

*St. Charles Heritage Center*

# THE CHARLEMAGNE

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

Volume XXV ✧ Issue 2 ✧ Summer 2008

## A History of St. Charles' South Cemetery

*by Emily Olson*

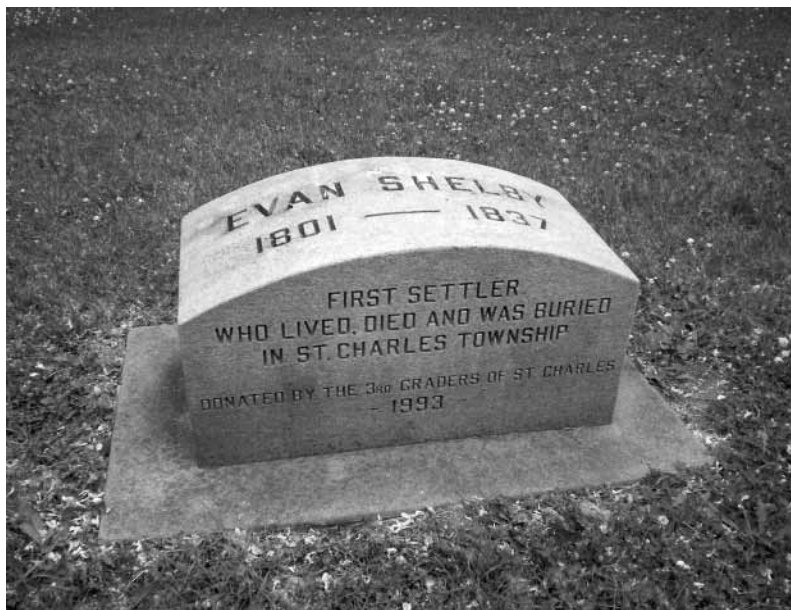
Throughout its history, St. Charles has had many cemeteries; some are more well-known, while others have been forgotten or neglected as the years pass by. Currently, the St. Charles Township Cemetery Board is responsible for four active cemeteries. These four include: Little Woods Cemetery, located on the east side of Dunham Road and which has its earliest burials dating from 1838; Prairie Cemetery, located east of Crane Road and about a third of a mile south of Silver Glen Road and which has its earliest burial dating to 1849; North Cemetery, a larger cemetery on the west side of Route 25 with its first burial in 1838 (although some monuments date to 1817) and Union Cemetery, located across the street from North Cemetery with later burials dating from 1891.

The oldest cemetery in St. Charles, however, is the inactive South Cemetery, located on the east side of 7th Avenue, north of Langum Park. South Cemetery was mainly in use around 1835, with very few burials occurring since the turn of the 20th century.

In 1930 Miss Helen Hempstead of the St. Charles Women's Club worked to erect a boulder with a bronze tablet marking the resting place of St. Charles' founder, Evan Shelby. In the 1950s another renovation was undertaken in order to

repair the cemetery's iron gate and surrounding stone fence, and it was during this renovation that 73 stones were also reset. Despite these efforts, however, markers and records continued to be lost as seen by the fact that in 1993, Evan Shelby's resting place was once again considered a mystery. The burial appeared to have been lost for some time before several third grade students from St. Charles researched Shelby's resting place and then raised enough money to purchase a replacement headstone.

The most recent restoration project occurred in the mid 1990s and was initiated by a Geneva resident and his son, Jack Bochar and Charles Bochar, respectively. The Bochars became interested in the history of South Cemetery after they had completed grave rubbings as part of a project organized by the St. Charles Heritage Center's Junior Historical Society. During this project the Bochars came across a section near the back of the cemetery where U.S. Civil War soldiers had been buried in a long row.



South Cemetery  
cont. page 5

# Christmas in July

## Gift Shop Sale

During the entire month of July, the Heritage Center will be hosting a "Christmas in July" ornament sale. All previous years' ornaments (2008 excluded) will be marked half off for this once-a-year sale.

While you're here, see what other St. Charles items are available such as pint glasses, shot glasses, ceramic crocks, coffee mugs and much more.

Gifts include St. Charles North Stars and St. Charles Saints scrapbooks, along with the popular St. Charles Memory Book and reprints of long-ago published works.



## Join us for a 75th Anniversary Picnic

Set aside the afternoon of Sunday, September 7 for a lunch-time picnic at the newly opened Primrose Farm Park, part of the depression era living history farm operated by the St. Charles Park District.

The Heritage Center will be hosting the picnic as part of the year-long celebration of the 75th anniversary of the History Museum. Festivities will include hay rides and tours of the historic farm buildings.

Please bring a dish to pass and your own beverage; it is also advised to wear comfortable shoes. The Heritage Center will supply plates, utensils, napkins and desert. Lunch begins at noon with tours after.

Please RSVP to the staff at 630-584-6967 and for directions. There is no charge for this event.



## St. Charles Heritage Center & History Museum

Office & Museum (630) 584-6967  
Fax: (630) 584-6077  
www.stcmuseum.org  
info@stcmuseum.org

### –St. Charles History Museum–

215 E. Main Street  
Tuesday-Saturday, 10 a.m.–4 p.m.  
Sunday, noon–4 p.m.

### –Hunt House Museum–

304 E. Cedar Avenue  
Open June 1  
Thursdays & Sundays, noon–4 p.m.

### –Archives–

Call for Appointment

### –Officers–

Mary Ellen Segraves, President  
Jack Brens, Vice President  
Allen Landmeier, Secretary  
Melvin Peterson, Treasurer

### –Board of Directors–

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### –Staff–

Julie Bunke, *Registrar*  
Natalie Gacek, *Educator*

# News, Events & Noteworthy Items

## Welcome, Kristin, the Center's New Intern



The staff & board at the St. Charles Heritage Center would like to welcome **Kristin Willison** as the newest intern at the St. Charles History Museum and Dunham-Hunt House.

Kristin is a 1998 graduate of Batavia High School and a 2002 graduate of Lake Forest College. Kristin also completed her Masters degree in Historic Preservation at the Art Institute of Chicago.

Kristin joined the staff in May and has been busy with a variety of projects, such as transcribing letters from a WWII soldier, accessioning photographs and giving tours at the Dunham-Hunt House. Welcome Kristin!

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*All committee meetings are held at the History Museum unless otherwise noted.*

## July

- 4 Museum Closed for 4th of July.
- 16 Education Committee meeting, 10 a.m.
- 23 Board of Directors meeting, 5 p.m.

## August

- 20 Education Committee meeting, 10 a.m.
- 27 Board of Directors meeting, 5 p.m.

## September

- 7 Members' Picnic at Primrose Farm, noon. See page 2 for more details.
- 11 Thursday Evening Lecture Series, "Grimm's Grimmest: The Darker Side of Traditional Fairy Tales." St. Charles Public Library, 7-8 p.m.
- 17 Education Committee meeting, 10 a.m.
- 21 "Grave Reminders Cememtery Walk," 1-3 p.m. See page 4 for all details.
- 24 Board of Directors meeting, 5 p.m.

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

## Thursday Evening Lecture Series: "Grimm's Grimmest"

The St. Charles Heritage Center, in conjunction with the St. Charles Public Library, will be presenting the third installment of the Thursday Evening Lecture Series on Thursday, September 11, 2008. The program will be held in the Carnegie Room at the St. Charles Public Library and will begin at 7 pm.

Judith Heineman and Daniel Marcotte will present **Grimm's Grimmest: The Darker Side of Traditional Fairy Tales**. This program challenges the popular, modern versions of fairy tales by reinstating the original gothic tales long before the stories were edited in the Victorian era. For example, what happened after Sleeping Beauty is awakened by the Prince's kiss? Most people believe they lived happily ever after, but this was far from the truth or intent of the original tale. Find out more through this innovative program.

Ms. Heineman holds an MA in English from the College of the City of New York and is a member of several theatrical unions, including Actors Equity. She is the founder of the Chicago Storytelling Guild, a co-founder of the Los Angeles Women's Theatre Festival, and producer of Tellabration, an adult storytelling festival.

Mr. Marcotte holds a BM in Voice Performance from Illinois Wesleyan and an MA in Musicology and Certificate in Early Music from Florida State University. He is currently the Music Director of the Bristol Renaissance Faire and teacher of voice and music theory.

This program is made possible through funding from the Illinois Humanities Council Road Scholars program. For more information on the IHC and their programs please visit [www.prairie.org](http://www.prairie.org).

# Programming for Students at the Heritage Center

The Junior Historical Society exhibits are up at the History Museum, and the members really out-did themselves this year. Each member researched a different area of St. Charles history and put together his or her own unique exhibit. Topics range from the history of the Arcada Theatre to the history of the Pottawatomie Tribe; there is information on Dr. Carlson – a local dentist for many years, and the Baker Community Center; while other members focused on the history of the Norris family and the history of the St. Charles History Museum. Please make sure you stop by this summer to check out all of their hard work. Look for the JHS meetings to start again in the Fall – enjoy your summer JHS!

During the next several months, a new program for the Middle Schools will be put together focusing on World War II and the war effort at home and the experiences of men from St. Charles who fought in the war. If you have any photos, letters, documents, posters, advertisements, stories or other items you would like to donate for use in the trunk, please contact Natalie at 630-584-6967.

## Overnight at the Museum

Finally, the St. Charles Heritage Center is excited to announce their new "Overnight at the Museum" program. Inspired by the wildly popular movie "Night at the Museum," the St. Charles Heritage Center is offering the opportunity to hold your next birthday party/slumber party at the St. Charles History Museum. Enjoy an evening of games, crafts, movies, cake and more, plus the chance to sleep in the exhibit hall. For more information including dates and pricing, please call Natalie at 630-584-6967.

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## Grave Reminders



Join us for the 17th Annual Grave Reminders Cemetery Walk at the North Cemetery, Route 25, from 1-3 p.m. on September 21.

This is a fantastic interactive presentation by our talented volunteers as they portray past community leaders and share a bit about the lives of early

residents. Characters from previous years have included "Maro the Magician", Titanic survivor Alice Berg Johnson, Civil War Nurse Lucy Kaiser, Businessman Bela Hunt, Teacher and Principal Alice Davis and Civil War General and Statesman John Farnsworth. As always, this event is free to Heritage Center Members. The program cost to non-members is \$3. We invite you to make this a family outing. Bring your friends and neighbors to this enlightening and captivating program.



## Passport to Adventure Program

The popular summer program Passport to Adventure is back. This program runs Memorial

Day Weekend through Labor Day Weekend. Participants are encouraged to visit museums and nature centers in Kane and DuPage Counties.

Free booklets are available to keep track of the places visited, and prizes are awarded for participants who visit 7 or more sites. For more information please call the History Museum at 630-584-6967.

# A History of St. Charles' South Cemetery

*continued from page 1*

Most of these graves were very worn down and were crumbling so bad as to be unreadable. There were some that had been knocked over or destroyed by vandals and others which were missing entirely.

The Bochars saw an injustice in the negligence of these markers and set out on a mission to restore the markers and thereby the recognition and honor that these soldiers deserved. The elder Bochar knew that the Department of Veteran Affairs entitles former military personnel to new grave markers if needed, so he applied to this department for replacement markers. The department required more information on the buried soldiers, however, before they would grant the new stones.

This requirement set Bochar and his son on an extensive hunt for the stories of these fallen soldiers. There were no burial records kept for South Cemetery by the St. Charles Township Cemeteries Board, so the two conducted their research instead at the local library and at the St. Charles History Museum.

The father and son soon discovered that South Cemetery had the burials of 17 known U.S. Civil War soldiers. These 17 spots were initially designated by wooden markers which were then later replaced in 1879 with marble military stones. Over the years, these stones became eroded and worn down, leading the Bochars to believe that there are probably more unknown soldier burials in South Cemetery with missing or illegible markers.

The young men buried in South Cemetery were from the 8th and 17th Illinois Cavalry divisions that trained at the nearby Camp Kane on the east side of the Fox River.

This site is now the location of Langum Park. Many of the soldiers buried in the cemetery were young Irish immigrants who were training at the camp before their first entry into combat. Eight of these soldiers probably died as new recruits after the harsh winters of 1863 and 1864 from either exposure or disease. The others, however, died at various times from natural causes or continuing health problems.

In 1994, Jack and Charles Bochar saw the fruition of their efforts when they were granted approval for the purchase of new grave markers by the Department of Veteran Affairs. There were ten new grave markers laid down which bore the individual soldier's name and the phrase "U.S. Soldier". A memorial service on the evening of August 4th, 1994, rededicated the grave sites of these long forgotten soldiers. Some of the names of the soldiers remembered on that night included: John Curran, William Wilson, James Smith, John Racey, John Murray, Winston Beckett, William Mackey, Peter Hannan, and Patrick Merreen.

So while South Cemetery may not be in use anymore, it still continues to have a profound influence on the people of St. Charles. The efforts by the Bochars and the St. Charles community in general to accomplish this restoration is a striking illustration of how a revival of history and recognition of the sacrifices made by our past countrymen can lead to a deeper understanding of our heritage as well as a newfound appreciation for the present.



To learn more about our local cemeteries and their residents mark your calendars for the 17th Annual Grave Reminders Cemetery Walk on Sunday, September 21. See page 4 for all the details.

# And...the Winner is...

St. Charles resident **Shaun Kruzan** was the lucky winner of the St. Charles Quilt. Her name was picked out of more than a thousand entries.

We want to thank everyone who supported the Heritage Center by purchasing a ticket for a chance to win this beautiful, one-of-a-kind quilt.



Special thanks goes to **Joanne VanBogaert** who donated her time and

extraordinary talents for this very special fundraiser, which helped to raise over \$2,000 for the Heritage Center's 75th Anniversary Endowment campaign.

Also thanks to the **Blue Goose Market** for allowing our volunteers to sell tickets all day on Saturday, May 10.

**To our valued members...  
Please note!**



If you have a red star next to your mailing label, this is a reminder that it is time to renew your membership in the St. Charles Heritage Center.

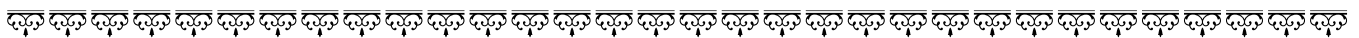
Please use the form below and be sure to stop in the museum & gift shop to see all the latest exhibits and merchandise.

## 75 Years & Counting!

It is not too late to make a donation to the 75th Anniversary Endowment Fund for the St. Charles Heritage Center.

Your **fully tax-deductible donation** will go a long way to ensure the future of the St. Charles History Museum and the award-winning educational programs that it has to offer residents of all ages.

For more information or to make a donation please contact the staff at the St. Charles Heritage Center at 630-584-6967 or contact any of the members of the Board of Directors.



**Memberships are important to the St. Charles Heritage Center!** Your support is vital! The Heritage Center derives a majority of its operating budget from its annual memberships. Please tell a friend about the St. Charles Heritage Center and use the form below to invite them to become a member. The many benefits of being a member include 10 percent off in the museum store, free admission to the history museum and Hunt House Museum as well as other special events throughout the year.

### Membership

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 \$40
- Individual \$25 *Your company may match your gift.*
- Senior \$10 *Please contact your employer for details!*
- Student/Junior \$10

*\*Your Name will be on Wall Recognition Plaque in the Museum*

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

•We do not rent or sell our private mail list.

**Clip & Mail to: St. Charles Heritage Center  
215 E. Main Street, St. Charles, IL 60174**

### Membership Benefits

- ❖ Free admission to the St. Charles History Museum, Hunt House Museum and various programs yearly.
- ❖ Reduced admission to lectures and programs.
- ❖ Free quarterly publication, *The Charlemagne*
- ❖ 10% discount on Museum Gift Shop items.
- ❖ Reduced fee on local history research services for home or family.
- ❖ Knowing that your membership, participation and support helps the Heritage Center to collect, preserve and present our history.

*I would also like to be involved with the following...*

- 4th of July Glowsticks Sales
- Appraisal Weekend Fund-raiser
- Grave Reminders Cemetery Program
- Tour Docent
- Museum and/or Hunt House Docent
- Office Assistance
- Gift Shop Assistance
- Special Events
- Other (please tell us your special talents)

# Dunham-Hunt House Open for the Summer Season

The Dunham-Hunt House opened for the summer season on Sunday June 1.

The summer hours are Thursdays and Sundays noon to 4 pm June, July and August. Stop by 304 East Cedar Avenue for a tour of the oldest brick home in St. Charles.



215 E. Main Street  
St. Charles, IL 60174

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