



FRIENDS OF LECLAIRE

NEWSLETTER

June 2015

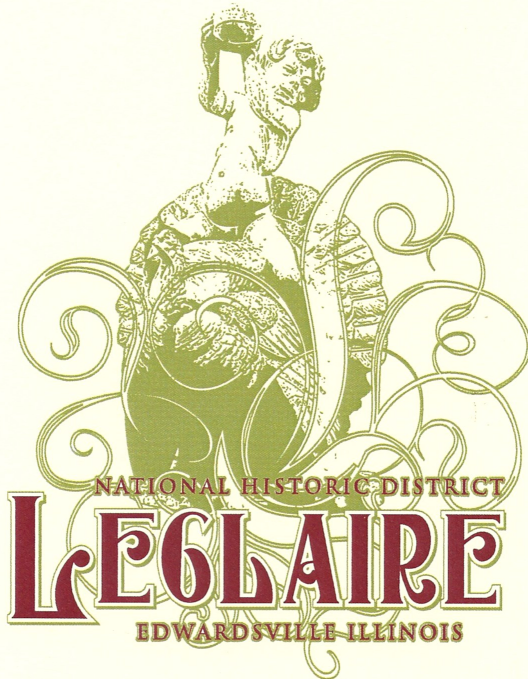
Volume 25 No. 2

Happy Anniversary Leclaire!

This month marks the 125th anniversary of the founding of Leclaire. On June 21, 1890, the future village was christened “Leclaire” by founder N. O. Nelson. In recognition of this anniversary, the “Article from the Past” in this issue is a description of Leclaire just five years after its founding. It is taken from the December 17, 1895, issue of the *Edwardsville Intelligencer* called the “Industrial Edition.”

This special edition featured 64 pages of articles and photographs on Edwardsville businesses, community leaders, government, churches, schools and more, including this transcribed article (see page 7) describing the “suburb of Leclaire.” A print copy of the entire newspaper can be read at the Madison County Archival Library, or it is available on microfilm at both the Archival Library and at the Edwardsville Public Library.

The image at left is one of the beautiful graphics donated to Friends of Leclaire by graphic designer Sherrie Hickman of Creative Options Graphic Design. It depicts the sculpture of the N. O. Nelson Memorial Fountain located behind the Leclaire School House on Hale Avenue.



NEW TREES FOR LECLAIRE PARK

The City of Edwardsville celebrated Arbor Day this year at Leclaire Park. City officials, Scout troops, Friends of Leclaire members and the Edwardsville Beautification and Tree Commission joined Mayor Hal Patton on April 25 for tree dedications in honor of Arbor Day.

In April, members of Cub Scout Den #7 and Girl Scout Troops #585, #75 and #655 each researched and then selected trees for the event. The Cub Scouts chose a red oak tree and the Girl Scouts requested a black gum tree. Both are located on the east side of the park near Madison Avenue.

After brief remarks from EBTC Chairman Mike Reinhardt and Fifth Ward Alderman William Krause, Mayor Patton read an Arbor Day proclamation announcing Edwardsville as a Tree City for the 13th successive year. Representatives of the Scout troops provided information on the trees that they chose to have planted in the park along with the characteristics that determined why these were good choices for our area.

In recent years Leclaire Park has lost many trees due to age or disease. This spring a total of nine trees, including the Arbor Day trees, were planted at Leclaire Park to replace lost trees. Seven trees were planted in the area south of the band



Girl Scouts displaying the Tree City flag include (left to right): Abby Brown (Junior troop 585), Helena Frisbie-Firsching (Senior troop 75), Hanna Pocuca (Senior troop 75), and Katie Brown (Daisy troop 655)

stand, including a sugar maple, tulip tree, white oak, red oak, bur oak, willow oak and red maple. EBTC coordinated the plantings with the species chosen by landscape architect Peggy Lambdin and approved by the Edwardsville Department of Parks and Recreation.

Friends of Leclaire ♦ P. O. Box 644 ♦ Edwardsville, IL 62025

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LECLAIRE PARK BAND CONCERT SUNDAY, JUNE 28 - 4 PM

REFRESHMENT STAND HOSTED BY FOL

2014-2015 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

The annual meeting of the Friends of Leclaire was held Tuesday, April 14 at the Nelson Campus of LCCC. The 2015-2016 Board of Directors:

| | |
|----------------|--|
| President | Mike Reinhardt |
| Vice-President | Will Krause |
| Secretary | Ashley Mattingly |
| Treasurer | Jim Milgrim |
| Trustees | Syvella Gregory Theresa Morrison Cindy Reinhardt |

FOL thanks Jennifer Rutherford who is retiring from the FOL board after six years of service. She will continue to coordinate the distribution of newsletters throughout the neighborhood. Theresa Morrison is welcomed as the newest FOL trustee.

SUMMER FUN AT THE EDWARDSVILLE CHILDREN'S MUSEUM

There are some exciting things happening at the Edwardsville Children's Museum located in the former Leclaire School House. In addition to all the new play stations at the museum, a wide variety of programs for kids of all ages are on the summer schedule, some starting as early as June 1st. There are summer camps called "Messy" and "Splish Splash" that are obviously going to be fun, plus programs for budding actors, artists, scientists, cooks and gardeners. Children can learn about money, build a bird house, explore how to care for animals and so much more. And the best part (for parents), is that they're all educational too, but don't tell the kids!

Go to: www.edwardsvillechildrensmuseum.org to register for summer programs or for additional information. These events look like so much fun, they'll surely fill up quickly, so register soon. The Children's Museum also has regular hours from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. on Tuesday, Friday and Saturday. For more information, call: 618-692-2094.

Members of Friends of Leclaire and the EHS Student Council celebrating after providing water and cheers for runners of the St. Boniface 5K Run on May 23rd. This was the fourth year FOL hosted the water station near the 2-mile mark of the race. Special thanks to Al and Kim Pauli for providing the water!

LECLAIRE PARKFEST VENDORS

Leclaire Parkfest will be held on October 18, 2015. Vendor applications, available on the FOL web site, will be accepted beginning July 1st.

If you belong to a not-for-profit organization interested in participating or are an artisan or crafter with goods to sell, you are welcome to apply. Please note that no commercial booths are accepted and all booths must be food, activity or items made by the vendor.

About Friends of Leclaire

Friends of Leclaire (FOL) is a nonprofit organization dedicated to promoting and enhancing the history and heritage of the Leclaire National Historic District. The organization promotes Leclaire's heritage through advocacy, education, and community involvement.

FOL conducts business meetings at 7 p.m. on the second Tuesday of each month except in December when the regular meeting is replaced with a holiday social and January when it's just too cold!

All members are welcome to attend meetings which are held in room 201 of Building N4 at the Historic N. O. Nelson Campus of Lewis & Clark Community College in Edwardsville.

Coming Soon

| | |
|--------------|----------------------------|
| Jun 9, 7 pm | FOL Board Meeting |
| Jun 12-13 | FOL at Route 66 Festival |
| Jun 20 | FOL at Goshen Market |
| Jun 28, 4 pm | Leclaire Park Band Concert |
| Jul 14, 7 pm | FOL Board Meeting |
| Jul 18 | FOL at Goshen Market |
| Aug 11, 7 pm | FOL Board Meeting |
| Aug 15 | FOL at Goshen Market |

LOVING OUR LECLAIRE LEGACY

By SJ Morrison

There is one house in all of LeClaire that is particularly special to me. Actually, make that three houses.

A few years ago, on a ride through the neighborhood I noticed that one of those houses, 216 McKinley Avenue, was falling into a state of disrepair. The front porch was collapsing, windows were broken, the grass was a foot tall and the wood siding desperately needed paint. Although she hasn't lived there in 20 years, the white bungalow at 216 will always be my Grandma's house. The Grandma I'm speaking of is Betty McKinnon. She was after all born there, raised her four children there, and spent more than 60 years of her life there.

The sad scene on McKinley caused me to pull over. The house was clearly vacant so I tiptoed over to a window and peered inside. A sticker on the front door indicated that the home had been weatherized and foreclosed on. My distress at seeing the home's condition prompted me to start researching the house, along with my family's history on McKinley Avenue. Here's what I found:

In 1914 – the year the Panama Canal opened and Wrigley Field hosted its first game – Daniel and Anna Schafer built a modest five-room house on McKinley Avenue in LeClaire. It was presumably their retirement home. Anna was 67 years old and Daniel was 65. They were moving from rural Madison County, near Moro – where they had lived for 40 years. The new house would be closer to work opportunities for their grown children, four of whom came with them: Katharine (age 33), Charles (31), Emma (26) and Philip (23). All had jobs in Edwardsville.

At the time, McKinley Avenue probably felt a little like their home in the country. Theirs was one of the first houses built in the block between Troy Road and Longfellow. The 1914 City Directory doesn't even provide an address, simply: "McKinley nr Troy Rd." The Schafer home wouldn't receive its present-day address of 218 McKinley for another decade.

The Schafers bought lots 4 and 5 on McKinley from N.O. Nelson himself. Lot 5 was purchased two years earlier in February 1912 for \$375 and Lot 4 was purchased two years later in January 1916 for \$1,600. They built their home on lot 5 and constructed a large two-story barn on the backside of lot 4. A quirky photo of Daniel, Anna and Emma Schafer with their pet cow "Beauty" taken on McKinley in the 1920s illustrates just how rural the avenue really was.

Anna and Daniel were German immigrants who would have likely still had heavy German accents when they arrived in LeClaire.



Philip Daniel Schafer Sr who was known as Daniel, and his wife Anna in 1914 when they moved to their new home in LeClaire.

Daniel came to the U.S. at the age of 18 in 1867. Anna Lowenstein was 23 when she left Germany in 1870. Both of their families made their way to Madison County, perhaps because the flat terrain reminded them of home. They married in 1875, both in their mid 20s. They were my great-great grandparents.

Daniel and Anna's youngest son Philip worked at the U.S. Radiator Corporation on East Vandalia in Edwardsville (where RP Lumber is today). In April 1917, when the U.S. declared war on Germany, 172 Edwardsville area residents enlisted in the U.S. Army. Philip, 26 at the time, was one of them. At enlistment, he was described as a tall, slender blue-eyed man with light colored hair who was working as a cement work contractor. On September 19, 1917, along with the other Edwardsville heroes, Philip was ceremonially sent off with a rousing patriotic tribute at the Wildey Theatre. The next day thousands gathered in downtown Edwardsville for a parade to the Clover Leaf Train Depot. A photo of the men wearing suits and ties was taken that morning on the steps of the recently completed Madison County Courthouse. The century-old photo comes to life when reading the lively accounts of that morning. The faces are solemn in the photo and each soldier wears his draft card pinned to his lapel. A man in the back waves a large American flag over the crowd. Philip, my great-grandfather, is in the second row looking somber and sporting a bowtie.

Philip was sent to Camp Dix, New Jersey, where he served in the medical corps. During World War I, U.S. Army bases were incubators for the influenza epidemic which ravaged the country. Philip became incredibly ill and nearly died while treating men at Camp Dix. As a result, he was never sent overseas. He returned to Edwardsville after the war's end and took a job as a carpenter for the Illinois Terminal Railroad, repairing the large wooden railroad trestles that dotted the landscape of southwestern Illinois.

In January 1927, Philip's mother Anna Schafer died at her residence. She was 79. Funeral services were held in the parlor of their home at 218 McKinley. Decades later my dad and his siblings would see photos of this event, complete with a casket in the living room and speculate that the house was haunted.

In October of that year, nine months after his mother passed away, Philip married Laura Strauss, a schoolteacher from the Collinsville area who taught at one room schoolhouses such as Progress, Acme, and Quercus Grove. Philip was 36 years old and Laura was 30. How the two of them met is a mystery. Family lore puts Philip and Laura both at the home of a wealthy estate north of Edwardsville in the 1920s, where Laura served as a live-in tutor for the children and Philip a farmhand. Interestingly, the 1919 City Directory lists the residence of



Wedding portrait of Philip and Laura Straus Schafer, October, 1927

LOVING OUR LECLAIRE LEGACY

Laura, her brother Edward, and her parents, Adam and Clara Strauss at 817 Troy Road, right here in LeClaire - just two blocks from the Schafers on McKinley. Could their paths have crossed on the streets of LeClaire one moonlit evening? The details are lost to history.

Philip and Laura purchased Lot 4 from his parents in 1927 and built a two-bedroom bungalow at 216 McKinley Avenue. The house had a large living room and dining room, tall ceilings, dark wood trim around the windows and doors and an ample front porch. Philip maintained a substantial garden on an open lot between Longfellow and the railroad tracks where lettuce, radishes, tomatoes, green beans, sweet potatoes and cabbage was grown. The backyard of 216 McKinley was home to grape arbors for winemaking and rabbits were raised in the large barn behind the house, for food.

The couple had two children, my grandmother, Betty (Schafer) McKinnon, born in July 1929 and my uncle, Robert Schafer, born in January 1931.

In February 1936, Daniel Schafer died at 218 McKinley, the home he had built with his wife 22 years before. He too was laid out in the living room. Daniel was 86 and with a bushy white mustache and goatee bore a striking resemblance to Col. Sanders. With both Daniel and Anna deceased, their two grown daughters Kate and Emma were now the only inhabitants of 218 McKinley. Although I never met "Aunt Katie" and "Aunt Emma," I can report with certainty that these two women made an indelible impact on generations of my family. They never married, spent the rest of their lives living at 218 and were - by all accounts - delightful, generous, and hard-working. They cleaned houses, washed and ironed clothes, kept a massive vegetable garden and baked feverishly. They became an ever-present force of good in the lives of their nieces, nephews, neighbors, and anyone else with whom they came into contact.

Under their supervision, 218 McKinley became a respite for out of work drifters, riding the rails during the Depression years. Kate and Emma forfeited their upstairs bedroom and set up four twin beds for boarders. They made fried chicken on Saturday nights and fed the growing hobo population that was assembling near the railroad tracks.

In the summer of 1940, Philip's job with Illinois Terminal took him to Granite City on a daily basis. In those days, the 15-mile trip from LeClaire to Granite City was a substantial trek for Philip and his aging 1926 Ford Coupe so he and Laura moved their family of four to Granite, where they settled at 2236 East 25th Street. The move was meant to be temporary. He had every intention of returning to the home he had built in LeClaire. So instead of selling 216 McKinley, the Schafers rented it to a local family, signing only a one-year lease.

In the winter of 1941 the unthinkable happened. After just eight months in Granite City, Philip suffered a series of three heart attacks over the course of a few days. Kate and Emma came from LeClaire via streetcar. Philip died of heart failure on February 14, 1941. He was 50. Betty was 11 and Bob was just 10.

Five months later, during the summer of 1941 - the summer that Joe DiMaggio went on a 56-game hitting streak and tensions mounted in the Pacific - Laura, Betty and Bob Schafer returned to 216 McKinley Avenue without its builder. Today, only a handful of pictures, a few legal documents, some impossibly heavy railroad tools, and the existence of his two children provide proof of his life. Everything else - his passions, his personality, his predilections - has been lost to history. The only two living souls who knew him have fond but only trace memories of their father. In a culture where our every movement is recorded with GPS precision and our every activity documented on social media, it's hard to imagine a time when someone could pass in and out of life with so little evidence.

Nine million Americans were out of work in 1941 and the country was still gripped by Depression. Without their bread-winner, Laura Schafer decided to sell the family car and return to teaching. For additional income, she rented the living room, dining room, kitchen and front bedroom of 216 McKinley. Laura and the children lived in a back bedroom and basement. It was during this period in the winter of 1942, that Bob developed rheumatic fever and spent almost an entire school year in bed. The nuns from St. Boniface came and visited them in their basement quarters regularly until he recovered.

The sudden and tragic death of Philip Schafer made life incredibly difficult for his family. It's a testament to their mother, their aunts and their strong character that the unflinchingly resilient, and wonderfully optimistic two people who lived through it and whom I know well today, emerged unscathed by the tragedy.

For Bob and Betty, growing up in LeClaire meant ice skating on LeClaire Lake, playing corkball in the empty lots, and spending time with their aunts, who continued to play a major role in their lives after their father's death. They spent summer afternoons picking dewberries with them along the railroad tracks and spoiled their suppers with candy and homemade coffee cakes with every visit to 218.

In the 1940s Laura Schafer fell and injured her leg. In the absence of readily-accessible modern treatment, the incident caused permanent damage, preventing her from fully extending one knee for the rest of her life and plaguing her with regular pain. While her condition created limited mobility, it did not stop her from teaching full-time, substituting when possible, canning vegetables for the family and reading voraciously to her children. Laura couldn't drive,

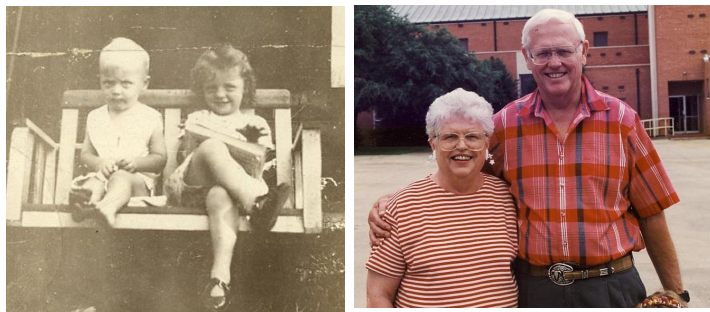


Above, Kate and Emma Schafer stand amidst the flowers in their beautiful garden. The backs of the homes at 216 and 218 can be seen behind them.

THE SCHAFER FAMILY IN LECLAIRE

and they didn't own a car, so she paid people to drive her to and from the one-room schoolhouses where she taught. Everywhere else, she walked. Without a car, every trip (to school, to shopping, to mass, to employment) was measured in footsteps from McKinley.

Betty graduated from Edwardsville High School in 1947 and in September of 1948, married John Morrison, an Edwardsville native who was working at the Busy Bee Bakery on Main Street. Their wedding at St. Boniface yielded an eight paragraph description in the "Society News" of the Edwardsville Intelligencer. In the absence of her father, Betty was escorted to the altar by her brother. A wedding breakfast was served at 216 McKinley for the immediate families prior to the ceremony. The couple purchased a home on H Street near downtown Edwardsville.



Brother and sister, Robert (Bob) and Betty Schaffer Morrison McKinnon in the mid-1930s and sixty-five years later in 2000.

Bob graduated from EHS in 1948 and attended the Missouri School of Mines in Rolla, Missouri, where he received a degree in Mining Engineering. The summer of 1949 was his last summer spent full time on McKinley. Four months after graduation in 1953, he was drafted into the U.S. Army, and served for two years including a tour in Japan. He sent more than 100 letters home to 216 and 218 McKinley during that time - all of which were saved. Bob began working for the Shell Oil Company and built a successful career in the oil industry. His job with Shell would take him to New Orleans, Brazil, and finally Texas, where he settled. In July 1958 he married Margaret Dyar, a teacher in Sweetwater, Texas. They had two children, Philip and Laura, named after his parents.

With Bob and Betty both married and living elsewhere, the houses on McKinley fell quiet. Laura retired from teaching and settled into a regular routine of watching "Gunsmoke," attending church, taking care of the house and reading. The aunts next door continued to keep up with their washing and ironing regimen for local townspeople and maintaining a beautiful garden of annuals and perennials in the backyard.

During that time, John and Betty had four children: Pat, Tom, Steve and Susan Morrison. The family lived for a little over a decade on H Street. But when John and Betty separated in the early 1960s, Betty decided to return to 216 McKinley, this time with her four children.

The houses on McKinley had played host to children before, but nothing quite like the rattling they'd receive from this brood. Mischievous and full of energy, the Morrison kids took LeClaire by storm. While Betty was at work during the day at Edwardsville National Bank, and with Laura becoming increasingly less mobile,

the kids had the run of the neighborhood. McKinley became the scene of dirt bike races, late night games of kick the can, impromptu football games on empty lots, and endless adventures in nearby places whose names have long been lost, like "Spitze's Woods" and "Tudor's Pond."

Betty admits (only half-jokingly) that she cringed every time the fire truck sped by her office on Main Street, fearing that her children had "created an emergency." One day she received a call at work from Laura who indicated that the little darlings had taken it upon themselves to remove the old barn in the backyard with hatchets and baseball bats.

Aunt Katie and Aunt Emma meanwhile, made it their personal responsibility to spoil another generation of nephews and nieces. The Morrison kids spent a lot of time with their aging aunts who became as important to them as they'd been for their mom and uncle. Emma and Katie never had a television, but there was always something to do. Playing cards or dominoes, winding the Victrola and listening to 78 records, or just playing kickball in the front yard while Emma and Katie watched from the porch.

On June 2, 1966, Laura Schaffer passed away at Anna Henry Nursing Home in Edwardsville. She was 68. Life had not been easy for Laura. In addition to losing her husband early, she raised two children as a single mother during the Depression, while battling a physical disability. She had diabetes, high blood pressure, and gall bladder problems. Despite these challenges she remained optimistic. Her faithful children cared for her well and her grandchildren brought her a lot of joy.



The Morrison kids with their mom a few years ago. From left, Steve Morrison, Pat Morrison, Betty McKinnon, Susie Bobrowski, Tom Morrison.

Betty married George "Bud" McKinnon in 1968. Like her father, Bud worked for the railroad. Not long after they wed, the family hired local contractor and well-known Edwardsville Township official Bob Stille to build an addition and expand the living quarters at 216. Stille built a 12' x 16' sympathetic addition on the back of the house and carved out some space in the back bedroom for a hallway and closet. By this time Pat was married and out of the house but Tom, Steve and Susie shared the back two bedrooms while Betty and Bud took the front bedroom, the room in which she was born.

On August 22, 1972, Kate Schaffer passed away in her sleep at 218 McKinley, like her parents before her. She was 91. Emma

LOVING OUR LECLAIRE LEGACY

Schafer lived another 8 years, dying at the age of 92 on August 24, 1980. They were the last of their generation and the only original remaining inhabitants of 218. The home which had been the Schafer family's original foothold in Edwardsville more than 75 years before, was rented by the family for a few years and eventually sold.

In the 1970s, 80s and 90s, Betty's kids brought nine grandchildren onto the scene (myself included) who filled the house with laughter and chaos. Betty expanded 216 McKinley once more in the 1980s adding another bedroom and closet where a covered porch had previously been.

Bob and Marge Schafer stayed in Texas to raise their children and they continue to reside there today. They have four grandchildren as well. Betty retired as an officer from Mark Twain Bank in the 1990s and began leading trips for senior citizen groups through a company she called "Travel with Betty."

In 1997, 70 years after it was built by her father, Betty sold 216 McKinley and moved to a more manageable condo across town in the Esic neighborhood. I had recently received my driver's license and helped with the move. Even though I wasn't born until 1980, the

house had become a fixture in the life of our family, and being a part of this transition was bittersweet. For my cousins and I, 216 had become a place of holiday gatherings, Saturday night sleepovers, bike ride pit stops and afternoons on the front porch with Grandma Betty.

During the 2000s, 216 McKinley changed hands a number of times. By the time I stumbled upon it in a state of disrepair in the summer of 2012, it had become a rental property and was eventually foreclosed on by a lending institution in Chicago. After almost a year of waiting and working through the foreclosure process, my wife, Emily, and I finally had an opportunity to tour the house. I brought along my parents as well. Walking into that house was like stepping into a bizarre version of the past. The trim was the same, the doors were the same, the fixtures were the same. The kitchen cabinets were the same, the flour bin and ceramic kitchen sink were the same. But many things were different.

An army of squirrels and raccoons were inhabiting the attic. Failing parts of the roof had caused ceiling and floor damage throughout the house. The plaster walls were cracked in almost every room, the foundation had shifted, the wiring was outdated, the plumbing seemed clogged, and the window seat that rested in the bay window of the dining room had been removed - just to name a few. This house was and is very special to me, but like those couples on HGTV, we weren't sure we were ready to dive into a full rehabilitation project.

After much soul searching, Emily and I purchased 216 McKinley in November 2013 and the house became a part of our family's story once again. It was going to be a rental property, but I wanted a full renovation, something that my family would be proud of. The restoration was a multi-month family affair. Emily and I worked alongside my parents, my siblings and a number of friends to complete the project. Needless to say, some of the work was hired out as well.

In the same way that I will always look fondly upon my childhood days in this house, I will always cherish working alongside my dad at 216, his boyhood home, hearing tales about his past in the very place where the stories were set.

Although frustrating, expensive and exhausting, the real payoff



The homes at 218 (left) and 216 McKinley Avenue as they appear today.

of the renovation came on January 18, 2014, when my Grandma, Betty McKinnon returned to 216 McKinley for the first time in nearly 17 years. It was a surprisingly emotional visit but I couldn't have been prouder to escort her through the newly renovated home that she knew so well. I think she enjoyed it too. Betty continues to live in the Edwardsville area, and so do all four of her children, eight of her grandchildren and all eight of her great-grandchildren.

As I look back on a century-long legacy of my family living in LeClaire, I am struck by a few final thoughts. Places matter, and the places that are filled with our family's memories are special and are worth preserving. But much more than that, I am reminded about the importance of family and just how incredibly grateful I am for the family I was born into and the family that Emily and I are building together.

In February of this year, my brother and his wife bought a house in LeClaire, just blocks from 216 and 218 McKinley Avenue where our family lived for decades. His house also required renovation and a rehab team composed of family and friends. A month after work was complete they had a baby girl. My brother is now the fifth generation of my family to live in LeClaire and his daughter is the sixth.

For our family, their home is now the most special house in all of LeClaire.

All photos courtesy of SJ Morrison.

LECLAIRE IN 1895

December 17, 1895

Edwardsville Intelligencer – Industrial Edition

LECLAIRE.

Immediately on the south border of Edwardsville, just across the Clover Leaf and C.P. & St. L. railroads, are the works of the N. O. Nelson Manufacturing Company, whose headquarters are in St. Louis. Adjacent to the works is the handsome suburban village of Leclaire.

The Nelson works consist of six brick and two frame buildings, varying in size from 50 by 60 feet to 80 by 160. They are strictly standard modern factories, electric lighted, steam heated, and roof ventilated. They are equipped in every case with the machinery that will do the most and the best work.

One factory makes brass work for plumbing houses and for steam work. Moulding, finishing, polishing and plating is done, and the work is shipped to New York, San Francisco and all international cities.

The planning and cabinet mill turns out finished wood work for houses, mantels, bathroom appliances, special doors, sashes and frames, and fine cabinet pieces. In this line the company employs not only mechanics, but artisans.

One department is employed in making marble plumber's slabs, wainscoting, tiling and the like; another makes copper bath tubs and other copper work. There is an extensive iron works which manufactures special machines used by large factories. These, as well as many of the goods produced in the other departments, are shipped to every part of the United States, and occasionally abroad.

One side track delivers coal to the boiler house; another one

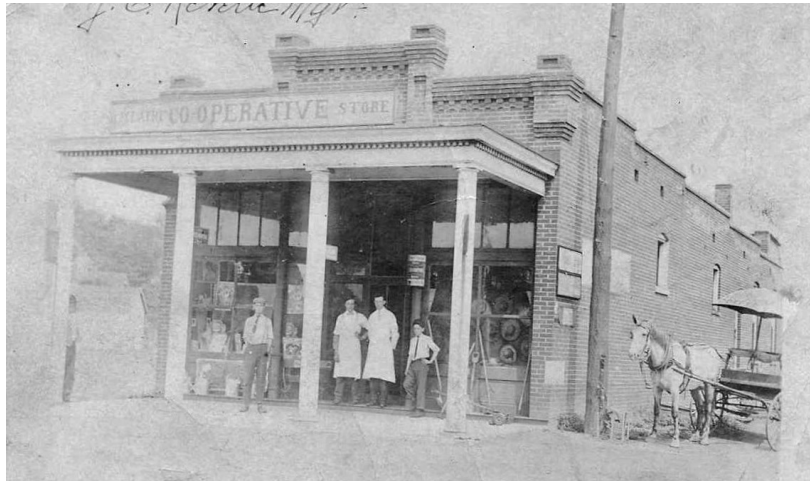
the raw material to the various departments, and still another receives the finished goods directly from the factories without hauling.

During the panic and the two depression years following, no department of the works was ever closed down, nor run short time, except three or four weeks in mid-winter; on the contrary, new factories have been erected, more than doubling the force employed before the panic.

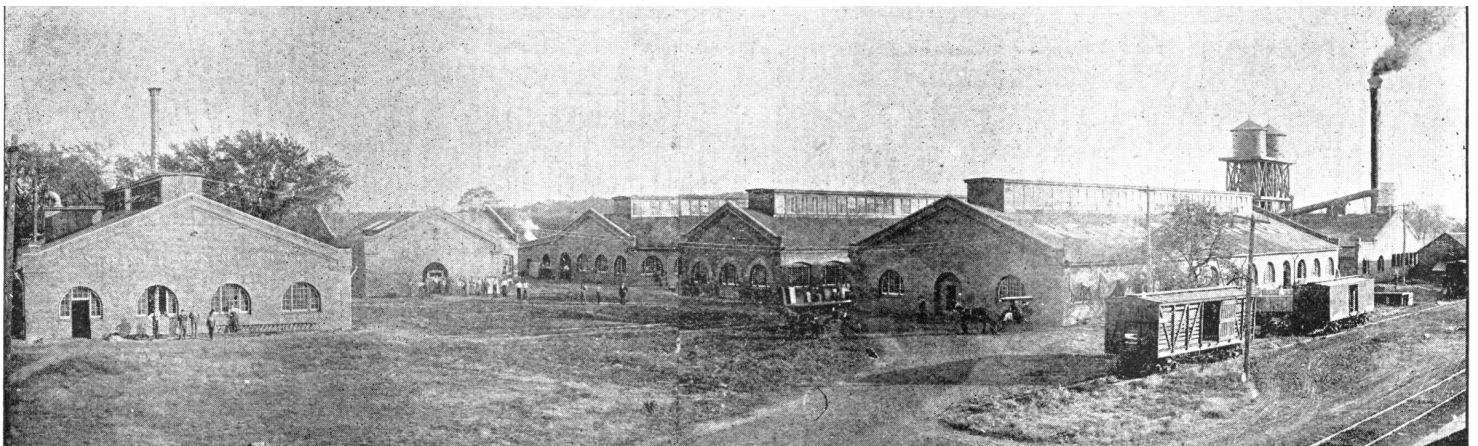
About 200 yards from the works begins the residence portion of Leclaire. The situation is a beautiful one, level, but not flat; flanked on either side by heavy oak woods. The village is laid out with winding streets, which are paved with cinders, and broad sidewalks and trees on either side. The building sites are laid out in lots of about one-third of an acre in size. On these the company builds houses for employes who wish to buy, and a few to rent. The houses are all good cottage designs, not all uniform, and are surrounded by yards set in grass, flowers and shrubbery. Every house is supplied with water under pressure, and with electric light, and the streets are electric lighted.

The houses are sold on installment payments, averaging about \$15 a month. They are sold in fee simple, subject to no other restriction than a building line, and to be used for residential purposes. There are in the village a kindergarten, a school, a library, a billiard room, and a bowling alley; all of which are free, not only to the residents of Leclaire, but to everyone. A new school house and lecture hall has been erected the present year. There is a co-operative store, which is owned and managed by its members, which are not confined to the residences of Leclaire, nor to employes of the company.

The company has for ten years conducted its business on a profit-sharing plan; during that time having distributed over



A rare photograph of the Leclaire Co-operative Store which was located at the corner of Wolf and Leclaire Streets on the north side of the factory complex.



LECLAIRE IN 1895

\$75,000 as dividends on men's wages. A large portion of the employes are stockholders in the corporation. Wages paid out during the present year to their workmen living in Edwardsville and Leclaire will amount to \$100,000. The investment of the company at this place in buildings improvements, machinery and material is about \$100,000.

The company also owns works in Mound City and St. Louis, and has its main office at the latter place. The officers of the company are: N. O. Nelson, president; G. A. Wells, vice president; L. D. Lawnin, secretary. The plant at Leclaire is managed by department superintendents, or foremen, each of which has a specified duty to perform and is responsible for his department. C. F. Wieland is superintendent, and William Shaw, foreman of the machinery department; Charles Harkins, superintendent of the brass shop; Fred Merkel, of the copper shop; William Held, of marble shop; M. M. Flannigan, of cabinet shop, and W. B. Thomas, of varnish room. J. F. Stillwell has charge of the office.

The entertainment and social features of Leclaire are in the broadest sense educational, as well as recreative. The school, or educational building, recently erected, is open to all residents of Leclaire and Edwardsville alike. A manual training department and night school affords boys and young men who are employed during the daytime an opportunity to extend their knowledge. The lectures, concerts and entertainments are free. Professors, preachers, lawyers, musicians and readers from Edwardsville, St. Louis, and as far off as Boston, have given their time and talent, the list of contributors containing such names as Dr. Edward Everett Hale, Prof. John Fiske, Rev. W. D. P. Bliss, Rev. Frank Tyrell, Dr. John Snyder, Rabbi Sale and others.

The school is in charge of E. N. Plank, who is assisted by Miss Olive Thomas, in the intermediate and Miss Callie Colt, in the primary departments. N. O. Nelson instructs a class in book keeping, and Geo. W. Wilder, one in mechanical drawing. The school and library are under supervision of a board of directors, composed of W. B. Thomas, president; Chas. Wilson, secretary; Fred Merkel, treasurer; Chas. Vollintine and Joseph Rizzoli.

The Pastime Club looks after physical exercise and recreation. It has comfortable quarters, equipped with gymnastic

appliances, and also provided with a bowling alley and billiard and pool tables. Edward M. Hendricks is president, and A. M. Latham, secretary.

The Leclaire Band has become a popular organization. It was organized in January, 1892, with six members, viz: W. B. Thomas, Edward Weber, George Ryan, Fred Pfeiffer, Rolland Van Hyning and Wm. McNeilly, all employees of the company. The membership has been increased, and at present is 23, and

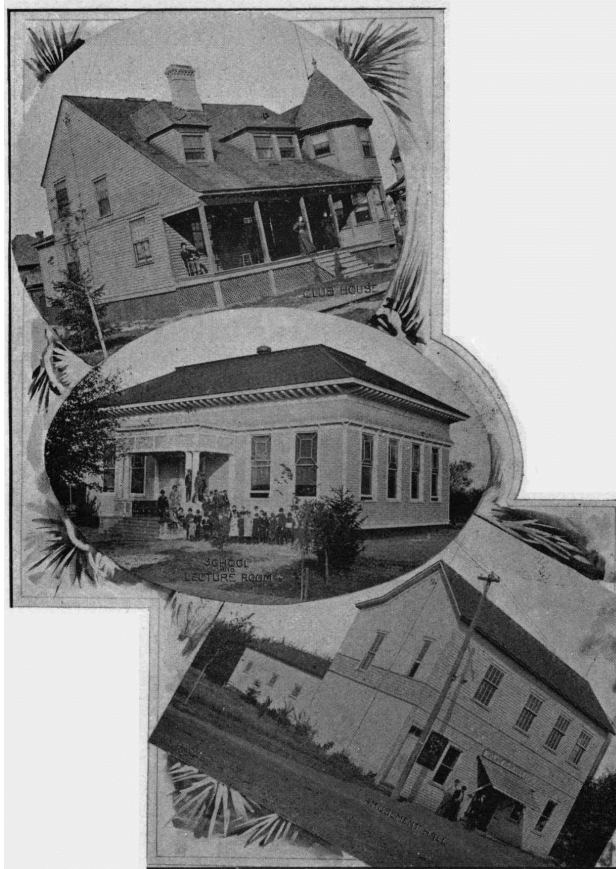
the officers are: W. B. Thomas, president and leader; Thos. Walton, vice president; Albert Mays, treasurer; Rolland Van Hyning, secretary. The band has entered several contests, and during the past summer won prizes at Staunton and Marine.

The Co-operative Association which conducts a provision and meat market, on the co-operative plan, is officered by W. B. Thomas, president; F. W. Casper, vice president; Ira Healy, secretary; Roy Denny, treasurer; and a board of trustees composed of Ross Roedecker, John Nix, R. E. Thomas, F. W. Casper, W. B. Thomas, G. W. Perry and Samuel Schneider. Joseph H. Miller has charge of the business.

Two unions are maintained by the employes: The International Woodworkers Union was organized April 17, 1895, with 30 charter members, and meets twice a month, on the first and third Wednesdays. The officers are: Joseph Stieren, president; Wm. McNeilly, vice president; Julius Horstmann, recording secretary; Otto Langwisch, financial secretary; John Hess, treasurer; Edwin Suppiger, Thos. Foster, August Fromm, trustees.

Local No. 37, United Brotherhood of Brass and Composition Metal Workers, Polishers and Buffers, is a branch of the national union and was organized November 17, 1894, with 23 charter members. The present officers are: Louis E. Seifert, president; Thos. R. Walton, recording secretary and statistician; Wm. Peiper, financial secretary; Chas. Ohms, treasurer; James O'Connor, inside guard; Edward McLean, doorkeeper; Wm. Steiner, Robt. Haley and Edward M. Hendricks, trustees.

Mr. Nelson is a believer in co-operation of labor and capital. He is an ardent advocate of workmen's associations and of equitable association between labor and capital. The enterprise is closely linked with the present marked prosperity of Edwardsville and its future.



From the Industrial Edition, this image depicts the community buildings of Leclaire. From the top, the Club House which served as a hotel in the early years, the new School House and the Bowling/Billiards Hall. (All photos with this article courtesy of Madison County Historical Society.)