

The Charlemagne

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

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ST. CHARLES
HERITAGE CENTER

St. Charles in the 1860s & 1870s by Jim McGuire

At the start of the Civil War, St. Charles had around 350 volunteers serving in the Union Army. Chief among area men serving were General John F. Farnsworth, General John M. Waite, Major W.G. Conklin, Major J.S. Van Patten, Major A.H. Barry, Captain J.F. Elliott, Captain F.H. Bowman, and Lieutenant S.W. Durant, who would later establish the weekly newspaper, The Valley Chronicle. Five units were raised in town: the 8th and 17th Illinois Cavalry, and the 52nd, 127th, and 141st Illinois Volunteer Infantry.

Perhaps the most famous of the units organized in town, the 8th Illinois Cavalry was organized on September 1, 1861 at Camp Kane under the leadership of then Colonel John F. Farnsworth. Farnsworth received permission to raise such a unit from President Abraham Lincoln. The 8th Illinois was mustered into service on September 18, 1861 by Captain Webb of the Union Army, and within a month the unit was on its way to combat service. The unit served in many key battles, including Gettysburg, and was considered vital to the Union war effort. Within one month of returning to St. Charles in 1864, the unit was ordered back into service.

There were many businesses of importance that lined Main Street in the 1860s. One area of Main Street that was teeming with business was known as Merchant's Row. Within this

establishment was the bank business of E. Freeman and Company, the tailoring business of Lewis and Malack, the cabinet business of H.O. Hyde, the boot and shoe store owned by J.H. Winsor, and the hardware business of F.H. Bowman and John Lloyd. Outside of Merchant's Row, other businesses flourished as well. There was Minard and Osgood's tailoring business on the east side of Main Street, where Nicholas Roche also had a grocery store. There was the Butler Paper Mill on the east side of town and Robert Haines's flour mill on the West of Main Street, an institution since 1842. Hotel lodging solely revolved around the St. Charles Hotel along Main Street. Bela T. Hunt owned a harness and tannery shop, while S.H. Marvin was a blacksmith on West Main Street.

With the end of the Civil War and the progression into the 1870s, many of those businesses that lined Main Street remained. The village of St. Charles became the city of St. Charles in 1874. Many noteworthy individuals called St. Charles home. Samuel L. Adams was a grocer who had previously served as highway commissioner for six years and was vital in the building of the new iron bridge. H.M. Crawford was a prominent surgeon in the area. Charles Chovin was a mercantile businessman in Chi-

cago and St. Charles who became an elected alderman in town. W.G. Conklin, Civil War veteran, ran a grain mill. J.T. Gallagher, a file manufacturer, formed the St. Charles File Company in 1877, the largest such establishment west of New York, and whose products were greatly preferred nationally to English models. Ira Minard's two eldest sons, George and Charles, both engaged in the lumber trade.

The area's who's who did not end there. H.T. Rockwell served as both clerk and recorder in Kane County, and as St. Charles Alderman and Assessor. By the next decade, he was mayor. T. E. Ryan was the primary attorney in town. Martin Switzer, a lifelong resident, built the first cheese factory in Kane County. Clinton D. Wing was mayor of the city, as well as one of its most successful men. Hiram Wheeler, another Civil War veteran, became editor and publisher of the St. Charles Leader, one of the area's most prosperous papers. Samuel Wilcox owned a major real estate enterprise in town, and soon became one of the area's wealthiest men.

During the time period of 1860-1880, St. Charles grew from a village to a city which played a key role in national importance.

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What Is Your Special Year?

The City of St. Charles is celebrating its 175th Anniversary in 2009 with a variety of special programs. The St. Charles Heritage Center & Museum announces its own take on this momentous event with a \$175 years for \$175 sale.

Purchase a memorable year for just \$175 from 1834, the founding of St. Charles, to the anniversary year of 2009. Purchase multiple years, and discounts apply. The Center's staff will research your year and provide the buyer with a certificate of notable events commemorating the year.

Families may want to purchase the year they moved to St. Charles or children's birth years. Organizations can mark the anniversary of their founding. See attached sheet for more information.

St. Charles History Rocks Framed Print Raffle

The St. Charles Heritage Center is selling raffle tickets for a chance to win a framed print titled *St. Charles History Rocks* featuring historic images from the St. Charles History Museum photograph collection. Some of the photos include the Hotel Baker and Arcada Theatre, Blue Goose Grocery Store, Delnor Hospital and scenes of historic St. Charles. The framed print is currently on display at the St. Charles History Museum and can be viewed during open hours.

The print was designed by local artist Mike Cain, to honor the 175th Anniversary of the City of

St. Charles. Tickets sell for \$2.00 each or 3 tickets for \$5.00 and can be purchased at the St. Charles History Museum at 215 East Main Street in downtown St. Charles. The drawing will be held on December 18th and the lucky winner will be notified by telephone.

For anyone wanting to purchase a copy of this print they are available in a variety of sizes framed or unframed in the St. Charles History Museum gift shop. Also available are photographs of

St. Charles scenes taken by Mike Cain featuring the Hotel Baker, Main Street Bridge and Municipal Building.

St. Charles History Rocks print



New Donations to the History Museum

Thank you to everyone who has recently donated items for display at the St. Charles History Museum. Included in these new donations are a banner given by Heritage Center Board Member **Brian Henry**. This banner was used at the News Radio Station WGSB am1480 which broadcast out of St. Charles.

Judith Shaw, a descendant of early settler Read Ferson, donated this lithograph image of John Gates.



Julie Swanson gave several photos of the Community Market. Julie worked there during the mid 1930s.

Karl Madsen, donated several photos and articles relating to the history of Lincoln Elementary School. Included in his donation is a rare vase that was made for Karl by an uncle who worked for Heinz Cut Glass. Inscribed on the vase is *öKarl Madsen St. Charles Class 1939ö*.

Greg Fox donated a treadle sewing machine that had been converted to electric and used by Emil Hanson in his upholstery shop.

The **Morrison Family** donated a panel previously located on the facade of the Hotel Baker Garage.

The panel depicts a steam engine and was located above the entrance door to the garage. Other panels depicted various modes of transportation such as a covered wagon, airplane, camel, horse and automobile. The panels were removed from the building before the garage was torn down in 1983.

Special thanks also to **Dan Anderson, Eamon Rago, Phil Frieny, Lillemor Wennes and John O'Leary**.

Below - Employees of the Community Market, 1935-1936 (l-r) John Gricunas, Al Montividos, Joe Misewicz, Louie Johnson, Cozzy Grozis, Tony Evanauski. The market was located at 3rd and Main Streets.



Join us for a night of Vaudeville

Come celebrate St. Charles' 175th Anniversary with a tribute to The Arcada's Vaudeville days and a performance of "Say Goodnight Gracie" on Sunday September 27th. The show celebrates the lives of George Burns and Gracie Allen whose last Vaudeville performance was on the Arcada stage, all proceeds will go to the St. Charles Heritage Center.

Told through the eyes of George Burns, the show takes audiences through a guided tour of an American century beginning with George's humble beginnings through his Vaudeville days and his marriage with Gracie. Tickets are being sold at a package rate of \$175. This special package includes two tickets to the show and a dinner for two at The Onesti Dinner Club. Reserve your tickets now by calling 630.587.8400, or by visiting www.oshows.com. The Arcada Theatre is located at 105 East Main Street (Rt. 64) in St. Charles.



Christmas in July sale

The entire month of July, the St. Charles Heritage Center Gift Shop will be holding its annual Christmas in July sale. Past years' collectors ornaments will be marked half off for this once a year sale. Other vintage ornaments will also be marked down in the shop. Come in and stock up

St. Charles Heritage Center Book Club

The Heritage Center Book Club will be meeting to discuss the third book of the year on Tuesday July 7th at 7:00 pm in the Carnegie Room at the St. Charles Public Library. The book we will be reading and discussing is *The Cowboy and His Elephant*, by Malcolm MacPherson. This book highlights the relationship between Robert Norris and his adopted elephant Amy, that he raised on his ranch in Colorado.

The next book to be discussed will be *Sin in the Second City*, written by Karen Abbott. A story of the Everleigh Club, a turn of the century brothel operated in Chicago by the Everleigh sisters. This book will be the subject of the September 1st book club meeting.

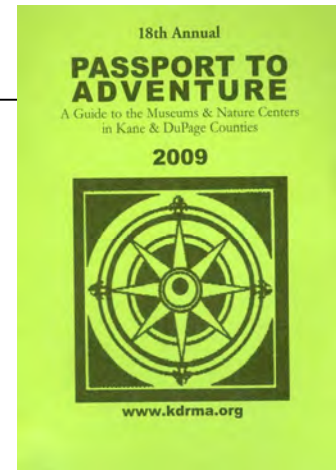
For more information on the book club please contact Natalie at the Heritage Center, 630-584-6967.

Thursday Evening Lecture

The next Thursday Evening Lecture of 2009 will take place on September 10th at 7:00 p.m. in the Carnegie Room of the St. Charles Public Library. Museum Consultant, Elizabeth Carlson will be presenting her program on Mrs. Potts, inventor of the sad iron.

Passport to Adventure now available

The 18th annual KDRMA Passport to Adventure booklet is now available at the St. Charles History Museum and Dunham-Hunt House. The program is for children ages 4 and older. Kids are encouraged to visit as many sites listed in the booklet between Memorial Day and Labor Day. Kids who visit 7 or more sites and get their booklets stamped will receive a free prize.



Looking to make a tax deductible donation?

Remember the St. Charles Heritage Center! Donations to the Heritage Center are completely tax deductible and help us to provide our many educational programs for adults and children. These programs include:

- Book Club
- JHS Programs
- Thursday Evening Lecture
- Grave Reminders
- And much more!

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
Sunday noon - 4pm

The Dunham-Hunt House Museum

304 East Cedar Avenue
St. Charles, IL 60174

Hours of Operation
Thursdays and Sundays
noon-4pm
June, July and August

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July

- 7 **Book Club** *A Cowboy and his Elephant*. Carnegie Community Room,
St. Charles Public Library, 1 S Sixth Ave., 7 p.m.
22 **Fundraising Committee meeting**, St. Charles History Museum, 4 p.m.
22 **Board of Directors meeting**, St. Charles History Museum, 5 p.m.

August

- 26 **Fundraising Committee meeting**, St. Charles History Museum, 5 p.m.
26 **Board of Directors meeting**, St. Charles History Museum, 5 p.m.

September

- 1 **Book Club** *Sin in the Second City*. Carnegie Community Room,
St. Charles Public Library, 1 S Sixth Ave., 7 p.m.
10 **Thursday Evening Lecture** Ellie Carlson presents Mrs. Potts. Carnegie
Community Room, St. Charles Public Library, 1 S Sixth Ave., 7 p.m.
23 **Fundraising Committee meeting**, St. Charles History Museum, 5 p.m.
23 **Board of Directors meeting**, St. Charles History Museum, 5 p.m.
27 **"Say Goodnight Gracie"**, dinner and performance, Arcada Theatre/Onesti Dinner
Club.

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



The Dunham-Hunt House circa, 1900.

The house is shown here with members of the Bela Hunt family on the front porch of the home. The historic house museum is open for tours Thursdays and Sundays from noon to 4 pm. Come and see displays on one of the earliest families in St. Charles history as well as history on the Dunham Family of Wayne, Illinois.

Happy 175th Anniversary, St. Charles!

What's your special year?



The St. Charles
History Museum

215 E. Main Street • 630-584-6967
www.stcmuseum.org

The St. Charles Heritage Center
invites you to celebrate & participate
in our city's major milestone.

To commemorate this anniversary,
the Heritage Center is creating a unique
St. Charles Celebration Scrapbook,
which will cover the years 1834 through 2009.
This scrapbook will be on permanent display in the
St. Charles History Museum.

YOU will be a significant part of this book by sponsoring your special year or years! Your name and memorable occasion will be documented in the year(s) you purchase.

What better way to recognize such personal events as your wedding, the births of your children, graduations or the opening of your business, club or organization?

The cost to sponsor one year is \$175.
Purchase a second year for \$125.
Each additional year is \$75.

In addition to being a part of the *St. Charles Celebration Scrapbook*,
you will also receive a keepsake certificate acknowledging the year(s) of your sponsorship.

Don't miss this opportunity to be a written part of St. Charles History!
Purchase your year by December 31, 2009.

Name of Business, Organization, Family: _____

1st Year (\$175): _____ Event: _____

2nd Year (\$125): _____ Event: _____

3rd or more Year(s) (\$75 each): _____ - _____ Event(s): _____

Address: _____ Phone: _____

E-Mail: _____ Total Enclosed: \$ _____

Send this form along with your donation for the years purchased to: St. Charles Heritage Center, 215 E. Main Street,
St. Charles, IL 60174. Please allow 4-6 weeks for delivery of certificate. Thank You for Your Outstanding Support.

Your donation is Tax Deductible to the fullest extent of the law.

(No thanks, but I WOULD like to make a tax deductible contribution of: \$ _____ in support of the Heritage Center.)

It's not too late to sponsor your special year!

Purchase a memorable year for just \$175 from 1834, the founding of St. Charles, to the anniversary year of 2009. Purchase multiple years, and discounts apply. The Center's staff will research your year and provide the buyer with a certificate of notable events commemorating the year.

175th Anniversary Sponsors

1837 - Congregational Church - year church began

1918 - Julie Swanson - year Julie was born

1920 - Nancy Fiebelkorn - year her mother, Ireta Maine was born

1936 - Charles and Diane Brown - year they started their career together at Lincoln School

1942 - Nancy Fiebelkorn French - year Nancy was born

1947 - Jack Brens Family - John and Dorothy Brens move their family to St. Charles

1956 - Max Hunt Family - Max and Doris Hunt move their family to St. Charles

1960 - Martha Miller - year Martha began teaching at Evan Shelby School

1960 - Helen Karam - year Helen graduated from St. Charles High School

1961 - Purchased as a gift for Larry Stachura - year Larry was born

1964 - William and Nancy Cox - year William and Nancy were married

1966 - Jack and Kathy Brens - year Jack and Kathy were married

1971 - Jack Brens Family - year J.P. Brens was born

1974 - David Hunt - year Town House Books opened

1975 - The Bike Rack - year Bike Rack opened

1975 - Jack Brens Family - year Jake Brens was born

1980 - Jack Brens Family - year Joel Brens was born

1989 - Blair and Dana Sanderson - year Blair and Dana were married

2002 - Thompson Middle School - Kane County 911 commemoration 9-11-02

2006 - Mercedes-Benz of St. Charles - year Mercedes-Benz of St. Charles opened