

Alton Museum of History & Art, Inc.

Summer 2011

News & Views



2809 College Avenue, Alton, Illinois 62002

618-462-2763

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www.altonmuseum.com

40th ANNIVERSARY PARTY

We hope that you will make it a point to mark on your calendar that the Alton Museum of History & Art will be celebrating their 40th Anniversary with a party on Wed., July 13th from 5-7 p.m. Plan now to join us for the big event! There will be cake, punch, and a free tour of the facility for all who want it. If you haven't been in lately, come check us out!

ROCKIN' WITH ROBERT

Following the party at the museum, go across College Avenue and head for the Robert Wadlow statue. This season's second Rockin' With Robert concert will begin at 7 p.m. Performing will be the Ralph Butler Trio featuring Ralph Butler (vocal), Gigi Darr (keyboard), and Lew Winer (saxophone). Refreshments will be available for purchase. So bring you lawn chair, blanket, bug spray, and finish out your evening under the watchful eyes of Robert!

In Memoriam

Edward Walker Keller

Edward Keller, 93, died May 9, 2011. A former Mayor of Elsah, Illinois until 1970, he was the owner of J.K. Keller & Son grocery in Elsah.

Mr. Keller served in the U.S. Army during WWII. He was a member of the Piasa Lodge and the Ainad chapter of Shriners.

Mr. Keller was a Charter Member and served on the Founding Board at the Alton Museum of History & Art. He was active with the Alton/Godfrey and East Alton Rotary Clubs and was a recipient of the Paul Harris Fellow Award.

He and his wife Genie were devoted to each other. Edward Keller was a grand person and his passing is a great loss to Alton.



Dr. Norman Showers, President, accepting artifact donation, Alton's First Railroad Sign, from Steve Sands.

HISTORIC STATION SIGN PRESENTED

Steve Sands of the Alton Area Landmarks Association (right) recently presented the Alton Station sign to Dr. Norman Showers, President of Alton Museum of History & Art. Sands acquired the sign during an auction of the estate of the late Bob St Peters, after a spirited bidding war between Sands and members of the Museum staff. He then donated it to the museum during a recent meeting of the Board of Directors. The sign, which shows evidence of being repainted at least twice, once graced the 1850 stone freight house at 7th and Piasa streets before it was razed to make room for the federal court house. It was the loss of this historic building which led directly to the founding of the Alton Museum of History & Art and the Alton Area Landmarks Association. (Photo by Brian Combs)

**Monthly on the 2nd Friday:
"Friday Night at the Museum"
6:30 p.m. – 8:30 p.m.
MUSEUM MEMBERS - FREE
Refreshments!!**

MILES DAVIS FESTIVAL REPORT

The sixth Miles Davis Jazz Festival was held on May 21, 2011 at Trimpe Hall on the Lewis & Clark Community College Campus. The event, which was sponsored by the Jazz Festival Committee of the Alton Museum of History & Art, attracted more than 150 jazz fans. The Jazz Festival Committee created this annual festival that brings the biggest names in local bands together for 4 wonderful hours.

The Alton Landing Jazz Quartet, The Jim Stevens Group, Big George Brock Jr. and The Moudinband, and Henry Miles and The Miles-Tones played for this year's festival.

Local musicians, Pete Basola, saxophone; Tim Jarden, guitarist; Kenny King, bass guitarist; Jeff Walker, drummer and percussionist share connections that date back to high school.

Jim Stevens is well known around St. Louis. He began playing saxophone at age 9. By age 17 he was playing with most of the St. Louis, big-name dance bands. Through the years Jim has freelanced around the Midwest.

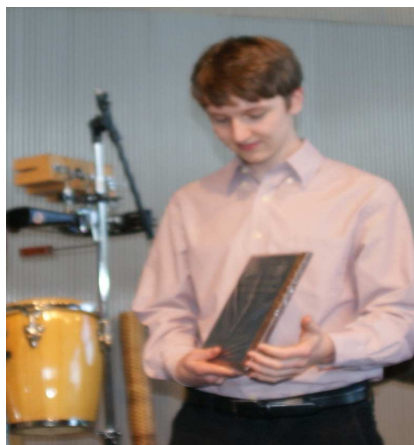
The Mondinband is made up of four Southern Illinois musicians. They play a mix of hard-driving blues and rock, with strong jazz and R&B influences. Big George Bock Jr. is the son of the St. Louis blues legend by the same name. Big George Jr. has blues in his genes and offers up a powerful performance.

Henry Miles has a long, impressive musical career that began right here in Alton. A founding member of the Ebony Rhythm Funk Campaign, Henry has opened for so many well-know artists, including Miles Davis. The Miles-Tones is made up of four outstanding musicians from all over the United States.

Plan now to join us for another fantastic event in 2012! (Photos by Jimmy Small)

THANK YOU Jacoby Arts Center

The Board of Directors of Alton Museum of History & Art and the Miles Davis Jazz Committee is grateful to the Jacoby Arts Center and the Illinois Arts Council for their support and encouragement of community arts programming.



Arlo Shultis



Alton Landing Jazz Quartet



The Jim Stevens Group



Big George Brock, Jr. and The Mondinband



Henry Miles and The Miles-Tones

Arlo Shultis

Wins Miles Davis Scholarship

Arlo Shultis, who recently was awarded the Miles Davis Scholarship through the Alton Museum of History & Art, said he was excited to receive the scholarship, which was presented to him at the Miles Davis Jazz Festival at Lewis and Clark Community College in May.

"I was really honored to receive the scholarship, especially one named after Miles Davis," he said. "Many people don't realize that Miles Davis grew up in Alton, which I think makes this an even bigger honor."

The scholarship is available to graduating high school seniors who want to pursue a college degree from a two- or four-year institution. A committee reviews the scholarship applications and selects a recipient.

In the fall, Shultis will attend the University of Michigan to study percussion performance in the university's school of music.



Marjorie Erwin



At 91, Marjorie Erwin has had many years in community service. She retired from her volunteer position at the Alton Museum of History & Art on Thursday, May 26, 2011 after 9 years.

As a young woman, a college student at Macomb, Illinois, Marjorie Evelyn Wilkins sang in a choir that traveled the state. She met her husband, Robert Erwin, who was also a college student, and a member of the choir. She sang soprano and he sang bass.

Robert Erwin served his country in World War II and the Korean War. Marjorie worked as a waitress and at a tractor company during the years Bob was overseas. Once Bob came home, Marjorie finally took on her role as a full time wife and mother.

Marjorie served as President of the Jersey County Home Bureau where she shared her knowledge with others on how to be a wife and mother. After moving to Alton, Marjorie was President of the Clover Leaf Home Extension twice and also served a term as secretary. Women joined for the purpose of learning life skills. Meal planning and food and nutrition were taught in meetings held in member's homes. Young women were taught by the older generation about many household chores.



Bob and Margie had two daughters in girl scouts. Marjorie volunteered as a Girl Scout leader for 12 years. The meetings were held in the basement of the Erwin home, which Bob finished for that purpose.

Marjorie faithfully attends Main Street United Methodist Church, where she taught Sunday school, a fourth grade group, in the old Methodist church building for a few years. Previously, she taught a fourth grade group at the Jerseyville Methodist Church. She volunteered for years, making and serving food at church related events.

After Bob retired from teaching school, he worked as a park ranger in the Smoky Mountains. They traveled all over the United States in a motor home and camped in Texas during the winter months. They joined a square dancing group and traveled for these events. Bob escorted Marjorie to Europe, where he enjoyed showing her the places he had seen during his military service.

Robert Erwin died and Marjorie felt she needed something to do. Richard Propes, a member of Main Street United Methodist Church, and a member of the Board of Directors at the Alton Museum of History & Art, suggested she volunteer at the museum. For the past nine years Marjorie has been a faithful and much loved volunteer.

Marjorie lost her younger daughter, Barbara Rogers, July 15, 2010. Rick and Barbara Rogers lived in the Atlanta area. Nancy Kosick, Marjorie's first child, and her husband live in New Lenox, Illinois. They have a son Scott Kosick and a daughter Kerri Bradford. Marjorie has a two year old great grandson, Jason Kosick. It means a long train ride for Marjorie, but she hasn't missed celebrating Jason's milestones. She is looking forward to another visit soon. **Thank you Marjorie! We shall miss seeing you here every week.**



RECENT WADLOW DONATION

Henry Warren donated a flyer. The flyer documents Wadlow's profession as a promotional representative for the Peters Shoe Co. The store advertising Robert's visit, H. E. Warren & Sons, a general merchandise and grocery store founded by Henry E. Warren in 1869 and was in operation for about 150 years. Gordon Warren (1911-2005), was working in the store at the time of Robert's visit and often recalled when he shook hands with Robert. "My hand in his was like the hand of a child in that of a grown man." Robert's visit to Richland in May of 1940 would have been just two months before his death in July.

Flyer documenting Wadlow's profession as a promotional representative for the Peters Shoe Co.



BIG BOY DAY

SEE HIM IN PERSON
ROBERT WADLOW
The Biggest Man in the World!
8 ft. 9¹/₂ in. TALL
WEARS SIZE 37 PETERS SHOE
22 YEARS OLD

This is an honest-to-goodness photo of Robert and his dad (his dad is six feet tall). When Robert was born February 22, 1918, he weighed 8¹/₂ pounds, at 6 months he weighed 30 pounds, and today he weighs 491 pounds . . . and towers above every other living man.

COME SEE HIM!
MEET HIM! TALK TO HIM!

REMEMBER THE DATE, SATURDAY, MAY 4th
HE WILL BE IN OUR STORE FROM 11:30 A. M. TO 12:30 NOON

H. E. WARREN & SONS
RICHLAND MISSOURI



Vice President, Brian Combs, and Secretary, John Langley, unload the museum's new flood exhibit.

FLOOD EXHIBIT DELIVERED

Vice President Brian Combs and Secretary John Langley unload a multi-panel exhibit commemorating the Great Flood of 1993. The exhibit is a gift of the Army Corps of Engineers which originally erected it for display at the Melvin Price Locks and Dam at Alton. The exhibit will be stored until the Alton Museum of History & Art can find a location for permanent display. Here's hoping that the current flooding will be long gone by then. (Photo by Cathy Bagby)

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION



ALTON MUSEUM OF HISTORY & ART, INC

2809 College Avenue, Alton, IL 62002
(618) 462-2763

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

PHONE _____

E-MAIL _____

- Youth\$5**
- Senior.....\$20**
- Active (Single).....\$25**
- Family.....\$30**
- History Lover.....\$40**
- Patron of the Arts...\$50**
- Business.....\$100**
- Life.....\$1,000**
- Benefactor.....\$5,000**

Donation _____

Willing to do volunteer work

We're on the Web!

See us at:

www.altonmuseum.com

Check out our new
Facebook Page!

About Our Organization

The Alton Museum of History & 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.

LOOKING FOR THAT PERFECT GIFT?

Consider the merchandise and books for sale at the Alton Museum of History & Art. A consistent favorite has been ***Boy Giant: The Story of Robert Wadlow, The World's Tallest Man***, by Dan Brannon. It has been a best seller at the museum, generating more than \$5,000 in revenue during 2006 and 2007. If you can't come in person, give us a call at 462-2763 to order over the phone with a credit card. Send checks or money orders for *Boy Giant* made out to the **Alton Museum of History & Art, 2809 College Avenue, Alton, IL 62002**. Price is \$19.95 plus \$1.42 for tax and \$4.00 for shipping and handling for a total of **\$25.37**.

Other book offerings include ***The Lost Cyclist*** by David Herlihy, telling the story of the disappearance of world cycle tourist Frank Lenz in 1892. Lenz attempted to make a round the world tour on a bicycle in the infancy of the bicycle age, and before there was any kind of network of paved roads in much of the world. He disappeared in eastern Turkey and is believed to have been a victim of civil war raging in that part of the world during the disintegration of the Ottoman Empire. It is also the story of William Sachleben of Alton and his friend from Ferguson, MO, who also journeyed around the world on bicycles attempting to find their missing friend Lenz. **The book sells for \$26.**

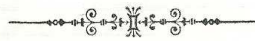
As we prepare for the Bicentennial of the War of 1812, we call your attention to two booklets on sale at the museum telling the history of rural forts built in this area. They are ***Tales of Hill's Fort*** and ***Hill's Fort—The Tales Continue***. These booklets were written by William Wilson and Kevin Keagy about an outpost in what is now Bond County. These forts were fortified farmhouses built by the early settlers attempting to establish a foothold in hostile Indian country during the early 19th century. **The booklets sell for \$19.95 each.**

**ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES
COORDINATOR SELECTED**

Barbara McKenzie of Alton was appointed by the Board of Directors at its June meeting to serve as the Coordinator Services Manager, effective July 1, 2011. Her duties include fund raising, grant writing, scheduling of special events, and updating the Museum's administrative and personnel policies and continuing the cataloguing of museum exhibits.

Ms. McKenzie has lived in Alton for eight years after relocating from St. Louis. She has experience in federal service with the Veterans Administration, Department of Housing and Urban Development and Social Security Administration. She has been a real estate broker and has experience in retail sales. She operated a shop at Mineral Springs Mall. Her volunteer work has included Board of Directors member with the Alton Marketplace Association and the Foster Grandparents program.

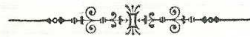
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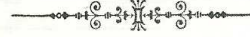
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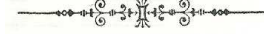
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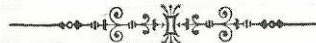
BROWN BAG LUNCH

Alton Marketplace, the North Alton-Godfrey Business Council and the Upper Alton Association are teaming up to promote a series of "Brown Bag Luncheons" to encourage business-to-business interaction and commerce. These events are designed as casual opportunities for local businesspeople to increase their knowledge about the services and goods available through local companies, and also discuss current events relevant to the growth & prosperity of the Alton community. There is no cost to attend; bring your own lunch, and complimentary beverages are provided by our sponsor Liberty Bank. Drop in anytime between 11:30-1:00 at the following location: Wed, August 3rd at the Alton Museum of History & Art (2809 College Ave.). We hope to see you!

TRIVIA CONTEST A SUCCESS!

Despite a small turnout (four tables with 10 players each), the AMHA Trivia Contest was great fun for all who attended. Our thanks to Julia's Banquet Center in East Alton for providing the space for the event on Sunday afternoon May 15th and for taking such good care of us. The questions were prepared by Rodger Dillon, master of ceremonies and a member of the Jazz Committee, as it was intended to be a fund-raiser for that event.

Special thanks go out to the team from the First Presbyterian Church of Brighton, the third place team, who donated back their entire winnings to the museum. Team members were: Rev. Mark Strothman, Jim & Sheila Wilkie. Sandy Evers, Jim & Nona Quick, Bev Tucker, Jan Fulk, and Tamara & Duane Atchley. Thank you also to the first and second place teams who gave back a portion of their winnings. Watch for the next Trivia Night!



THANK YOU to the Alton Community Service League!

The Board of Directors of the Alton Museum of History & Art is grateful to this wonderful organization for sharing our hopes and dreams. We thank the *Alton Community Service League* for their 40 years of support.



"History outlives those who would destroy it."
...anonymous

