

Fall/Winter 2023
Newsletter #28

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 LIFE-TIME 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!

2024 Calendars on Sale NOW!!

After a year's hiatus, we are back to selling calendars again! Our sales declined in 2022 so we thought that maybe it was time to take a year off. We certainly had many of you ask about them so we're at it again! The 2024 calendar are available at the Museum, The Barber Shop, Sandy's Shear Magic and First State Insurance (Earlville). **The price is the same as last year (\$15/calendar) but the postage has gone up. If you want them shipped it will be an additional \$3/calendar.**

Checks and Orders can be sent to:
Earlville Comm Historical Society
PO Bo 683
Earlville IL 60518

*Please be sure to include a complete address for shipping and an *email address*



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

2024 Officers

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

Directors: Ann Newell
Kent Sellers

Building: Jack Anderson
Dave Michelsen

Knotty Pine Celebrates 25th Anniversary!

Recently, Curt and Cindy Burnett, celebrated 25 years of ownership of CS's Knotty Pine. We all know how difficult it's been for bars and restaurants these past few years, and we congratulate them on their success! The Knotty Pine has been a part of this community much longer than 25 years, dating back to 1940, so we decided that it would be good time to look back at the history of this business.

In 1940, Delbert Swayze purchased a track of land from Reuben Rowan with the intention of erecting a new tavern. Alfred Lee's Feed Store arranged for a large chicken house to be shipped in on two trucks and delivered to that location (current location of the Knotty Pine). The two sections were unloaded quickly, and the men finished up the work of setting it up. The new establishment would be known as "Del's Tavern". Delbert had previously tended bar in town for his father-in-law, Emil Myers. Shortly after opening, he, like so many others, went off to war, while his wife, Madeline (also known as Babe), was left to run the business. Sadly, Del was killed in action. Madeline continued to keep the bar open for a few years with the help from the Swayze family.

There was a potbelly stove in the middle of the building and a flue pipe that exited the roof. One cold evening, the patrons put a little too much wood in the firebox and a serious fire broke out. Within a short time, a new chicken house was delivered and business continued. Madeline had three small children at the time, and the tavern became a burden. Other family members took over, and it was eventually sold. Bill Swayze and Sam Thompson ran the business until 1950 when they sold it to William Rokey. The business would be known as "Rokey's Tavern" until 1954 when he sold it to Anton Eder. Eder came from Compton where he had operated a bar in the basement of a building there. He built the present structure on the west end over the old part and installed knotty pine wood throughout the interior, hence the new name, "Tony's Knotty Pine Tap". Tony enlarged the building to the east, adding a dining room. The name, "Knotty Pine" has stuck, with some new owners just adding their names to it. Tony and his wife, Helen, had a very big following. It was the place to be for parties and after football games in the '50s and '60s.

In 1968, Tony's daughter and son-in-law from Arlington Heights, Chuck and Eleanor Stowe, took over the business for a couple of years before selling to Dave Michelsen in 1971. Dave, his wife, Marietta, and his step-son, Jim Abens, ran a successful business there for nearly 20 years. Dave tells that he had only been in the bar a couple of times prior to buying it and had no experience in running one. He eventually sold to Kelly and Sarah Taylor in 1991. Taylors sold after a short time (less than 2 years) to Gloria Kohl who renamed the tavern "POG's Knotty Pine" which stood for "Poor Ol' Gloria". Gloria had operated the Irish Club for 10 years in Aurora prior to purchasing the bar. After 6 years, Gloria sold the business to Curt & Cindy Burnett from Harding, and the rest is history! Oh, if those walls could talk! Still so many in town who can recall most of the owners and fun times that have been had in that building. Some stories that can be repeated. Some that canNOT!

Wishing Curt and Cindy many more years of success—and more GREAT fried chicken!!



Congratulations!

Christmas in Earlville (1939)

(Earlville Leader 12/7/1939)

“Business Men and Trade Promotion—Earlville’s businessmen are beginning a Christmas trade promotion program which is the most ambitious on undertaken in this community in years. A committee composed of Chas. Dyas, Frank Genter, Carl Miller, C.E. Richards and Frank Tuor are completing solicitation of funds for the program today. They expect to spend nearly \$200 on the following program of events:

Decoration of business district with colored Christmas lights

Santa Claus visit with free candy for children on December 23.

Free movie for children December 23.

Poultry scramble Saturday, December 16

Christmas gift night with Christmas carols Friday night December 22

This schedule of events should give people added incentives to come to this community to do their Christmas shopping. And, incidentally, The Leader will do its share of local promotion next week when we issue our annual Christmas shopping edition. The paper will go into every home in this trade territory and will serve as a medium for local merchants to carry their Christmas shopping message to people in the community.

With predictions of the greatest buying season in 10 years being made by the business leaders, there is every belief that this will be one of the best Christmas seasons of recent years. Certainly it should be in Earlville”

*Editors note— This article was just prior to Christmas in 1939 corresponding to the end of the Great Depression which makes this program of “free” events to the community even more ambitious. It’s interesting to note that in one of the articles related to the fundraising, 75 Earlville businesses were listed as giving support to these events. Our 2024 calendar features a photo of the huge Christmas tree that used to be set up on Railroad St. The photo is a bit blurry but you can make out the location and other downtown decorations.

Christmas in Earlville (2023)

Christmas in the year 2023 has many similarities to 1939 in that the business association (EBA) has lots of free fun events planned for the kids in the community. Although our economy is significantly better than it was in 1939, families are still struggling to make ends meet. We no longer drop live turkeys off of the buildings downtown in an effort to provide food for those in need, but we do have wonderful organizations like the Lion’s Club and Sharing Hearts along with fundraisers by the local churches, Fire Department and others to make sure that everyone has a holiday dinner and gifts under the tree. And, these organizations don’t stop at providing at the holidays. They are busy assisting throughout the year.

The EBA has sponsored the Christmas Festival for several years now, and you can bet that it costs a little more than the \$200. Like 1939, they do ask for the businesses to donate, however, we now have only a fraction of the number of businesses in town to share the burden. The community and organizations usually come through to make up the difference, but “manpower” is what they need most. If you ever have the opportunity to help with this event, don’t hesitate. Thanks to the EBA and all who donate or work to make this a great day for the kids!





Christmas Means MUSIC!!



Here are some photos from our church archives to test your memories.



Junior Choir
Methodist Church
~1966



Junior Choir
Presbyterian Church
~1953



Senior Choir
Lutheran Church
~1967



THANKS TO OUR PRESENTERS!!

Bill Landers and **Kent Sellers** volunteered to discuss the History of the Earlville Farmer's Co-Op starting with the original Earlville Grange until present day at our October meeting.



In November **Randy Simpson** presented a program on the History of the Earlville Ambulance Service. We were fortunate to have Chuck Jenkins (first Director of the service) along with other volunteers who gave so many hours in the original fundraising and operation of the service over the years. More than 40 people attended! We're going to need to buy some more chairs!!

Don't forget that you can find these and many of our previous programs on our YouTube channel. Search for Earlville Community Historical Society!

Motorcycle Club Organized

(From the Earlville Leader 2/22/73)

"The newly organized, Earlville community motorcycle club, the Indian Creek Riders, held a meeting this month to elect officers, directors and establish a permanent mailing address.

They elected James Atherton, president; Harold Carter, vice president; Neil Bomstad, secretary; Jim Joslin, treasurer; Robert Atherton, referee; Gary Stockley, reporter.

Director for the three year term is John Rhodes; Two years, Steve Pickert; one year Gary Stockley.

Their next meeting will be March 3 at 7 o'clock with Jim Atherton.



CALENDAR OF EVENTS

- | | |
|--------------|---------------------------------------------------|
| Sat. Dec. 2 | BOARD MTG ONLY—at 9am
NO MEMBERSHIP MTG |
| Sun. Dec. 3 | EBA Christmas Fest |
| Wed. Dec. 13 | Museum Christmas Open House |
| Dec. 16-17 | Last open weekend |
| Jan-Mar | Museum closed except by reservation |
| Apr 6, 2024 | First Membership Mtg of the year |

Meet our New Board Members!

We had our annual elections recently. Our current officers agreed to stay on as we had no others who were on the ballot. We have three Directors who serve a 3 year term and can choose to stay on another term according to our bylaws if there is no opposition. This year Sandi (Andrews) Engel will be leaving the Board after serving two terms. Sandi is a dedicated volunteer on our weekend schedule, and we can always count on her to bring Krispie Kreme donuts to our meetings! She lives in Bloomington but NEVER misses a meeting or event. We thank her for all of her service and look forward to continuing to work along side her in the future.

Taking Sandi's place on the Board as Director is Jack Anderson. Jack is another dedicated weekend volunteer, but Jack's service goes well-beyond that. We are always calling upon his carpentry and painting talents (and just about any handyman jobs) around the museum. Thanks for saying "yes" to joining the Board.

We also want to welcome Dave Michelsen as head of our Building Committee. This is a job that Dave has pretty much been doing for us over the past couple of years starting with heading up the new addition project a couple years ago along with many other tasks to keep us moving forward! Thanks for all you do, Dave!

Important Museum Happenings!

We have taken on a couple of BIG projects for the upcoming year and want to share some information about them.

Precinct Cemetery Walk—Sunday, September 15th: A Cemetery Walk features anywhere from 6-8 persons who are significant to the community in many different ways. They could be an early settler, a military hero, a mayor or businessman who helped Earlville grow, an educator, or a person who otherwise contributed to the fabric of community. And, in this case, they must be buried in the Precinct Cemetery. There will be an actor portraying the individual who will take about 5-10 minutes to tell about their life and experiences before you move on to the next one. Tickets will be sold ahead of time and buses will transport all participants to the cemetery and back as there is not room for parking. The project takes a lot of work to plan, research and finding actors for the event, let alone, volunteers for that day. The date is a ways off, but if you would be interested in volunteering, please raise your hand or give us a call, txt or email and let us know!! The proceed from this event will go to repairing some of the old gravestones in the cemetery.

Mural Painting Downtown: In an effort to further beautify our city, we have started the process of working with the building owner of 139 W Railroad St. (building next to the bank parking lot) to provide a mural on the west side of that building. The owner is very anxious to work with us to make this happen. It is in its early stages so we are in the process of forming a committee to move forward. If you are interested in helping with this project, please let us know. We are also looking for feedback from the community as to what should be included on the mural. What pictures would best portray our town's history? Do you know of any outside wall artists that you could recommend? We need your ideas. The committee will collect all ideas and make the final decisions.

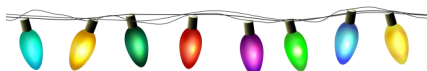


DONATION!

Thanks to Chris Fritz who recently donated this Hymn Board which came from the old Lutheran Church. We have added this to our display on Churches at the Museum. We are very appreciative of this (and all donations) which add to the interest for those visiting the Museum!

FROM ALL OF US AT THE MUSEUM

WE WISH YOU A VERY MERRY CHRISTMAS
AND ANOTHER YEAR FULL OF WONDERFUL MEMORIES!



Please join us on
Wed., Dec. 13th
4p-7p

CHRISTMAS OPEN HOUSE
At the Museum

Light refreshments and beverages will be served while you check out the displays and enjoy some fellowship with others in the community!

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