



Sumner House

# Roselle History Museum Newsletter

Official Publication of the Roselle Historical Foundation  
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Winter 2017

## Flags for Roselle



### Eleven – Eleven – Eleven

#### Doing Our Part to Remember Our Veterans and Our Military

World War I, then referred to as The Great War, ended with a temporary cessation of hostilities, an *armistice*, between the Allies and Germany at the eleventh hour of the eleventh day of the eleventh month in 1918. The final peace agreement, the Treaty of Versailles, was signed in 1919. In 1954, the name of the legal holiday was changed from Armistice Day to Veterans Day.

The final Flags for Roselle installation for 2017 will take place on Saturday, November 11. Between 7 and 8 a.m., nearly 200 flags will be placed in front lawns throughout Roselle. What a tribute to our veterans and to all that is important to us as Americans.

### **VOLUNTEERS AND VEHICLES ARE NEEDED!**

If you can help, contact Dominic Manola at Lake Park High School ([dmanola@lphs.org](mailto:dmanola@lphs.org)) today! At least 20 teams of 2 or 3 are needed. 2-person team: one person drives and helps the other with installation. 3-person team: one person drives only, and the 2 others install the flag. Vehicles need to accommodate about ten 8-foot poles.

What does love and respect for our flag look like? →  
When the flags got wet on June 14, Roselle firemen created this unique drying system at the firehouse.

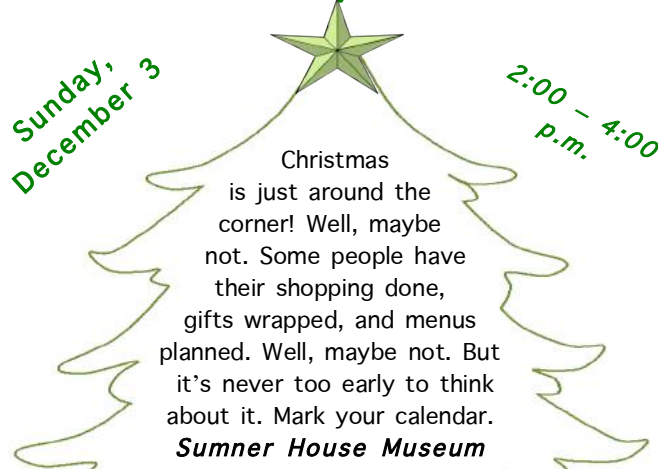


Thank you!

## Christmas Open House

Sunday,  
December 3

2:00 – 4:00  
p.m.



Once again, Santa's Helpers (museum volunteers) will host the Christmas Open House—an opportunity for you to stop by and sample some of the best cookies and confections in the world. Added this year to the array of sweets will be gingerbread cookies to delight the children. One section of the museum will be set up with crayons and pictures of gingerbread “subjects” for the little ones to color and happily take home for display on the fridge.

Admission is free, and door prizes will be awarded. And, for a \$1 donation, guests may take a chance to win a Byer's Caroler's Kindle. He's a 6" tall gingerbread baker who comes with his own gingerbread house.



Take me home

Both buildings will be decorated, and holiday music will fill the air. Guests can take a close look at the precious artifacts in the museum and then take a trip back to the 1920s in the Richter House. Come one, come all.

**JANUARY:** The museum building will be closed for the month of January for some exciting renovation.

# THREE PORCH EVENTS & FACE PAINTING HUGE SUCCESSES!

## Tank and the Beez CONCERT ON THE PORCH – JULY 16



Brian and Beth (Malouf) Blankenship entertained an appreciative audience with old time Americana music when they came to the history museum for the first Concert on the Porch.

Visitors veg out, sing along, and reminisce



Event chairman Maria Wojtas (on the right) enjoys the music with her parents, Mary & Bob Wojtas, and husband Matthew Kluber

## Face Painting at the Taste

Some of Roselle's little sub-debs pose for a "special facial" by artist Paulina Engel at the Taste of Roselle in August.



## Dave Carmona CONCERT ON THE PORCH – AUGUST 13



Dave Carmona delighted his audience with music from many genres: Classic rock, pop, standards, including the all-time, crowd-pleaser sing-along, *Sweet Caroline*.



## Ghost Stories on the Porch October 8



Eighteen (18) children participated in the Ghost Stories on the Porch event presented by storyteller and chairman Maria Wojtas. Program included crafts and a Halloween movie in the Museum Office for the young goblins.





## Someone You Should Know

Tom Piorkowski, New Board Member



The “Open” sign in front of the Sumner House Museum caught Tom Piorkowski’s eye during his bike ride home from the library on a fall Sunday in 2014. He’d been meaning to stop in and take a look around, and

decided that was the time to do it. He enjoyed it so much he attended a general meeting the following summer. He enjoyed that session so much he continued to attend meetings, and this past May was elected to the Board of Directors.

When asked what he considers to be the history museum’s strengths, Tom replied, “I believe one of the museum’s main strengths is the surprising abundance of objects and artifacts in our collection. We have been tremendously lucky over the years that so many residents have been incredibly generous, donating interesting pieces that show both the history of the town and the history of the country. In addition to this, the presentation is absolutely amazing. Working with what is admittedly a relatively limited space, (two houses plus one more for the office and archives) our volunteers have done an amazing job of organizing and presenting a tremendous array of items in a manner that communicates information in a way that is both clear and visually appealing.”

Tom goes on to say that “the museum is on a great path right now as we try to expand our presence in the community with programs like Sip & Paint and the porch concerts. Events like these are important in ensuring that the museum plays a role in our community . . . I believe the museum serves as another community center where residents can come together.”

Looking at where the museum is now and where it might be in five years, Tom says that it’s currently in great shape, providing residents with opportunities to learn about their wonderful town. He sees the museum in five years continuing to perform its basic function— but continually adapting to changing times, offering new programs, and providing new experiences for visitors.

“I think some of the things are timeless, and, hopefully, will not change. While the expanded technology presence and expanded programs are great, I still think the best way to get a sense of the history is to stop by the museum and look at the items on display in person.”

You may see Tom serving as a docent on any given Sunday throughout the year. You will also see him lending a helping hand at the annual Historical Evening.

Being elected to the RHM Board of Trustees was a great honor, Tom says. He has a great respect for the work that has been done by the people who have brought the organization to where it is today, and he wants to live up to the standards set by them.

As a board member, Tom feels a responsibility to be a good steward of RHM funds. He expresses appreciation “to the great number of individuals and businesses who have been incredibly generous in their donations.”

Tom’s interest in community service is not limited to the history museum. He’s also a member of the Roselle Public Library Board, where he serves as vice president, and a member of the RPL Foundation Board where he currently serves as treasurer. From 2009 to 2015, he served on the Roselle Zoning Board of Appeals.

Tom Piorkowski was born and raised in Roselle. He graduated from St. Walter School, Lake Park High School (Class of 2006), and Elmhurst College, where, in 2010, he received his B.A. in history and political science. In 2016, he graduated from Roosevelt University with an M.A. in history. He also has been teaching at Elmhurst College as an adjunct professor in the history department since Fall 2016. And so, Tom is one more “giving” volunteer who combines a career with community service.

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## Roselle Cocoa Crawl

Join the Village of Roselle and the businesses along Main Street for the second annual Cocoa Crawl on

November 25, Small Business Saturday.

Kick off the holidays with “*Celebrate the Season*” hosted by the Roselle Public Library at 1 pm. After Santa arrives at the Library via fire truck at 2 pm, the Cocoa Crawl will continue down Main Street.



*Plan to visit the history museum while you’re on the Cocoa Crawl! Have some cookies and take a tour of the buildings.*

Entertainment will be ongoing in the Town Center Plaza (Main & Prospect) throughout the afternoon. Beloved characters from Disney’s “Frozen,” Elsa and Anna, will be available for photo ops and autographs. And, carolers will be traveling the sidewalks.

A Community Christmas Tree will be located in the Plaza. Families are invited to bring an ornament from home or make one at the American Legion during the day to put on the tree. Lighting of the tree will be at 5 pm, marking the conclusion of the Cocoa Crawl.



# Looking Back at the Big Snow



by Nancy Bokelmann Stetter

The year 1918 was long remembered as the winter of the big snow, when a blizzard in early January tied up movement for days. The snow was so deep that trains could not get through. Many commuters spent the night in Chicago or on trains stalled on their tracks leading out of the city.

On the Chicago and Milwaukee line, all trains coming from the west were held up in Elgin because of a drift on the tracks a mile out of Roselle. A flyer left Chicago and made it to this spot before getting stuck. It was about 3 a.m., and the train was without heat or communication. Another train was sent to the scene but couldn't get through as the snow was waist-deep.

Emil Benhart took his bobsled out to rescue the stranded people, including many women and children, and brought them back to Roselle. Everyone in town pitched in and offered the travelers a warm place. People stayed up all night to help. Several days later, the trains finally got through.

The snow was piled up for weeks, making transportation difficult. In some of the DuPage County villages, the sidewalks were impassable, but the streets were kept open by four-horse teams dragging plows.

In the countryside, drifts in the roads forced farmers to take down fences and drive their teams of horses through the fields or wherever they could guide their

sleds through the snow banks. Many people ran out of food and other necessities. In the Westmore area of Lombard, some families were short of coal to heat their homes. The neighborhood women banded together, and with the help of a few men who were at home, cleared a path to a main street where they could get coal and hauled the coal on sleds to the homes that needed it.



*The Big Snow of 1918*

*The St. Paul's crack flyer, the "Southwestern Limited," behind the brand new Pacific type passenger engines got bogged down in the snow west of town. It was three days before the line was opened. (Etched in Time, p.10)*



*Typical scenes during the Big Storm*

"To sit back and let Fate play its hand out and never influence it is not the way man was meant to operate."  
(John Glenn)



**Sip & Paint**  
Friday, November 17, 2017  
7-10 pm

Bring a buddy!  
Everything's better  
when it's shared.  
Museum volunteers  
will provide the  
refreshments and

supplies. Artist/Coach Paulina Engel will provide the instruction. No experience necessary. You will need to register, though; classes are small. Call 630-351-5300. You may pay the \$40 in cash or by check when you arrive. A chair will be reserved for you at the Museum Office, 39 E. Elm Street, Roselle.



## 2018 Historical Evening Saturday, April 14, 2018 – 7:30 p.m.

Who: Terry Lynch, Historic Actor  
What: The Rise and Fall of the Doughboy (WWI)  
Where: Trinity Lutheran Family Life Center  
405 South Rush Street, Roselle



### Back by popular demand!

The 2018 FLAGS FOR ROSELLE program kicks off on January 1, and one more holiday is added: Patriot Day, September 11. If you would like a beautiful 3x5-foot U.S. flag placed in your front yard on five holidays next year, contact the history museum at 630-351-5300 or [rosellehistory@sbcglobal.net](mailto:rosellehistory@sbcglobal.net). Subscription is \$50 for 5 installations: Memorial Day, Flag Day, Independence Day, Patriot Day, and Veterans Day. Make checks payable to Roselle Historical Foundation and mail to 39 E. Elm St., Roselle, IL 60172. For online payments, go to [www.flagsforroselle.weebly.com](http://www.flagsforroselle.weebly.com).

## STATE OF THE FOUNDATION

### An Annual Report from the President



*As 2017 gradually becomes history, President Ray Hitzemann shares a summary of what's happened this past year in the Roselle Historical Foundation and its buildings that make up the Museum Campus.*

For the past several years, few things have changed. We continued to put our best foot forward with our traditional activities. Some were fund raisers, some were not, but all were designed to fulfill our mission.

The two major fund-raising events, the annual Historical Evening (now in its 25<sup>th</sup> year), and the glow sticks sale at the Fourth of July fireworks, were successful once again. Entering a float in the annual Rose Parade, maintaining a booth at the Taste of Roselle, hosting the Christmas Open House, and welcoming school children, scout troops, and individuals to the museum strengthened community relations.

The beautification of the grounds continued seamlessly from season to season, thanks to our great group of volunteers.

The exhibit committee continued to keep the displays looking good. That small group has some great plans for new exhibits. Watch for news of these in future newsletters.

During the past year, several new activities made their way to the museum calendar—events geared toward “community outreach” and the ongoing drive to increase membership. One innovative activity, introduced by Kay Cahill, was the “Flags for Roselle” program. The museum, Lake Park High School, and the American Legion benefited from this fund-raising event, and the museum will participate again in 2018.

The Sip & Paint classes, conducted by Paulina Engel, brought some people to the museum who had never visited it before.

The Porch Events, suggested and implemented by Maria Wojtas, brought still more people to the Museum Campus grounds where they sat back in lawn chairs and on blankets to enjoy two concerts and a Halloween Special (ghost stories and more) presented from the Sumner House porch. Maria plans to continue this program next year.

The Sumner House, built circa 1880, has been Roselle's history museum since 1987. The building needs some updating and upgrading. We are pleased to announce that, in January, the Hattendorf Store floor will be replaced, and new carpeting will be installed on the second floor. In addition, lighting in the Museum Office will be replaced. It is hoped that, depending on finances, more work will be done in the near future.

The nuts and bolts of maintaining a museum campus like Roselle's requires the support of the whole town.

Financially, the Roselle Historical Foundation is sound at this point. Our concern is that maintaining that stability requires funding, and a primary funding source is memberships. Currently, there are 179 paid memberships. Roselle boasts approximately 3,000 families. We will continue to reach out to the community so that one day every family in town has a vested interest (a membership) in its own history museum.

The museum belongs to the community. We encourage you to take an active role in what's happening there. Share your time and talent. Come to a meeting. Become a member.

### *The Museum Campus*



*Sumner House Museum*



*Richter House*



*Museum Office (coach house)*

#### **CAROL STREAM HISTORICAL SOCIETY**

held its Country Fair on Sept 16, featuring *Milk Maggie the Cow* (courtesy of Kline Creek Farm), old-time games, a crafts/book sale, and tours of the historical house at 301 Lies Rd. This is an annual event, so when you have your 2018 calendar, pencil it in.

**ROSELLE HISTORY MUSEUM  
39 E ELM STREET  
ROSELLE IL 60172**



**Nov 11 – Flags for Roselle  
Nov 17 – Sip & Paint  
Nov 25 – Cocoa Crawl  
Dec 3 – Christmas Open House**

***Mission Statement***

To maintain and enhance a historically accurate museum with primary focus on Roselle and surrounding areas

To collect local facts and artifacts of today that will be our village history and pride tomorrow

To provide a dynamic historical and educational resource for our residents and visitors

***Board of Directors***

Ray Hitzemann, President  
Glenn Spachman, VP/Treas  
Ruth Bagel, Secretary  
Milan Bagel \* Hank Kvintus  
Walter Lotz \* Tom Piorkowski  
Frank Zielinski

***Historian*** - Joan Beauprez

***Museum Hours***

Sundays 2-4 p.m.  
Other times by appointment

***Newsletter Deadlines***

Feb 1, May 1  
Aug 1, Nov 1

***Editor:*** Kay Cahill  
kaycahill@comcast.net

***General Meetings*** are held on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Saturday, 10-11:30 a.m. at the Museum Office, 39 E. Elm. Everyone is welcome.

**MEMBERSHIP FORM**

***Mail to: Roselle History Museum, 39 E. Elm St., Roselle, IL 60172***

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_  
Address \_\_\_\_\_ City/State/Zip \_\_\_\_\_  
Email Address \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_ New Member    Circle one:    \$30    \$50\*    \$100    \$250    Other \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_ Renewal

\_\_\_ \*My contribution is at least \$50. Please send me a free copy of the *Remembering Roselle* history book.

*The Roselle Historical Foundation is a 501(c)(3) corporation. Your contribution may be fully tax deductible.*

*Winter 2017*