

# ROSELLE HISTORY MUSEUM Winter 2023 Newsletter



A Sad Farewell

Official publication of the Roselle Historical Foundation

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(630-351-5300)

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Facebook: <https://facebook.com/rosellehistorymuseum>

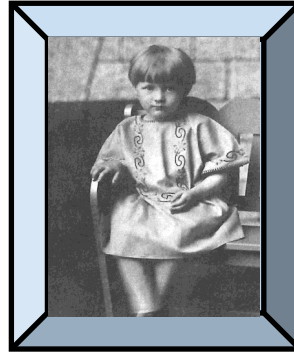
On August 29 of this year, our village lost a very special person when Ethel Geistfeld Schwolow passed away. Ethel was Roselle's oldest original resident at 102. She was born on February 19, 1921, to Gustav and Kydia Geistfeld on the family farm on Mensching Road. Ethel was a helpful child with responsibilities of her own such as gathering eggs and feeding chickens.

Ethel attended Roselle Public School, Trinity Lutheran School, and Glenbard High School. She met her husband, Howard, at a dance hall. They were married on Oct 2, 1941.

Ethel worked a variety of jobs. Most notable was her position with Avon Products where she stayed for 42 years. She composed 200 form letters that the company used in their correspondence.

Their first home was at 120 S. Roselle Rd. The family moved to the house Ethel inherited from her parents at 17 W. Elm St after their daughter Diane was born. In 1978 they moved to Ethel's final home on West Granville Ave.

After her husband Howard passed in 1999, Ethel became an avid golfer which she continued to do till she was 90. Ethel had been present in many Roselle festivities, always with a big smile and an enthusiastic wave.



*Rest in Peace Ethel*

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## Marketing Manager's Corner

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It is hard to believe that 2023 is almost at an end! It has been a great year for the RHM, with new faces in terms of board members, volunteers, friends of the museum, and a campus remodel for the new year.

You may have seen mentions in newsletters over the years of the Flags for Roselle (FFR) program. FFR is a community program that raises funds for local groups and nonprofits like the museum, Green Roselle, the Girl and Boy Scouts, the American Legion, and more. For \$50, subscribers will receive a flag placed in their yard on five flag holidays.

FFR also participates in special events honoring military veterans and emergency responders. In December 2021, Roselle welcomed home Officer Steven Kotlewski, a Bensenville police officer who was injured in the line of duty. FFR placed 100 flags down Granville Avenue to celebrate his safe return from the hospital. FFR also honored longtime Roselle resident and WW2 veteran Robert Dunbar at his November 15 funeral by placing flags outside his home, at Trinity Church, and Trinity Lutheran Cemetery.

As a beneficiary of FFR funds, the museum supplies volunteers to deploy and retire flags on flag holidays throughout the year. If you are interested in volunteering with the museum, please reach out for more information!

([marketingmanager@rosellehistory.org](mailto:marketingmanager@rosellehistory.org))

Wishing you and yours a safe and happy holiday season, and a Happy New Year!

Keri Soukup - Marketing Manager



Thanks to Mastertech Garage for being a leading business supporter of the Roselle History Museum

This  
photo by  
Clara  
Becker  
Thies



During the great snow of 1918, the Southwestern Limited (westbound from Chicago to Kansas City) stalled west of Roselle in the snowdrifts. Emil Benhart used his bobsleds to transport passengers from the stranded train to Roselle homes. It was three days before the line was reopened



Sleighting on Roselle Road north of Forest Avenue, circa 1913. The baby in the sleigh is Viola Voelz (Becker); A. G. Stillman, teacher at Trinity Lutheran School, handles the reins.



"Winter is nature's sleep."

— H.S. Jacobs

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## *From the Museum Manager's Desk*

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Winter is here! And with it, some big changes at the RHM! We have gotten all new porches and walkways for the museum houses with a more efficient design! The feeling will still be historical, but the materials will be all new. It is amazing how companies can match the historical architectural design to maintain the beauty of our "ladies." Our special thanks to Karen Young at the village for all her hard work!



We are still looking for more volunteers to help at the Museum Houses and the office. Do you have an artistic flair and would like to learn about exhibit display; or do you prefer office work, like cataloging or transcription? Do you love to make gardens grow into beautiful places of reflection and tranquility? or if you have another talent that you would like to put forward, we would LOVE to have you as a volunteer at the Roselle History Museum!

Please call (630) 351-5300 and leave a message or email us at [museummanager@rosellehistory.org](mailto:museummanager@rosellehistory.org). Please join us as we protect and preserve Roselle's History one project at a time. We cannot wait to hear from you!



Remember, Stay Curious!  
Leslie

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### **WANTED:** Old family and heirloom recipes!

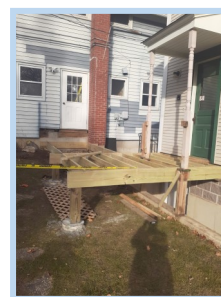
Do you have any recipes that you would like to share? Perhaps recipes that were passed down through your family or those you look forward to at family gatherings.



Then you are just the person we are looking for!

For more information, or to submit a recipe, please contact Leslie Drewitz – by phone, (630) 351-5300 or

email [museummanager@rosellehistory.org](mailto:museummanager@rosellehistory.org).



We will remain closed until this project is completed - sometime in December. Please stay connected with us via Facebook and our website for updates and do not forget to check out the pictures of the progress!



Genealogy Classes have come to the RHM! We did a surprise canvas of some of our patrons and asked them if they would be interested in a Genealogy Class by accredited genealogists. The answer was a resounding, "YES!" So, in February we will be offering a genealogy class for beginners to intermediate genealogists. Registration will open in mid-January for the class and pre-paid registration will be available. There will be more information on our Facebook page and our website very soon, so please check back regularly for more information!

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In case you missed these cute shirts at the Taste, these Roselle historical t-shirts are now available at the museum.

They are \$20 and there are different designs available.

If you are interested, you can call Leslie at the museum, 630-351-5300 or email her at [museummanager@rosellehistory.org](mailto:museummanager@rosellehistory.org)





## *Rock of Roselle's Reign Ended?*



**OOPS !**

We may be witnessing the end of an era.

The Rock holds a special place in our village- it is considered the “Best Thing to Happen in Roselle,” but not many people really know about it. Take one look online and you will see just how popular people getting towed off rocks are; strange though it may seem, it still brings us some amount of fame.

As I reported in the centennial spring newsletter, the Rock of Roselle is notorious for the victims it claims and the towing bills it produces. Many citizens can relate to the pain of running a curb, but few locations hold the same sting as 1326 W. Lake Street.

Good or bad, it is time for an update.

What took me by surprise while driving past the Rock was its position: the Rock had been moved far towards the street. All that remained in the original spot was a ‘no parking’ mark on the asphalt.

I couldn't tell if the Facebook/Meta page (created in 2017) had any effect on the decision to move the Rock. Any questions hit the aforementioned wall of obscurity, but updates will frequent future sections of this newsletter. I would imagine either the media attention or a disgruntled driver was the impetus to enact such a change. Unless you severely miss the turn, the Rock appears unlikely to claim another victim anytime soon.

That is an obvious positive. Fewer damaged vehicles, fewer towing expenses, and less time wasted.

But now for what are we ‘famous? We’ll long have Lynfred Winery, yet I wonder if any children, even just one child, found excitement in the ‘Rocked’ cars behind Pizza Hut.

Perhaps it is better to leave the Rock intact and not ‘abuse’ it. Worth wondering is how many people drove over it “for the ‘gram.”

After all the talk of neighboring Coachlite's future, quiet speculation may abound. Though change has come to Lake Street, the Rock itself seems to be here to stay.

Here’s to the next chapter. Rock on.

***By Philip Sullivan***

## *Antebellum Presidents*

The rankings of the US presidents by historians have become something of a cottage industry. Every few years or so, a new poll will come out that considers different metrics, new research, and a host of other factors. Every time one of these polls comes out, there are always some changes that surprise people. Sometimes it is the result of correcting for recency bias, where recent presidents tend to be judged to be better or worse than they were. George H.W. Bush has consistently moved up, now falling securely into the middle ranks. Sometimes it is because new factors are being emphasized. Ulysses S. Grant has seen a dramatic rise in his historical stock as historians have looked more towards his Indian policies and his fight against the Ku Klux Klan. Often, the top and the bottom of these lists remain static. Abraham Lincoln is almost always first, with George Washington and Franklin D. Roosevelt jockeying for second. And at the bottom, you will invariably find James Buchanan (1857-1861), with Franklin Pierce (1853-1857) right above him.

It is one of this country's greatest misfortunes that these two men served as president, back-to-back, during the greatest existential crisis in its history. There are positive things that can be said about them. Pierce was considered quite handsome. Buchanan had an exceptionally long resume. And... that is about it. I am exaggerating by saying that is it, but not by much.

Pierce had served in both houses of congress but had not really done anything to distinguish himself. He voted the party line as a loyal Democrat and resigned from the senate shortly after the Whigs took control of congress because he did not like being in the minority. He served in the Mexican American War but did not have a chance to distinguish himself as he was injured in the groin and the knee when his horse was startled, and the lingering injuries limited his participation.

Buchanan also served in both houses of congress, as well as in the cabinet and as a diplomat. Despite having a very long career, it is hard to find anything positive he did during that time other than survive political battles, many of which were of his own making. As historians David S. Heidler and Jeanne T. Heidler wrote, bad luck followed Buchanan. The problem was that he often created his own bad luck. The first time he entered the historical record in a significant way was during the 1824 presidential election. With no candidate receiving a majority in the electoral college, the election was thrown to the House of Representatives. Representative Buchanan then seemingly attempted to bribe the speaker of the house to throw the election to his candidate, Andrew Jackson, in exchange for the speaker becoming secretary of state. Missteps such as this one recurred throughout his career.

Both men's most glaring flaw, however, was that they were doughfaces. Doughfaces were northern politicians with southern sympathies, although in their cases, sympathy does not convey the level to which they both favored the south. Throughout both of their presidencies, they pushed for "compromises" that were the north giving into southern demands on slavery. They both viewed abolitionists as fanatics who were trying to take away the property rights of the southerners and viewed the southern histrionics on the subject, including outright violence, as a justified response.

They both saw their actions as attempts to unify the nation by putting the slavery question to rest, but they made the situation much worse. The south became used to getting its way. The north became angrier at what they perceived to be a slave power conspiracy. This led the north to embrace antislavery politics through the Republican Party and Lincoln. The south, used to having its demands almost always fully met in the recent "compromises," reacted angrily through secession and war. By attempting to unify the nation by favoring only one section of it, they instead drove it apart.

*By Tom Piorkowski*

# Roselle History Museum Newsletter

39 E. Elm St

Roselle, IL 60172

Newsletter generously  
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*"Every day of your life is a page of your history"*

**Robin Rowark**



**Summer 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 part of our village history and pride tomorrow.  
To provide a dynamic historical and educational resource for our residents and visitors.

#### **Board of Directors & Staff**

President: Ray Hitzemann  
Vice President:  
Glenn Spachman  
Treasurer: Jeff Engel  
Secretary: Sharon Jach

Mgr: Leslie Drewitz  
Marketing Mgr: Keri Soukup  
Village Board Liaisons:  
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Tom Piorkowski

Board Members:  
Joan Beauprez  
John Binneboese  
Tim Grasso  
Walter Lotz  
Janice Wood

#### **Friends of the Museum**

Mary Beahan, Peggy Ott,  
and Michael Drewitz

#### **General Meetings**

Second Saturday of the Month  
10-11:30 am – 39 E. Elm St.

#### **Museum Hours**

Sundays: 2-4 pm  
Wednesday through Saturday  
10 am - 2 pm, by appt

**Editor:** Janice Wood  
editor@rosellehistory.org

#### **CONTRIBUTION FORM**

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

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address \_\_\_\_\_

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Circle one:    \$30    \$50\*    \$100    \$250

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#### **TWO NEW WAYS TO SEND YOUR CONTRIBUTION VIA PAYPAL**

- 1) Scan the QR Code at the right to donate
- 2) Go to <https://tinyurl.com/PayPalRHM>

\_\_\_\_\_ \*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*



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