



Roselle History Museum Newsletter

Official Publication of the Roselle Historical Foundation

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MERRY CHRISTMAS AND HAPPY NEW YEAR



The Roselle History Museum proudly announces plans for two Christmas events to be held at the Museum campus across from the Village Hall.

Christmas with Santa will be held on Sunday December 7th from 2-4 PM. Visit with Santa. Enjoy refreshments, stories and more.

The annual Christmas open house will be held on December 14th from 2-4 PM. This year's theme is **Christmas in Poland**. Enjoy holiday decorations, refreshments, cookies, cookie recipes, visit the museum and Richter house to see how Christmas was celebrated in Poland.

Looking for a unique Christmas present?

The History Museum has recently published two new books.

Cherished Recipes is a unique 440-recipe cookbook comprised of favorite dishes of many current and former residents. It features 9 categories of recipes as well as personal stories and household hints.

Remembering Roselle is new pictorial history. It is 129 pages with 200 pictures that will take you on an historical trip through Roselle. It is great for browsing and sharing with friends.

Copies of both books are available at the Village Hall or the museum office at 39 E. Elm Street. The price is \$20. If ordered from the museum it can be shipped free of charge until December 30th. Call the museum at office at (630)351-5300 to arrange for the order or visit the museum Sunday afternoon from 2-4.

SPRINGFIELD VISIT A HUGE SUCCESS



Twenty-two members of the Roselle History Museum enjoyed a two-day visit to the Springfield area to enjoy the historical sights on October 7th and 8th.

We started out at the new Abraham Lincoln Museum, which I believe was the highlight of the tour, showing how technology could bring history to life.

As we went to the various places the tour guides provided us with many insights that you would not get by visiting on your own.

Some of the other locations we toured were the “new” state capitol, which was built in 1899, the “old” state capitol which was torn down in the ‘60’s. Each piece was labeled and then it was then completely rebuilt. The tour of Lincoln’s grave was interesting. While we were in the cemetery we also saw the war memorials for WWII, Vietnam, and Korea. We toured the Governors Mansion. Next on the agenda was a tour of Lincoln’s home, which is run by the National Park Service. All of these locations were visited on the first day.

The second day we went to New Salem, IL. Some of the insights we got from the people in the buildings were very interesting. At one store we learned what a “gander pull” was. At another building we learned about the ox powered wool-carding machine. The oxen would walk on this tilted wheel. To keep the wheel from moving too fast and have the oxen falling there was a brakeman that would apply the brakes to slow it down. New Salem had mostly stores with very few residences. It was explained that this was the equivalent of the modern day strip mall. Farmers would come from up to 40 miles away to shop, trade and get medical attention.

Two other stops were made the second day. We visited the Dana-Thomas house which is the most complete Frank Lloyd-Wright house in existence. It is unfortunate that this fine piece of architecture is being closed due to state budget cuts. The last stop was the Illinois History Museum, which is a very modern and interesting museum of natural history as it pertains to Illinois.

August 18, 1950 80 FIREMEN CALLED TO FIGHT \$75,000 BLAZE AT ROSELLE



A bakery worker, some 80 firemen and the public service company teamed together to fight a spectacular extra alarm fire that at one time endangered most of Roselle.

As it turned out the blaze was confined to two factories and a garage in the rear of the Robert C. Chessman home, Roselle Road near Central Avenue. The industrial buildings, located on the south side of the Milwaukee road tracks just east of Central were frame, cement block and brick construction and housed Midwest Folding Products and the Nordic Wood Products companies. Both were almost entirely leveled.

The fire was discovered by Kenneth Pencola, Roselle, who was on his way to work at the Roselle Home bakery at 117 E. Main St. He noticed a small blaze in the Midwest Folding Products building and when he arrived at the bakery the owner, Erwin Eckert turned in alarms at the Roselle and Bloomingdale volunteer fire departments.

No sooner had these departments arrived at the scene than two tremendous explosions rocked the area. It is now believed that they were caused by the igniting of lacquer thinner. The blasts turned the two factories into one blazing inferno and burning fragments fell as far as two blocks away, but fortunately none started other fires.

The fireman at the scene immediately sent for all available help and fire departments from Hanover Park, Keeneyville, Elgin, Itasca, Bensenville, Bartlett and O'Hare field were soon at the scene. At about this time it was discovered the Roselle water supply was running out because the fire had damaged the main power line which keeps the village water pumps in operation.

An urgent call was made to the Public Service company whose employees arrived in the nick of time. With additional water, allowing the firemen to battle the blaze into submission in about three hours. Several buildings in the vicinity had to be soaked down several times. Foremost among, these was the H.A. Turner grain elevator located just across the railroad tracks from the burning buildings. Had the fire reached the huge Turner grain elevator it's hard to say just how far it might have gone. The railroad ties under the Milwaukee Road tracks had to be doused with water several times after they started burning but no trains were delayed.

The damage was has been estimated at \$75,000 by the Roselle fire department

50's ROOM NEW EXHIBIT

After many months of research and hard work dusting off artifacts and designing displays to create an authentic exhibit, the 50's room in the Sumner House at the History Museum campus is ready for your enjoyment and reminiscing. Plan to remember the days of the '50s when life was much simpler and quite different, when Roselle was one-tenth the size it is today. The 50's were the days of Elvis, rock and roll, cars with big fins, drive-in restaurants with carhops, and teenage girls in poodle skirts and saddle shoes.

It is definitely worth your time to see and enjoy.



The museum is open Sundays from 2-4. If this time is not convenient, you can call the museum office at 630-351-5300 to arrange a visit at another time.

Final reminder!.....Holiday Gift Ideas!

Don't forget about our two new books (See page 1)... They make great holiday gifts and will precious memories for years to come!

CHERISHED RECIPES, our new cookbook is selling out fast. It will not be reprinted so if you want a copy, now is the time to act. Call or come to the Roselle History Museum or the Roselle Village Hall. Only \$20 per copy.

REMEMBERING ROSELLE is our new pictorial history book depicting Roselle in the early days before the "urban sprawl". Over 200 captioned photographs from our museum's archives. \$20 per copy.

HELP! We are looking for someone who would like to take on the responsibility of preparing this newsletter on a quarterly basis. This issue was created by a couple of old "amateurs" and someone who has more creative talent is sorely needed!

MEMORIALS

The museum campus has added a tree and a bench shown below as a result of memorials in memory of two long time Roselle residents. Irene Hitzeman and Grace Blystone both left their marks on Roselle's history.

Memorials and donations in the past have been used for a variety including the benches in front of the museum and plantings by the museum office only to mention a few.



MEMBERSHIP

Please become a member and help support and preserve local history. Clip and mail to our address shown on the front page.

Yes, I'd like to help the Museum!
Here's my membership contribution to the Roselle History Museum for 2008

☐ New ☐ Renewal Circle One: \$20 \$50 \$100 \$250 Other Amount \$ _____

Your Name _____

Your address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____ Phone _____

E-mail _____

Do you have any memories about Roselle that you would like to share with us? Send it to us via the regular mail or via e-mail. Yours doesn't have to be "pretty". We will clean it up and give you a by-line in a future issue.

MADAM OR SIR CAN YOU SPARE SOME TIME?

We are always looking for people who are interested in helping preserve the history of our village and the surrounding area. Do you enjoy working on displays, gathering historical evidence, researching photographs or just puttering around cutting news articles for our archives? We can also use people who are handy with tools to do miscellaneous repairs and modifications or, assist with building displays, floats, etc. There are no fixed hours and your compensation is the good feeling you get when you have helped us complete an important project

The Roselle History Museum is operated primarily by volunteers. We only have two part time contract employees. We desperately need volunteers who are willing to donate their time and talents to help us preserve, display and present the history of Roselle. Volunteers are needed at various levels.

Active volunteers are people who attend regular monthly to meetings determine the direction of the museum and act as team leaders and members of established teams such as exhibits, public relations, membership, newsletter etc.

Project volunteers are people who want to work on a specific projects but do not want to make a monthly commitment. Projects could include minor maintenance; refresh an exhibit room or miscellaneous painting.

Event volunteers are people who like to help host, bake for, or work on the publicity.

No special skills are needed just a desire to help.

**ROSELLE HISTORY MUSEUM
39 E. ELM ST.
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