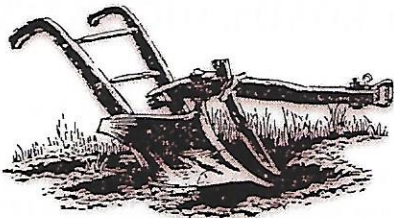


# Grundy County Historical Society Newsletter



Volume 7 Issue 1 January 2019

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Historical Society-Illinois

Museum Hours: Thursday, Friday, Saturday  
10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

## Group Tours by Appointment—Call for Appointment

The Grundy County Historical Society Newsletter is published four times a year. It is distributed to members of record free of charge via e-mail and USPS. Subscriptions start at \$10 for students annually.

### Board of Directors

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## APOLOGIES TO OUR MEMBERS

December 2018 and January 2019 have not been kind to some of our staff. Your Newsletter editor had bronchitis for most of December and now is fighting a cold. Debbie Steffes came down with a cold right after New Year's Day. President Donna has also battled a cold. As a result, work on the January newsletter has fallen behind schedule but we're trying our best to get it out as quickly as we can. Thanks for your patience.

We hope that everyone had a great holiday season!

## MUSEUM NEWS

### FESTIVAL OF TREES

We had a very successful Festival of Trees. About 1,000 people came through the Museum to marvel and bid on all the wonderful trees and other holiday decorations. Many wonderful comments were tendered on our expanded space. The 3D Christmas glasses were a definite hit! And, Mr. and Mrs. Kringle delighted many children who had their pictures taken with them. All of the photos are here at the Museum. If you wish, we will print them out on paper for you. There were over 180 photos taken so it may take a couple of minutes to find your perfect photo for your memory and photo album.

We would like to thank all the businesses for their support as well as all our volunteers. A special thank you goes to our committee members and friends who worked countless hours to prepare for such a wonderful event. We are already working on Festival of Trees 2019 . . . so stay tuned!! Check out a few of our visitors posing with some of the beautiful trees on page 4.

Our little gift store was popular at Christmas and at the FOT. We were surprised to learn that our "20% Off" sale resulted in \$294 in sales. Thank you for your purchases and support of the Museum.

Our new addition is beautiful. As many saw, we have moved and started exhibits in the new area. Is it done? Absolutely not. Now

## UPCOMING PROGRAMS

All our programs are free to members and nonmembers alike except for the dinner fee for the Annual Meeting in May. Mark your calendars!

**March 26, 2019, 7:00 p.m.:** "Museum Tools and Blacksmithing" presented by John Hanson. This program will be held at the Museum.

**April 23, 2019, 7:00 p.m.:** "Bridal Gowns through the Decades" presented by our Program Committee and featuring items in our collection. This program will be held at the Museum.

**May 21, 2019, 7:00 p.m.:** "The History of Inventors in Illinois" presented by Terry and Laura Lynch. The annual meeting is a dinner meeting and **will be held at the First Presbyterian Church, 200 E. Jackson Street in Morris.** A modest charge for dinner will be announced closer to the event.

that Festival of Trees is over, we will be concentrating on setting up new exhibits and completing others. Some of the planned exhibits include a coal mine exhibit (thanks to Richard Joyce and Three Rivers Association of REALTORS®), a Northwestern Corporation exhibit, and moving the sleigh donated by the Holderman Family from the tool shed into the new area so it can be properly seen and admired. Our military exhibit needs tweaking and we will be moving two new cases into the original section of the Museum to revamp the fossil collection. Why—well visitors strain to see the fossils. The two "new" cases are much shallower and will allow visitors to see the fossils much more closely.

Continuing is the consolidation of local history items from the Morris Community Library, the Museum's local history items, and Ken Sereno's collection. One of our members built us the

most beautiful storage unit for framed pictures which we think is wonderful. It's amazing and so useful.

January is always a month of general blah feelings sometimes with reason and sometimes just because it is January. The one good thing is days are now getting longer by a minute a day in our area. This varies based on your latitude. That is always my good feeling for January. The bad things, as our editor noted above, are coming down with colds and flu, causing many of us to feel bad. So, are you off to the doctor, clinic or ????

## HOSPITAL IN OPERATION

*Morris Daily Herald—Oct. 23, 1918*

The temporary hospital in the Landy Hoge house on East Washington Street is now fitted up with eighteen beds and already five patients have been taken to the institution. Four of these patients are residents of the city and one has been removed from Wauponsee township.

Mrs. Werner, state nurse, is in charge, assisted by Miss Stena Matand and Mrs. A. H. Sorem. An effort is being made to secure at least two more nurses, in order that no nurse will have to be on duty for more than six hours at a time.

The emergency influenza committee of Grundy County consists of the following men. F. S. Johnson, Chairman; Ed Martin, secretary; D. A. Matthews, representing the board of supervisors of the local committee; T. H. Hall, mayor; Dr. W. G. Sachse, health physician; W. C. Snider; F. G. Blasingham; Daniel O'Connell of Kinsman; William Lewins of Felix; and S. D. Holderman, Erienna.

When you next visit our Museum, be sure to take a look at the historic hospital exhibit now housed in the Sereno memorial wing. In the exhibit is the examining bed first used by Dr. Sachse. Then it was used by Dr. Roth, Sr., and finally by his son, Dr. Roth, Jr. Also on display is a patient's overbed table from the original Morris Hospital dating back to 1909. In addition we have a collection of Dr. Avalos's medical equipment, some of which can give you the shivers. But, in the early 1900s, it was state of the art.

## AKZO NOBEL

Akzo Nobel, a Dutch multinational company which creates paints and performance coatings for both industry and consumers worldwide, is headquartered in Amsterdam. The company has activities in more than 80 countries.

Now the company is called Nouryon, a name derived from the name of one of the original AKZO companies, Noury and Van Der Lande. We contacted them to ask if they had a history of the company in Grundy County. We heard from Pat Neff who said there exists a very old binder with aerial photos, newspaper clippings, and other items. "I think they would entrust it to me to get copies at their expense." We were happy to learn that we could get this information duplicated. We won't know how we might display it until we see what they give us, but at least the information has been saved which is always appreciated by the Historical Society.

## CORN CRIBS

This spring, I am going to travel through Grundy County to record CORN CRIBS. They are no longer used for their original purpose and many are falling apart. So this will be my last opportunity to record them for history. If you know of one that you would like photographed, please let us know, especially if it has a short life left to it

## COUNTY ROADS, HIGHWAYS, AND BYWAYS

There is a very interesting history which has been compiled by the Grundy County Highway Department on the history of the department and roads in Grundy County. It's worth taking a look at it. Keep in mind that in 1919 they FINALLY paved the old Dwight Road. Country roads were not paved until much later. Historical Society president, Donna Sroczyński, believes Southmor Road was paved in approximately 1954 or 1955. "I remember my mother never opening the windows on the side of the house toward the road when it was gravel to prevent all the dust coming into the house," she said. This history is a great peek at the history of the roads in the county plus it gives one an appreciation for the Highway Commission's work today. Check it out at <https://www.grundyco.org/highway/highway-department-history>.

## NEW MEMBERS

The following people are new members of the Grundy County Historical Society. We thank them for their support.

George Dergo, Morris, IL  
Marlene Hoge Hudgins, Texas

## FACEBOOK



Besides our web site, we have a Facebook presence thanks to Dorothy Cunnea, our very dedicated volunteer who handles the Facebook page. So, a hearty hello to all 1,027 of our Facebook friends. We appreciate your interest in our Museum as well as your support. If you are not currently a member of the Historical Society, please consider joining not only our Facebook page *but* our Museum as well. Friend us at the **Museum of the Grundy County Historical Society-Illinois**. Additionally, you can download a membership application for the Historical Society from our web site, [www.grundycountyhs.org](http://www.grundycountyhs.org), click on Membership/Newsletter. Thank you!

## DID YOU KNOW?????

### *National Register of Historic Places Located in Grundy County*

- Coleman Hardware Company building—510 W. Illinois. Morris.
- Morris Downtown Historic District
- Dresden Island Lock and Dam Historic District—7521 Lock Road

- Mazon Creek Fossil Beds—Wauponsee Township (Benson Road)
- Morris Wide Water Canal—East Washington Street
- White & Company's Goose Lake Stone Manufacturing
- White & Company's Goose Lake Tile Mfg.

## RADIO



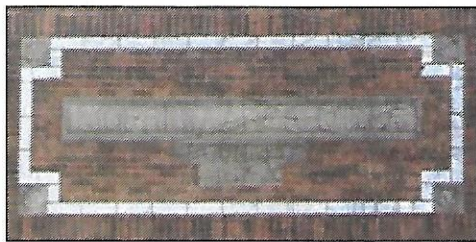
Find the Museum on the radio the first Monday of every month. Tune in to "People Are Talking," WCSJ, 103.1 on your FM dial, from approximately 9:15 a.m. to 9:30 a.m.

## GRUNDY COUNTY TRIVIA

What was the first cemetery in Mazon township? Look for the answer elsewhere in this newsletter.

# THEN AND NOW: MORRIS PAPER MILLS

*The Herald-News, Oct. 18, 2017*



The first paper business in Morris was the Allen Paper Car Wheel Works, which functioned as a straw milling operation for the Pullman Palace Car Company in Chicago.

The business was named for Richard N. Allen, a former locomotive engineer and master mechanic of the Cleveland and Toledo Railroad, who invented and patented the paper car wheel in Brandon, Vermont, in 1869.

After testing and perfecting the wheel, the Pullman Palace Car Co. gave the first order for 100 wheels in 1871.

Allen soon established a main plant in Hudson, New York, in 1873, and eventually relocated the plant on the grounds of Pullman's Chicago works.

By 1881, the Allen Paper Car Wheel Co. had shops in New York and Chicago, and a processing plant in Morris, and managed to produce and sell thousands of wheels each year.

The plant straw was pulped, made into board, and cut into circles, which created the core for the steel-tired composite wheels for Pullman. The paper core helped to absorb the shock from the track and provide a quieter, smoother ride for the traveler. This paper wheel is made up of a disk of compressed paper, surrounded by a steel tire, and fitted with a cast-iron hub, which is bored for the axle. Wrought-iron plates protect the paper disk on either side, and all are bolted together by two circles of bolts.



Top and center: Two historic views of the old Federal Paperboard Office at 960 East North Street. Photos provided by David Belden and the Local History Project digital collections. Bottom: The paper mill building today. Photo by your editor.

The paper wheels were standard on Pullman trains until the turn-of-the-century, when railroad companies switched from wood to steel cars.

These new cars were considerably heavier and produced a greater braking load on the wheels. Paper wheels were considered unsafe for use by the early 1920s. Located on East North Street, the Allen Paper Car Wheel Works operated until 1890, when it was turned over to John N. Bunnell and changed its name to the American Straw Board Co.

Over the next two decades, the business and plant was leased, sold and restructured and operated under different names, including the Morris Box Board Co.

In October 1915, the business reorganized and was incorporated as the Morris Paper Mills.

By the 1920s, the paper mill became one of Morris' largest employers and produced boxes of every kind, color and size that were shipped all over the country.

In August 1956, the Morris Paper Mills was sold to Federal Paperboard Company, and operated until closing in 1980.

# Festival of Trees 2018

