

The Charlemagne

215 East Main Street - St. Charles, Illinois 60174 - (630) 584-6967

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WINTER 2014
ST. CHARLES
HERITAGE CENTER

Looking Back and Looking Ahead

On January 11, 2014, the St. Charles Heritage Center held our Annual Membership Meeting and an open house for members here at the St. Charles History Museum. There were over 25 people in attendance at this meeting and information on the successes of the past year, along with plans for the upcoming year, were shared with those in attendance. Following are some of the highlights from 2013 and plans for 2014:

Education:

A new partnership with the Geneva and Batavia museums was formed. We held our first successful joint program at the Geneva History Center in early December and we are looking forward to more programs like this in 2014.

We continue to enjoy success with our popular Brown Bag Lunch programs put on in conjunction with the St. Charles Public Library. These programs, held twice a year at the Library, offer participants a chance to come and hear a first person interpretive program from an historical figure. In 2013 we heard about the life of Mark Twain, and we feasted on delicious treats during "Dining A La Downton" while learning all about life at an early twentieth century estate. In 2014

we will have programs from Amelia Earhart and Mamah Borthwick-Cheney (Frank Lloyd Wright's paramour).

Fundraising:

2013 saw the first ever Heritage Center Pig Roast held at the Museum in late June. Over 200 people joined us on a lovely Saturday evening and helped to raise over \$24,000 for the St. Charles Heritage Center. With great food, a fun crowd, and amazing auction items, the event was a smash hit! The Fundraising Committee is already hard at work planning the Pig Roast for this year

(mark your calendars for June 28). The St. Charles Heritage Raffle has already begun, look inside the newsletter for more information.

Facilities:

This past year we successfully completed a project to change over all of the lights in the exhibit hall, foyer, research room, and gift shop. New LED light bulbs were installed in the can fixtures and new LED track lights were installed to our existing track lighting system. The new lights are all energy efficient and much better for the artifacts and photos on display.

Jim, our part-time collections manager, has been hard at work updating our collections database on the computer. By inputting all of the information for all of our accession records, we will be able to better track our collection in the future. In 2014 we are looking forward to continuing with this project as well as tackling some projects at the storage unit, where our newspaper, textile, and large object collections are stored.

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A Short History of Mount St. Mary Academy in St. Charles

Mount St. Mary Academy is the topic of our current temporary display at the St. Charles History Museum. Please be sure to stop in and see the exhibit while it is on display through the end of April.

For over 100 years various private schools have offered an alternative to public education in St. Charles. The first of these private schools to open was Mount St. Mary Academy in 1907. The Mount, as it was called by many students over the years, was opened by the Dominican Sister from Adrian, Michigan. The school was initially housed in the old Farnsworth Mansion on the west side of town along Geneva Road. Today the View Point subdivision sits on that land.

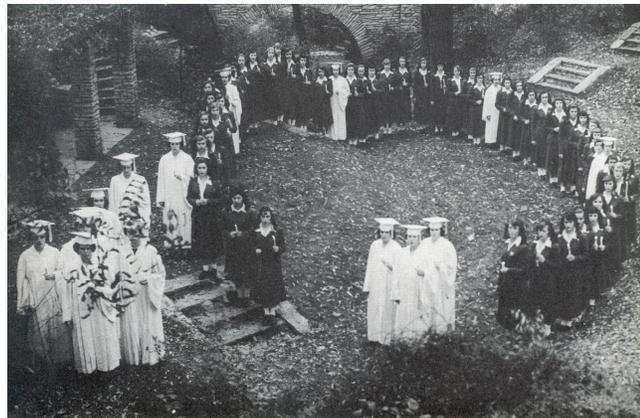
When Mount St. Mary was first established it was a co-ed school for all grade levels. It was both a boarding and day school, although only girl students were allowed to board. A few years later the Sisters converted a home on property near Mount St. Mary

school and student population continued to grow new additions were made to the school. In 1925 St. Augustin's Hall was built, adding more classrooms, an auditorium and gymnasium.

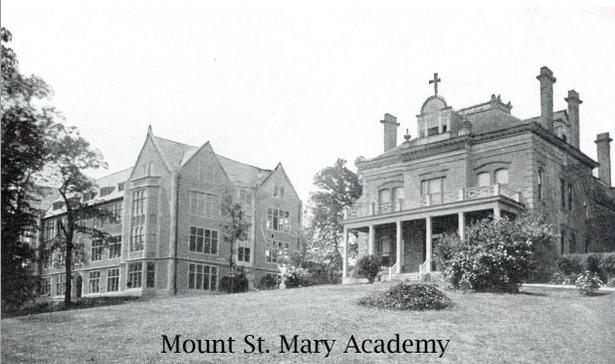
By the 1940's St. Raymond had closed and The Mount became an all girl Catholic High School. The property on the east side of Route 31 had been improved by the school and the girls had ac-

encountered. In 1967 the school became a day school, no longer taking boarding students, and in 1972 The Mount closed. Later that year the Lutheran High School Association purchased the property and the Fox Valley Lutheran High School, a co-ed school, opened in the fall of 1974.

In 1992, after 17 years at that location, Valley Lutheran High School closed its doors and a year later the buildings were leveled to make room for the View Point development. Today, the land on the east side of Route 31 is known as Mount St. Mary Park and is owned and maintained by the St. Charles Park District.



Students praying a living rosary in the Lady Glen at Mount St. Mary

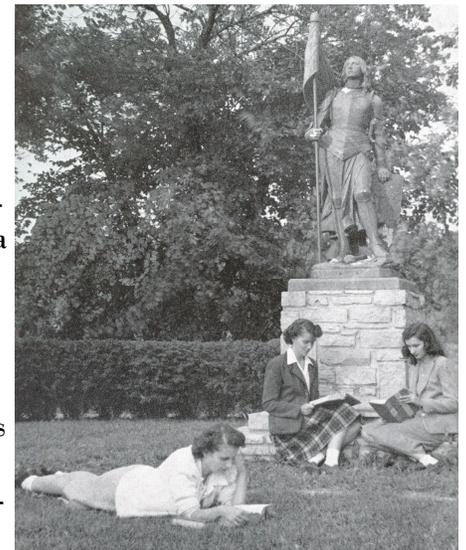


Mount St. Mary Academy

into Villa Angela. Villa Angela, which soon was renamed St. Raymond, was a boarding facility for the male students. As the

cess to tennis courts, a golf course, athletic field, summer pavilion and the river via the St. Jude's Passageway which ran under the highway.

Sadly, by the 1960's The Mount started to face troubles. Declining enrollment and rising costs were the two main problems the school



Students studying under the St. Jeanne d'Arc statue.

Brown Bag Lunch Program

**Co-Sponsored by the St. Charles Heritage Center and
the St. Charles Public Library**

Please join us at noon on Thursday, May 29, at the St. Charles Public Library for a free brown bag lunch program. Pack your lunch and meet us downstairs in the Huntley Meeting Room where Leslie Goddard will present her first person performance "Never Lost: Amelia Earhart Before the Legend."

The first woman to fly solo across the Atlantic, Amelia Earhart became America's most famous female aviator in just a few years. Her numerous records and daring exploits, along with her charisma and striking looks, made her a media darling, while newsreels, newspapers, and magazines kept her constantly in the public eye. Her mysterious disappearance in 1937, just three weeks shy of her 40th birthday, enshrined her name in legend, but the emphasis on her disappearance in subsequent decades has obscured many of the most intriguing aspects of Earhart's biography. Presented in first-person, this program not only introduces audiences to Earhart's life story (including her graduation from Chicago's Hyde Park High School), but also explores missing aspects of her story, including her frustration with constrictive gender norms, her relentless optimism, and her aptitude for succeeding in a man's world without losing the adoration of the public.

Leslie Goddard has been presenting history lectures and performing first-person programs in



Leslie Goddard as Amelia Earhart

the Chicago area for more than ten years. She holds a Ph.D. from Northwestern University, specializing in American studies and U.S. history, as well as master's degrees in theater and in museum studies. Leslie has worked in the museum field for ten years and is the author of two books on Chicago history.

Her nationally-recognized programs have been presented for Illinois Humanities Council sites, Chicago's Navy Pier, WBEZ-Chicago Amplified, Questers International, the Victorian Society in America, and scores of schools, universities, retirement centers, libraries, historical societies, businesses, conferences, and fund-raisers.

This program is made possible through a grant from the Illinois Humanities Council. For over twelve years, the IHC Road Scholars Speakers Bureau has been sending Illinois' finest writers, poets, historians, anthropologists, and living history actors to present to audiences across Illinois. For more information on the IHC and their many programs please visit their website at www.prairie.org

We hope to see you at this exciting program. Reservations are not required, for more information please call Natalie at 630-584-6967.

Illinois Humanities Council



www.prairie.org



New and Upcoming Exhibits at the History Museum!

Once again Heritage Center staff has been busy changing around the exhibits in the temporary display area. The first exhibit to go up this year is **The History of Mount St. Mary Academy**. Items on display include photos, sweater patches, records, graduation items, a banner used in ceremonies at the school, a pennant, items from the all school reunion, and two chairs from the formal lounge at the school. A short video was produced with photos from our collection and several yearbooks as well. We are always looking for more items and information on Mount St. Mary, and it's not too late to bring things in to be used in this and future displays.

In May our second display of the year will go up. **St. Charles Art and Artists** will feature paintings, sketches, and sculptures from artists from St. Charles. In addition, many of the paintings feature people and places from town. This exhibit will coincide with the St. Charles Fine Art Show, May 24 - 25, and the Art Around the Corner event that runs May - June. This exhibit will be on display through August.

In September we will have **Wedding Belles**, an exhibit featuring wedding photos and wedding dresses from St. Charles residents. Information on some of the first weddings to take place in St. Charles and changes in wedding traditions over time will also be included in this exhibit.

As always, if you have photos or items you would like to donate or lend to the Museum for any of these displays please call Natalie at 630-584-6967. We hope you stop by to see these displays soon!



Painting of Karl Gartner by Pehr Anderson.

Anderson is one of several artists whose works will be featured in our upcoming exhibit



Items from Mount St. Mary Academy will be on display through the end of April at the Museum.



**St. Charles Heritage Center
& History Museum**

215 East Main Street
St. Charles, IL 60174
Office & Museum 630-584-6967
Fax 630-584-6077
www.stcmuseum.org
info@stcmuseum.org

Hours of Operation
Tuesday - Saturday 10am - 4pm

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Kathy Brens, President
Diana Brown
Joyce Cregier
Kathy Fleming, Vice President
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Carol Glemza
Ed Klosowski
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Jim McGuire, Collections

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Follow us on Facebook and Twitter!

Stay up to date with information about events, promotions and news from the St. Charles Heritage Center. ðLikeö our fan page on Facebook or follow us on Twitter @STCHeritageCent Links to both can be found on our website
www.stcmuseum.org

Calendar of upcoming meetings and events for the St. Charles Heritage Center

January

- 2 **Museum reopens after break**
- 11 **Annual Membership Meeting**, St. Charles History Museum, 1:30 p.m.

Februray

- 1 **Split the Pot Raffle Kickoff**, Blue Goose Supermarket, 10 a.m. - 5 p.m.
- 19 **Board of Directors meeting**, St. Charles History Museum, 5 p.m.

March

- 16 **John Wredling's 100th Birthday**
- 26 **Board of Directors meeting**, St. Charles History Museum, 5 p.m.

Program dates and times are subject to change, please call to confirm all events (630) 584-6967

From the Archive

Taking a break from their studies at Mount St. Mary Academy, Marilyn Proesel, Mardi Keevers, and Lorraine Keavney built this exceptional looking snowman. This photo appeared in the 1948 Mount St. Mary Academy year-book *The Marian*.



WELCOME TO OUR NEW BOARD MEMBERS

On January 11 at our Annual Membership Meeting a new Executive Committee was voted into office and three new Board Members were voted onto the Board. Please join us in thanking and congratulating our new Executive Board: President Kathy Brens, Vice President Kathy Fleming, Secretary Sue Glad, and Treasurer Rita Payleitner. We would also like to extend a warm welcome to our three newest Board Members Diana Brown, Ed Klosowski, and Mike Shortall.

Diana Brown recently retired as the Director of the St. Charles Public Library. She has lived in St. Charles since 1978 with her husband Doug. Diana grew up in Tennessee and graduated from University of Michigan and NIU. She moved to Illinois after marrying Doug, whose family has lived in Elgin for three generations. Their son Colin, his wife Grace, and their son George live in DeKalb. Diana serves on the Board of the St. Charles Arts Council; chairs the Public Art Committee of the Downtown St. Charles Partnership; is a member of the Sculpture in the Park Committee and the St. Charles Kiwanis Club, where she is a past president and now co-chairs its Rose Day fundraiser; serves on the Altar Guild and is a lay Eucharistic minister at St. Charles Episcopal Church. In her spare time, Diana loves to read and walk her Border Collies!

Ed Klosowski, along with his wife Barbara and daughter Nicole, has lived in unincorporated St. Charles for the past 24 years. He is a Business Economics graduate of Benedictine University in Lisle, Illinois. Ed has been employed by Allstate Insurance Company for the last 37 years, the past 10 as their Director of Facilities. Ed served on boards for St. Charles UCC Congregational church, Splitrail subdivision, Oakton Community College Educational Facility engineering committee, and currently the Transportation Management Association for Lake and Cook counties. Ed has had an interest in serving on the St. Charles Heritage Center board because of his keen interest in local and United States history. He's knowledgeable of the Illinois 8th US Cavalry and it's origin in St. Charles. Ed's other interests include traveling (vacations have touched 49 states) and attending local sporting events. His high school, Montini Catholic, has won four Illinois football championships. Ed has also been active in the past with the American Indian College Fund and was blanketed by this organization for his involvement.

Mike Shortall's bio will appear in the next issue of the Charlemagne.

Congratulations!

We would like to congratulate our Director, Natalie Gacek on her recent engagement. Natalie and her fiancée, Brad Troiani, became engaged in November after Natalie returned from the three week Seminar for Historical Administration in Indianapolis. The couple will be married in St. Charles on September 6, 2014. Congratulations Natalie and Brad!!



The St. Charles Heritage Raffle is BACK



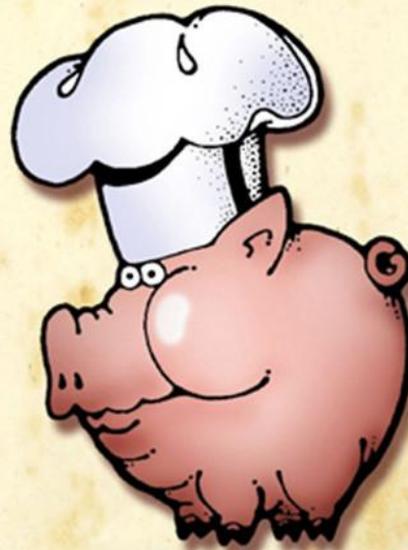
This year the Heritage Center will once again be holding a raffle in conjunction with our major fundraiser. Our 4th Annual St. Charles Heritage Celebration will take place Saturday, June 28th (watch for more information on this event in the next issue of the Charlemagne!). At that time three (3) lucky tickets will be pulled and the winners will each be awarded \$1,000. Ticket sales will kick off on Saturday, February 1, at the Blue Goose; after that day tickets will be available at the St. Charles History Museum or through Board Members and Fundraising Committee Members. Ticket prices are \$10 each and a maximum of 1,500 tickets will be sold. Don't miss out, get your tickets today and Good Luck!!



Save The Date! June 28, 2014

**4th Annual St. Charles
Heritage Celebration Pig
Roast Fundraiser**

**Join us at the St. Charles
Museum for a great night
full of food, music, silent
auctions, raffles, and FUN!**



Membership Form

Please check the yearly membership level of your choice:

- Grantor \$5,000+
- Benefactor \$1,000 - \$4,999
- Corporate \$500 - \$999
- Patron \$250 - \$499
- Sponsor \$100 - \$249
- Family \$45
- Individual \$30
- Senior \$20
- Student/Junior \$10



My check # _____ for \$ _____ is enclosed.

Name

Address

City

State

Zip

Telephone

Email

NOTE: We do not rent or sell our private mailing list.

I would also like to be involved with the following:

- Grave Reminders Cemetery Walk
- Award Winning Junior Historical Society
- Museum Docent
- Office Assistant/Data Entry
- Gift Shop Assistant
- Special Events
- Book Club
- Other (please specify) _____

Print & Mail to:

**St. Charles Heritage Center
215 E. Main Street, St. Charles, IL 60174**

A large portion of the Heritage Center's budget comes from membership dues and we cannot operate without the support of our members. Please take a moment to fill out this membership renewal form and submit it with your 2014 membership fees. Thank you for your continued support of St. Charles history.