

Alton Museum of History and Art, Inc.

Fall 2007

News & Views

2809 College Avenue, Alton, Illinois 62002

618-462-2763

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Becki Combs,
Editor of Newsletter

Charlene Gill,
President Emeritus

Fall Special Events

September 15, 2007

9 a.m. to 2 p.m.
“Riverfront Park”
The museum will
have River History
Presentations
(1) Elijah Lovejoy
(2) Captain Benjamin
Godfrey

September 25, 2007

SIUE
50th Anniversary
“Founders Day”
12 noon to 2 p.m.
Alton Museum will be
open for walking tour

October 28th 2007

“Koenig House on
House Tour”
12 noon to 6 p.m.

November 7th thru 11th

Elijah Lovejoy week

October 6, 2007

Dental College
“Family Day”

Excerpts from

Abraham Lincoln Walks at Midnight

By Vachel Lindsay

It is a portentous, and a
thing of state
That here at midnight,
in our little town
A mourning figure
walks, and will not rest,
Near the old court-
house pacing up and
down,

He cannot sleep upon
his hillside now.
He is among us: - as in
times before!

And we who toss and
lie awake for long,
Breathe deep, and start,
to see him pass the
door.

The sins of all the war-
lords burn his heart.
He sees the
dreadnaughts scouring
every main.

He carries on his shawl-
wrapped shoulders now
The bitterness, the folly
and the pain.

It breaks his heart that
things must murder still,
That all his hours of
travail here for men
Seem yet in vain. And
who will bring peace
That he may sleep upon
his hill again?

Policy on Gifts to the Museum

A gift is a complete transfer of ownership without restriction from the previous owner to the museum. As a matter of principle, the museum cannot afford to limit the usefulness of a gift by agreeing to display them at all times or to associate the name(s) of the donor publicly every time the item is used. Long Term Loans are graciously refused. Temporary loans of two weeks or a month are often necessary, but it is important that the owner be aware that he is to return to get his object immediately when the exhibit is dismantled.

The museum collects two kinds of objects:

(a) Items that have aesthetic, historic or scientific importance. (These should be fully documented as to their history or their value for scholars or students)

(b) Items that have future educational usefulness...typical commonplace objects that have to be stored until the time that they are called upon to fill out an exhibit to demonstrate physical characteristics or processes.

These, too, must be identified and documented.

Volunteers

Beatrice Adams
Ruth Bell
Aidan Combs
Brian Combs
Dennis Reed Cox
Nathan Ryan Cox
David Culp
Patti Culp
Marjorie Erwin
Charlene Gill
Charlene Johnson
Meghan Jones
Lois Mitchell
Richard Propes
Barbara Raglin
Tom Raglin
Pauline Scheurer
Norman Showers
Lucy Youngberg

Museum Disposition of Property Act

Senate Bill 1292 – May 19, 1998

ACQUIRING TITLE TO UNDOCUMENTED PROPERTY

If a museum has objects in its collection that have no documentation or the documentation has been destroyed or lost, the museum may establish clear title to the objects if it can prove that the objects have been in the museum's possession for seven years. This proof may be in the form of an inventory, an exhibit catalog, a press release or photograph, or some other document that mentions the object specifically. The museum becomes the owner of the property on the day after the seven-year period ends, free from all claims. Stolen or confiscated objects are exempt from this section of the law.

New Members

Shirley Buddell	Godfrey, IL
Perry Covuey	Alton, IL
Dorothy Droste	Alton, IL
Harold Johnson	Alton, IL
Kay & Dick Massey	Alton, IL
Barbara and Michael McGrew	Godfrey, IL
Brian McKinney	Wood River, IL
Esther Young	Chesterfield, MO

**Thank you
Volunteers!**

WELCOME!

Message from the President

A foundation is defined as the basis upon which something stands or is supported. The mission of Alton Museum of History and Art, Inc. is to educate and entertain, and it is supported by our members, our visitors and by donor’s generosity.

Considering the tremendous changes that have occurred in the past couple of years at Alton Museum of History and Art, Inc., it is amazing to note all that has been accomplished with the help of our members, volunteers, corporate sponsors, private donors and the community.

David Culp, past president, has logged

many volunteer hours building new exhibits and improving old ones.

These developments are improving our role in tourism and satisfaction on every front. It is vital that we continue to have the support of our friends, so that we may realize the full vision of the Alton Museum of History and Art, Inc. including the development of Alton Museum of History and Art, Inc. into a first class museum.

Great things are happening at Alton Museum of History and Art, Inc. thanks to your support. We offer immense gratitude for your lasting contributions and hope to

continue our collaboration establishing the Alton Museum of History and Art, Inc. of the 21st century.

We are pleased Brian McKinney has the skills to repair the Pfeifferberger architectural drawing of the Koenig House and volunteered to do so. That is a wonderful skill to have.

Please allow me to extend my heartfelt appreciation for our members, visitors and donors to the Museum.

*Charlene Johnson
President,
Board of Directors*

*“History outlives those who would destroy it.”
...anonymous*

Volunteers Needed

Here is a list of tasks for which the Museum needs your help...

- Grant Writer
- Brochure Delivery
- Tour Guide/Gift Shop
- Organizing Volunteer Program
- Cataloging/Photographing Artifacts
- Organizing Storage
- General Housekeeping
- Painting/Carpentry/Electric

AMHA Wish list

LOOMIS HALL - DIGITAL SECURITY SYSTEM \$2,000.00
\$5,500.00

(Security for exhibits -

WADLOW ROOM/PIONEER ROOM – New Carpet

WILHELM HOUSE (circa 1860)

(The Wilhelm House is in the State Historical District. The first floor will be used for Research Library of Alton Area Historical Society Committee)

1. Slate Roof (new roof is a necessity due to hail damage) \$26,000.00

2. Wall Board & Paint & Carpeting (1st floor)

3. Replacement of Front & Back Doors

4. Scrape & Paint \$5,000.00

KOENIG HOUSE – tuck pointing

COLE CLARKE CARRIAGE HOUSE (circa 1850)

\$5,500.00

WEATHERIZE - cupola, doors and windows – (Future home of Children’s Museum)

(The building must have a well cared for appearance because of location on SIUE Campus near Wadlow statue.)

NEWSLETTER – (Printing & Postage per year)

\$1,500.00

WADLOW BIRTH HOUSE – Refurbish/Remodeling (Needs new floors, walls, and paint)

WADLOW BIRTH HOME – (Scrape & Paint)

\$5,000.00

(Located on the Campus of SIUE Dental School, the home must have a well cared for appearance)

Current Museum Exhibits

- The Grace Monroe Classroom & Art Gallery, a multiple purpose area with a new Multi Media / Projection System, (also includes the David Culp Exhibit “Fancy Work”.)
- Robert P. Wadlow Room contains memorabilia and photographs of “Alton’s Gentle Giant”. The museum is grateful to Robert Graul for his photographs documenting the life of one of Alton’s most loveable and extraordinary citizens. The video “The Life of Robert” is shown in the Grace Monroe Classroom and runs about 25 minutes.
- Elijah P. Lovejoy Exhibit is located in the Pioneer Room. Long before the Civil War, this great martyr died defending freedom of the press, freedom of speech and freedom from slavery.
- Lincoln / Civil War Exhibit located in the Pioneer Room include many period illustrations, photographs, and Civil War memorabilia.
- The Underground Railroad Exhibit highlights local involvement in the flight for freedom. Hundreds of former slaves passed through the community with the assistance of permanent residents. The Underground Railroad assisted slaves as they were attempting to escape to the North before and during the Civil War. Safe houses along the route provided food,

clothing and shelter, with most travel occurring at night. Illinois is the home to several stops along the Underground Railroad. Among them are the Old Rock House and Enos Apartments in Alton, Zion Lutheran Church in Springfield and Rocky Fork in Godfrey.” Old Rock house in Alton is now the Lovejoy Apartments. It was built in 1835 for the Rev. T. B. Hurlbut, pastor of the Upper Alton Presbyterian Church. Hurlbut was a friend of the Rev. Elijah P. Lovejoy, publisher of the Alton Observer, who was killed by a pro-slavery mob just two weeks after a meeting of the Anti-Slavery Society of Illinois at the Old Rock House. Rocky Fork was a rural farm and church in the Godfrey area that included a free African American community. The Rocky Fork Church was co-founded by Rev. Erasmus Green, a former slave and Civil War Soldier, who bought his freedom and settled in the area.

- The Black Pioneer Exhibit highlights the early black settlers who farmed, owned businesses and worshiped in vicinity of Alton.
- The Piasa Bird Exhibit lines the hallway. The exhibit tells the story of the fascinating Indian Legend.
- The Transportation Room located at the top of the stairs on the left is rated as one of the best in the State of Illinois. The

replica of the riverboat pilothouse portrays Alton as an 1850 river captain would have seen it. The river landscape mural is by life member Dycie Madison. The museum is grateful to Robert Graul for his donation of photographs, his knowledge of the river & for his expertise in putting the exhibit together.

Our GIFT SHOPPE features Advisory Board Member Dan Brannan’s “Boy Giant” and Alton area postcards, t-shirts, souvenirs and collectibles.

ADVISORY BOARD

Dan Brannan
Terrie Cameron
David Culp
Brian McKinney
Pat Miller
Norman Shaw

If you are interested in becoming a volunteer, call the
Alton Museum of History & Art:
618-462-2763

E-mail:
altonmuseum@yahoo.com

Alton Museum's Record Speaks for History

By Matt Hall

Telegraph Correspondent

Alton - Two decades ago, much of the River Bend's history was being sold down the river.

Historical Buildings were coming down and telltale artifacts were being dealt to New Orleans.

"Antique dealers were starting to sell the birthright of the area downriver," Charlene Gill said. "I was afraid there would not be a (historical) record left. We needed a group to preserve and conserve history."

That group, the Alton Museum of History and Art, Inc., is celebrating its 20th anniversary this week. History, and its preservation, is alive and well.

"It's starting to get on the map," said Gill, president and one of five founders of the museum at 121 E. Broadway, now 2809 College Ave. "It's really taken 20 years! History is very, very important!!! Unfortunately, most people don't get interested in it until they are 40 years old."

The museum will hold its annual meeting at 7 p.m. Wednesday in the Sky Room of the Hotel Stafford, 229 Market St. in Alton. The cost is \$5.00, payable at the door. Instead of a guest speaker, museum members will be encouraged to take turns reminiscing about the organization's development.

In 1971, the museum was a dream. The founders - Gill, Margaret D. Weber, Norma Miller, Robert R. Hinthorne and Herbert E. Wagenfeldt - mailed 3,000

invitations for \$10.00 memberships. About 300 replied.

Two years later, the museum found a home in the old Schweppe House, later known as the McKernan House, built in 1848.

Now visitors can learn about the Moore family massacre by Kickapoo Indians in 1814 and the first state prison in Alton, later used as a prison for Confederate prisoners in the Civil War, and the 8-foot-11 inch Robert Wadlow. One of the most popular exhibits is a photo depiction of buildings that have been razed.

The museum tries to steer clear of stuffiness and exclusive concentration on famous people, although it does devote attention to Benjamin Godfrey and Meriwether Lewis and William Clark, Gill said.

"There are many unsung heroes. They need to be remembered, too, in some fashion," she said.

The museum is equally interested in the history of Calhoun, Jersey and Macoupin Counties, Gill said.

About half of the museum's collection is on permanent exhibit. The rest is rotated into display and new exhibits are always in the works.

"We didn't want to be a dusty, crowded museum," Gill said. "We don't want to be like an attic. We move things in and out."

Achievements of the organization, which relies on private donations and no tax money, include:

The re-publication of four books, including "In Search of the Piasa" by Everett L. Sparks and the "Black Pioneer Cookbook."

Ongoing renovation of the Koenig House at East Fourth and Oak Streets. The house, which was built in 1896, is open for meetings & tours by appointment.

The fund raiser, Heirloom Discovery Days, when five appraisers of the New York auction house Sotheby Parke-Bernet were flown in to evaluate collectibles for area residents.

The Museum is sponsoring work on a book on the Civil War prison and a seminar on Abraham Lincoln.

"Our biggest goal is to get an endowment fund so we could pay for general operations," Gill said. "Nobody wants to give money to pay the light bill, yet the light bill has to be paid. When that is done, I'm going to hang it up. The research part of the museum is exciting. I'd rather spend my time doing that than holding out any tin cup."

The museum and its gift shop are open from 10 to 4 p.m. Wednesday through Saturday and 1 to 4 p.m. on Sunday. Admission is Adults: \$2.50 Children 3 years and over \$1.00.

(Reprinted & Edited from the Alton Telegraph 1991)

**Alton Museum of History
and Art, Inc.**

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Alton, Illinois 62002

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We're on the Web!
See us at:
www.altonmuseum.com

CAMPAIGN FUNDRAISING

I want to help the museum with its financial need.
Please apply my enclosed tax free donation for

\$ _____

DONATION

\$250.00
\$100.00
\$ 50.00
_____ Other

Senior..... \$20.00
Single.....\$25.00
Family.....\$30.00
History Lover.....\$40.00
Patron of the Arts.....\$50.00
Business.....\$100.00
Life.....\$1,000
Benefactor.....\$5,000

IRS NON-PROFIT ORGANIZATION

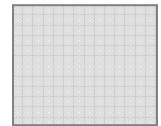
About Our Organization...

***The Alton Museum of
History and Art was
founded in 1971 to
preserve the great
heritage of our***

***community. Through
the exhibits, we share
with you our past and
present so that you too
may discover the***

***people, places and
events that influenced
our ancestors and
continue to shape our
destiny.***

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2809 College Avenue
Alton, Illinois 62002



TO: