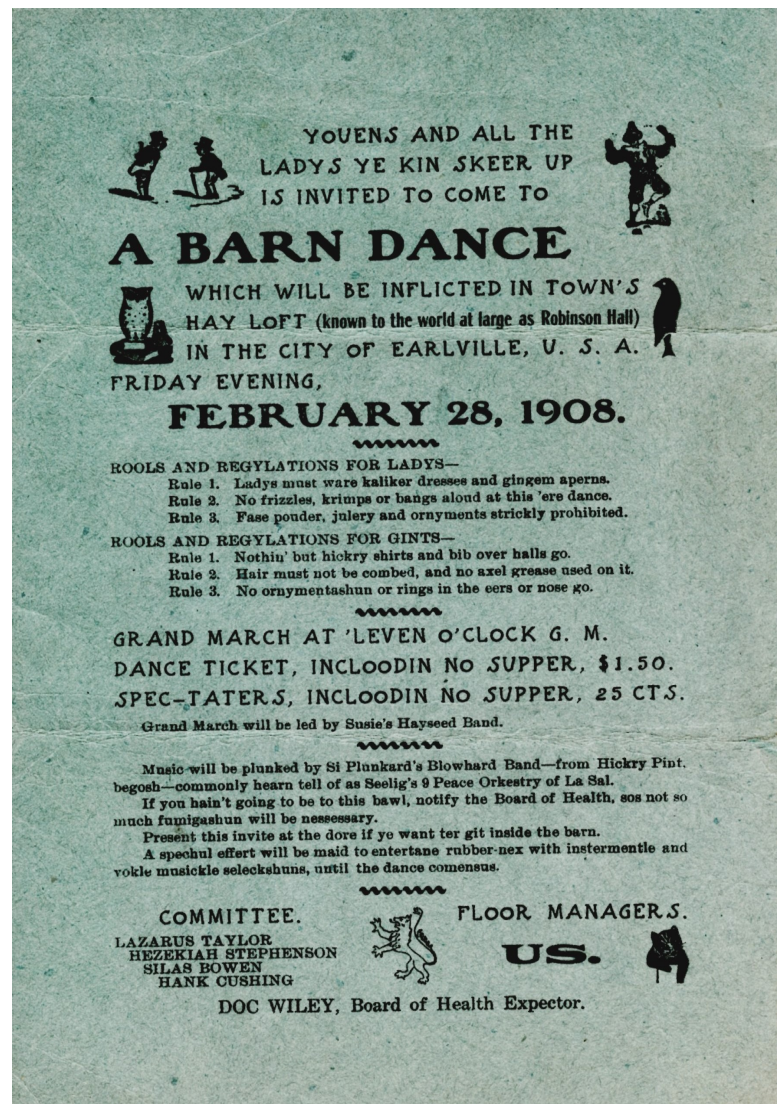
- Sat. Dec. 3 Board Mtg Only
- Sun. Dec. 4 EBA Christmas Festival (3-6p)
- Sun. Dec. 4 Holiday Open House (6-8p)
- Sun. Dec. 18 Last day Museum is Open

Merry Christmas!

Happy New Year!

R's ALL IN

Welcome to "R's All In" a new restaurant and bar owned by Mark Wiley and located at 137 W Railroad St. We wish you much success! If you haven't given them a try, stop on in and offer your support. SHOP LOCAL!



WHAT? FOUR Grocery Stores in Earlville??

That's right! We've been without a grocery store in Earlville for quite a few years now so it's hard to fathom that there was a long period of time (1938-1953) where Earlville supported 4 grocery stores. By the time that E.T. Pugh opened his store on Ottawa Street in 1938, Pugh's AG Grocery Store, there were already 3 other grocery businesses in town all in close proximity on Railroad Street.

House & Boyd, located at 129 W Railroad Street (previous location of McConville Realty) was in the grocery business from 1920-1952. The partnership dissolved during that period of time, and, in 1952, the business was sold to Gene Witalka who opened Gene's Grocery. In 1955, Witalka sold to Jack Smith who operated Clover Farm Grocery until 1958. Bill Babcock eventually purchased the property.

Casey Genter started Genter's Food Center at 127 W Railroad Street (current location of Sandy's Shear Magic) in 1926 and had the longest run before selling to his long-time employee, Helen Rochford, in 1960. Helen's Food Mart closed in 1972, and she went on to work for Ted Fritz.

**Pictured to left Ken Stillwell and Pick Richards.*

**Pictured to the right is ?, Bill Holiday and Helen Rochford*



In 1929, one of the large grocery chains came into town. The Atlantic & Pacific Tea Company—otherwise known as the A&P Grocery— was located at 119 W Railroad Street (previous location of Franscesa's). It operated for ~25 years, closing on or around 1953. Ralph Schmitz was a longtime manager of the store.



As mentioned above, E.T. Pugh started his grocery business on the west side of Ottawa St. in 1938 but sold the store a year later to Corey "Pick" Richards. Pick had been a butcher at the Locker Plant prior to this time. Richards Grocery & Meats sold in 1949 to Emmett Fox & Vince Coss. Fox & Coss were in business together until 1957 when Fox sold out to Coss. Vince renamed the store The Earlville Supermarket, and, in 1964, built a new larger store with parking across the street in the areas vacated by the Strong Elevator storage and the Lyric Theater. Ted Fritz purchased the building and the business in 1970 and operated a grocery store under the names One Stop Foods and Ted's Red Fox until 2005. Dave Hatcher opened Earlville Country Market in this location in 2005, but the business was forced to close in 2009 leaving Earlville with no grocery store for the first time in history.

**Pictured to the left top is ?? and Sylvia Schammel on the back porch of Richard's store*

**Pictured to the left bottom is Alice Coss, Laura Sutton, Larry Simpson, Hugh ?, Don Shurlow, Paul Manning, Vince "Soupy" Coss*

In 1960, brothers-in-law, Bob Rave and Bill Hindle built a new store on the north side of Rt. 34 and opened the R&H Supermarket. After 30 years in business they sold to Michaels brothers grocery chain. In 2000 it was sold to Dave Struck and named the Village Market but was returned to Michaels after a couple years. The grocery business in this location was finally closed for good in 2005 to Jeff Sanford who opened Jake & Elwood's restaurant/bar in that location..

**Pictured to the right is Bob Rave, Bob Francis, ? Michaels, and Bill Hindle)*



Of course, there were many grocery stores with familiar Earlville names (Edgett, Pratt, Conklin, Waechter, etc) that came before the ones discussed here. In the earlier days those were often General Stores or Mercantiles where they carried more products than just groceries.



The grocery business has provided employment and careers for many adults in town as well as summer and after-school jobs for so many kids. In the '50s and '60s, especially, many of the stores had panel trucks for home delivery. Sometimes it didn't even matter if you were old enough to have a driver's license to be hired as a delivery person! In those days the delivery person would likely come in to the house and put your refrigerated or frozen items away for you if you weren't home. Cash registers were manual, all the bags were brown paper, and there were no electric belts to move the groceries towards the checker (who was a real live person, of course!). There was ALWAYS a nice young man to pack and carry your groceries to the car, and if you tipped him, he wouldn't smash your eggs the next time!

**Pictured next to Genter's delivery truck is Ray Strouss*



Did you know?

- In the early 1960s the Lion's Club sponsored an ice skating rink in Dodge Park each year in the area of the tennis courts
- In 1897 Mr. Dupee (local businessman) paid for the first public drinking fountain to be built on the NW corner of Railroad and Ottawa St.
- Earlville Leader, 4/10/1924—"Earlville Has A New Shoemaker. His name is Shoemaker". B.F. Shoemaker had moved to Earlville to take over the cobbler business of Louis Cohn.
- The first house numbers were distributed in 1960 (another project of the Lion's Club)

Welcome to our Newest Board Member!

On January 1st, 2023, we will welcome a new Director to our Board. Ann (Mussato) Newell has been an active member of ECHS for a number of years and is also a member of the LaSalle County Genealogy Guild. Directors serve 3-year terms which can be renewed once for a total of 6 years. Other current Directors include Sandi Engel and Kent Sellers. Ann takes the place of outgoing Director Larry Maly who has recently filled out his term. We thank Larry for all that he has contributed to the Board and the Museum in general. This is by no means a goodbye to him as we expect him to stick around to give us a hand where we need it.

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