



Spring 2023
Newsletter #26



HAPPY 160TH BIRTHDAY EARLVILLE!!



Charles H. Sutphen and John B. Dow settled in this area in 1834, and Sutphen purchased 1000 acres which would eventually include the Town of Earl. His cabin was located near the small creek we now know as "Sutphen's Run". Later, he built a brick home just south of that location in order to defend himself against Indian attacks. That home stood until just a few years ago when it was demolished years after a fire had destroyed it.

Sutphen sold acreage to S.T. Stilson in 1839 in order to develop a village. Initially, several businesses, a general store, a blacksmith, a hotel and a post office (within Sutphen's cabin), would be erected between what is now US Rt 34 and Union St. In 1853 when the railroad came through, those businesses closed, and the town began to form alongside the railroad tracks.

The town of Earl was incorporated on May 16th, 1863 (our official birthday!). Fourteen years later, in 1877, the people of the town voted to incorporate as a "city" which meant that they would operate under aldermanic rule. The first Mayor, Joseph J. Pool, was elected as well as six aldermen. The city government continued under that rule until 1917 when it was voted to return to the "Commission" form. That only lasted for 6 years before returning to aldermanic rule as it stands today.

Over the years the city has had large celebrations for major milestones. The largest one occurred in 1963 for the Centennial celebration of 100 years. There were additional townwide celebrations for the Quasquicentennial (125 years) in 1988, and the Sesquicentennial (150 years) in 2013. It was during the 150th celebration that the Committee received permission from the bank to utilize the old vacant hardware store as its headquarters. The Historical Society was finally able to display the items that had been tucked away at the Library. Before, during and after the event donors kept appearing with more and more memorabilia. In 2014 ECHS voted to purchase the building. And THAT, is the story of how the Museum came into being! Since that time we have been the recipient of 1000s of pieces of Earlville history in the form of items, furniture, photos, genealogy, etc., all with an important connection to Earlville, and we thank you for that!

Want to know more about the early settlers and history of the town? Come to our August 5th meeting and listen to Dale Stockley's presentation!

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

815-252-9380

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:	Ann Newell
	Sandi Engel
	Kent Sellers

Have you ever heard of “Club Earlville”??



We are perplexed! Frank Green brought in this very interesting sign welcoming people to “Club Earlville” where you can “relax and enjoy your stay” featuring a “kitchen, fishing and shopping”. The sign is all wood and 3 dimensional. We have combed through the newspapers for a reference to this but have been unsuccessful. We estimate that this was probably from the 1930’s or 1940’s, so it’s too early to be associated with Maple Leaf lake. The closest we’ve been able to come to making a connection to the sign is, perhaps, the Indian Arrow Campground. In 1930, J.S. Warren purchased the “Stiquel property just east of the Indian Creek bridge” with plans to establish a tourist camp along with several small cottages. His wife, Fern Estelle, planned to open a tea room next to the camp. Fred Keith was also planning to open a Shell filling station near the camp. The (possibly weak) connection that we made, other than the estimated age of the sign, included “fishing” in the creek, dining at the tea room, “shopping” downtown in Earlville’s very active business district, plus being able to “stay” at the campground. The campground changed owners several times, but during the time that it was quite the social scene with open air dances and boxing matches being held regularly drawing as many as 300 spectators.. Is it a stretch? We’d sure love to hear from someone who might have other ideas. Stop up and take a look at the sign, and give us your thoughts. For now, that’s our story and we’re sticking to it!

PLEASE JOIN US IN SUPPORT OF
THE EARLVILLE LIONS CLUB

LIONSFEST

Sat/Sun June 17-18
So many fun activities
Parade on Sunday



ANOTHER BEAUTIFUL DONATION!

John & Nancy Weidner recently donated the wedding outfit worn by John’s grandfather & grandmother, John Wm. Weidner, Jr. & Louise Marie Bruell. The couple was married on Oct. 14, 1896, and the clothing is in remarkable shape. Thanks so much for thinking of us!



NEWS FLASH!

We **WILL** be publishing a 2024 calendar this fall! We took a break last year since our sales had fallen, thinking that maybe interest had declined. We had so many of you that asked about them that we now KNOW that’s not the case. We won’t be ordering as many this year though so better get them as soon as they are available so you’re not left out!

Preserving History!

When Stacy Grey needed to replace the roof of her Barber Shop on Ottawa St. it became necessary to remove the façade that has adorned the top front of that building for so many years. She held onto it, and her dad, Frank Stegman, a carpenter, restored and repaired it. Now it is proudly displayed above the bench in her shop.

The shop was built by barber, George Furbish, in 1904. The photo to the right was taken in 1907 so we believe that the piece is original to the building. Thanks, Stacy, for holding onto and displaying part of the town's history!



Earville's Ice Cream Factory

In 1905 Capt. T.E. Woods from Princeton, purchased the "Wiley Lots down below Frey's commission house" to create a branch of his ice cream factory there. Today you would know this area as just east of the Co-Op elevator on Railroad St. about midway between the elevator and 3rd St. The location was considered desirable due to the proximity to the railroad. The lots had to be purchased together so Ed Weidner took the west end of that property and Woods took the east end which was 50x60 ft. The factory was "equipped with a 12 hp boiler, a 10 hp engine and all of the necessary machinery to make as much ice cream as could be sold in the area." The factory closed sometime around 1912. In 1915, after the factory was closed, Wood's leased the property to "an outfit out of Sandwich" that erected a big tent and portable floor with all accessories to open a skating rink in that location. Woods finally sold the property in 1918 to Frank & Kelley who would use it to expand their lumber yard business.



EARLVILLE FRESH MARKET!!

Join us in welcoming the Earville Fresh Market to town!! It's been 14 long years since Earville had a grocery store so to say that we are excited would be an understatement. We know that it will be hard to break your habit of going out of town, but it will be so important to give them our business. As with all of our Earville businesses—SHOP LOCAL!

History of the Burlington Railroad Route In and Around Earlville



We were pleased to welcome Leo Phillipp from the Burlington Route Historical Society for his presentation at our May meeting. You can view this and other presentations on our YouTube channel by searching on Earlville Community Historical Society.

Thanks to Leo for the informational presentation. Future presentations will include the History of the Wallace House and other Hotels, the Earlville Ambulance Service, Earlville Farmers CoOp Elevator, Birth of Earlville and its Early Settlers, Earlville Physicians, Volunteer Orientation and others.

There will be NO Membership Mtg in June



CALENDAR OF EVENTS

- Sat. June 3 **NO MEMBERSHIP MEETING!**
- Tue. June 6 Host LaSalle Co. Hist. Societies
- Sat. June 10 Earlville Alumni
- Jun 17/18 Earlville Lionsfest
- Sat. July 1 Membership Mtg. 9am
- Sat. July 11 Hosting EHS Class of 1958
- St. Aug. 5 Membership Mtg. 9am

...and speaking of THANKS

These guys never get enough credit for all they do for us, but, most recently, Dave Michelsen and Jack Anderson expanded our display area in the Agricultural Shed so that we can accommodate a couple of large new items that we are anticipating. If you haven't been in this area yet or haven't been there recently, you should really stop and take a look!

THANK YOU, THANK YOU, THANK YOU!!!

Two of our members stepped up and answered our request for help with researching areas of Earlville History.

Marlyn Hackett from Libertyville, IL, has recently completed a project on the Bliss Family. They were early settlers and have strong family lines in Earlville throughout history. She has also completed researching the Wallace Family including the history of the Wallace House.

Carolyn (Todd) Doughty from Earlville, has been doing exhaustive research on all of the physicians from early days forward—and there were a LOT of them!

Thanks to these two ladies for raising your hand! There are so many ways to volunteer. Doing research is just one. We are always looking for volunteers to help out during our weekend shifts; or someone with a strong back (or has kids or grandkids with a strong back) to help move or rearrange displays; or people who like to clean, dust; or make cookies for an event at the Museum. If you are interested in helping in any way.....

Contact Anna (815-985-3763) or Kris (815-252-9380)
Or email: earlville.history@yahoo.com

In the January 9th, 1936, edition to the Earlville Leader, a list of over 100 single Earlville men (along with their “attributes”) was published in honor of Leap Year. As you can tell, it was very “tongue in cheek” but highly doubtful that it would fly today!! ENJOY!

LEAP YEAR BRINGS DANGER TO THESE EARLVILLE BACHELORS!



It's the Open Season on bachelors all you maid and maidens! A whole year ahead to get yourself a man. It's Leap Year and according to all the best traditions, the woman has the right to propose marriage to the man of her choice. Of course he can say "No" if he so desires, but here again custom steps in. Should he say "No" to your proposal, madam, you have every right to expect him to buy you a new dress or a box of candy—anyway that's the leap year custom.

And so you ladies who are looking around with the idea of taking advantage of your opportunity won't have too much trouble surveying the field, the Leader presents a list of eligibles. We have made an effort to make this a complete list of bachelors of this community. If anyone has been overlooked, it has been entirely unintentional. Besides it may be to your advantage not to get listed! But here they are ladies, your legitimate prey during 1936!

(While we don't have room to list each and every one, here is a sampling of some of their descriptions!)

Gib Hoffman—wouldn't you like to have him croon to you in the moonlight?

George Gould—shy, but a good catch for the one who can land him

Eddie Rochford—will Earlville women lose him to an outsider?

Ray Strouss—best man at a wedding recently; in the mood

Fred Denny—another man with a roadster and a job

Charlie Steele—he's been through many leap years

Frank Tuor—try and get him to say "yes"

Jim Rowe—take out insurance first. Also tagged.

Guy Thorsen—for the woman who wants an alderman

Dr. Fischer—a man to look up to

Glenn Everham—quiet, musically inclined

Russell Ikens = a good looking farmer

Ernie Lehman—He can marry you (justice of the peace)

James and Paul Seaton—good, steady opportunities

Louie Vask—a railroad man, always on time

Charley Howe—free passes to the theatre with him

George Cole—she's already proposed

Herman Binder—Earlville's No. 1 politician

Lorraine Keith—plenty of honey here

Jim Maly—will bring home the groceries

Paul Duffy—a good-natured Irishman



Did you know?

- In 1886, Wah Hing, a Chinaman, rented the basement in the Arnold building (current location of the old bowling alley) and opened a laundry there.
- A band of gypsies “struck town” in 1921 and were “put to flight” by Fred Mueller (barber) wielding a wet towel and a swift boot!
- The town had a Tennis Club in 1896 and they had two tennis courts built “near the east end of East St.”

The S.A.S. Club

(From the Earlville Post 8/2/2002—Written by Janet Worsley and Jane Atherton)

“Friendship lasts forever” could be the motto for the S.A.S. club which was organized in Earlville in 1937. The original name was “Sew and Sew” when the ladies were making scarves and other items for their Hope Chests. The club was later called the “Sex Appeal Society” while its members were dating, and finally became known as “Settled and Satisfied” during their married years.

The group was founded by Janet (Allen) Worsley, and its members through the years have included: Roberta (Cox) Kern Worsley, Marguerite (Dudley) Flynn, Gwendolyn (Carter) Shaddle, Ida (Tillman) Wold, Mary (Wood) Reedy, Winifred (Gueded) Pearce, Babara (Wallace) Smith, Mabel (Mende) Molared, Mary (Strouss) Vance Beard, Mary Sue Kern, Shirley (Willey) Allen, Charlotte (Atherton) Cole, Jane (Cox) Atherton, Doris (Gallagher) Schmitz, Nettie May Hughes, Ruth (Allen) Fruit, and June (Strouss) Chevasz.

Sewing was the original purpose of the club, although a private joke is that one of the girls (who shall remain nameless) could not and still can’t sew a stitch. With the help of a few recruits, the group later switched to bridge. We are fortunate to be able to get together, share our lives, ailments, activities, complaints, and to laugh with or at ourselves. It’s a blessing.

****While most, if not all, of these ladies have passed on, this is a great example of how important “clubs” were and continue to be to social life, especially in small communities.**

EARLVILLE COMMERCIAL CLUB

The Earlville Commercial Club (similar to our Earlville Business Association) was an organization of business owners and leaders working for community improvement and advancement of local business and trade. The first meeting was in 1923, and through several ups and downs and reorganizations, was active through the late 1940s. At one time the goal of the organization was to get 100 local businesses to join. Yes, there were THAT many businesses in Earlville at one time. In the mid 1920s the club advocated for the new “hard road” to be constructed on S. Railroad St. which would have been advantageous for downtown businesses. They lost that battle when the decision was made to locate the road south of the downtown district on what we now know as Union St. (or “old 34” as some of us still call it). They also worked to support the plan for the new Rt. 23 that included the road running north out of Ottawa on Terra Cotta and continuing north to “Myers’ corner” where it would connect with Canon Ball Trail (now known as Rt. 34). History tells us that they were unsuccessful in that endeavor as well which led to a lot of finger-pointing and conflict within the organization at the time. In 1937 The Commercial Club led by Chuck Dyas and George Myers introduced the “Big Wednesday Nights” trade dividend idea which brought more people to town on Wednesdays than on Saturday nights. The plan was simple - local merchants encouraged people to shop in town by giving a coupon with every \$.26 purchase. Those coupons went into a weekly drawing on Wednesday night and \$35 in trade coupons were given out (seven \$5 awards). The coupons were made good at any cooperating store. Reports say “Wednesday night crowds ran from 1,200 to 1,600. Earlville’s population at the time was 1,000.”



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