



FRIENDS OF LECLAIRE

NEWSLETTER

June 2016

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FRIENDS OF LECLAIRE CELEBRATES SILVER ANNIVERSARY!

On Dec. 12, 1990, the last meeting of the Leclaire Centennial Committee was held at the home of Chairman Karen Hangsleben at 930 Holyoake Road. It was announced that beginning in 1991, a new organization, Friends of Leclaire, would be organized. An organizational meeting was held April 25, 1991, and the first official meeting was on June 18, 1991, at the home of Jack and Janet Foehrkolb at 515 Hadley Avenue at the south-east corner of Leclaire.

Those present at the first meeting, most still active in the organization today, were Bob Blain, Mary Blain, Bennett Dickman Sr., Jack Foehrkolb, Janet Foehrkolb, Jim Fralinger, Bob Gill, Andrew Hughes, Jean Hughes, Steve Hughes, Diane Jacober, Betty McKinnon, and Bonnie Wehrend.

The name for the new organization was suggested by Jim Fralinger, and the first Friends of Leclaire newsletter was published by Bob Blain in October 1991. The first officers in the organization were Co-Presidents Janet Foehrkolb and Jean Hughes, Treasurer Mary Blain, and Secretary Diane Jacober.

According to that first newsletter, the purposes of Friends of Leclaire were to “support and encourage park improvements and events and to promote an appreciation of the histo-

ry of the Leclaire neighborhood.” Friends of Leclaire has far surpassed those modest goals in the years since then with the help of many incredible volunteers.

In October 1991, they held an “Old Fashioned Picnic” at Leclaire Park, but the following year, in 1992, the first Leclaire Parkfest and Volksmarch was held on October 25.



An 1899 picnic in Leclaire with members of the St. Louis Bellamy Club. N. O. Nelson is seated at center front. Photo courtesy of the Madison County Historical Society.

In 2007, thanks to Steve Brockmeyer, Friends of Leclaire created its first website. It’s been upgraded since then, with version 3.0 due to launch in a few weeks. The website has proven useful for students of Leclaire history, neighborhood residents, people seeking information on their genealogy, and those just interested in history. Friends of Leclaire also serves as an informal help center, receiving many calls and e-mails with requests for recommendations and information.

Friends of Leclaire will celebrate its 25th anniversary on June 5th with a members only picnic at the “scene of the crime,” 515 Hadley Avenue, where the first Leclaire meeting was held in 1991. Invitations were sent out to members in May. Many thanks to Bob and Ellen Nickrent who will not only serve as hosts, but also suggested the event as a celebration of this special milestone.

Happy Birthday, Friends of Leclaire!

ICE CREAM SOCIAL AT LECLAIRE PARK BAND CONCERT

Join Friends of Leclaire on Sunday, June 26, at 4 p.m. for the annual Leclaire Park summer concert by the Edwardsville Municipal Band. To celebrate the 25th anniversary of the founding of Friends of Leclaire, there will be free ice cream (while supplies last) for concert attendees.

The Edwardsville Municipal Band has been entertaining residents of Edwardsville for over a century. Musicians must pass auditions to qualify and the band has been supported by a tax levee since the 1920s. The band marches in parades, performs at special functions and holds weekly concerts during the summer at City Park on Thursday evenings.

Join us for music and a cup of Culver’s ice cream on Sunday, June 26. Maybe we’ll even sing Happy Birthday!

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Coming Soon

Fishing Derby at Leclaire Lake

The annual Fishing Derby at Leclaire Park, hosted by the Edwardsville Parks and Recreation Department, is scheduled for June 25, 10 a.m. – Noon for kids aged 15 and under. Registration for the event begins at 9:30 a.m. at the park. Go to www.cityofedwardsville.com for details under City Departments-Parks and Recreation. The event is free, but all children must be accompanied by an adult.

Free Fishing Lessons

A representative from the Illinois Department of Natural Resources will provide free two-hour fishing lessons through Edwardsville Parks and Recreation on June 21 and 23 at Leclaire Lake. Participants must be aged 15 or younger and must be accompanied by an adult. For registration information, go to www.cityofedwardsville.com under City Departments-Parks and Registration or call 692-7538. Preregistration is required.

Leclaire Parkfest

City applications for the 25th Annual Leclaire Parkfest have been submitted and approved as the City of Edwardsville and Edwardsville Parks and Recreation Department continue to be very supportive of the festival. The date for the 2016 Leclaire Parkfest is October 16, the third Sunday in October.

Vendor applications for the festival will be posted to the FOL website by July 1. Vendors must be local not-for-profit organizations or artisans. No commercial applications are accepted.

After more than 20 years, the DAR is retiring from the book business, but the Parkfest Book Sale will continue with proceeds benefiting the American Cancer Society.



The Fishing Derby at Leclaire Lake is always a popular event. Above the kids receive some lessons in fishing safety from an IDNR employee before they begin at the 2015 Fishing Derby.

FOL at Goshen Market

Volunteers are needed to work the FOL Community Service table at the Goshen Market on July 16 and August 20. Please call 618-656-1294 if you are able to volunteer. New volunteers are always paired with an experienced worker. Weather cancelled FOL participation at the May market so FOL will make their 2016 market debut on June 18.

Free House History Workshop

Curious about your historic home? A free workshop on how to research historic Edwardsville houses will be held on Monday, June 20, at 7 p.m. at the Edwardsville Public Library. The program, by local historian Cindy Reinhardt, is a joint project of the Edwardsville Historic Preservation Commission and Edwardsville Public Library. Reinhardt has researched well over a hundred Edwardsville buildings in recent years.

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 PM 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

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| Jun 10-11 | FOL at Route 66 Festival |
| Jun 14 | 7 pm FOL meeting |
| Jun 18 | FOL at Goshen Market |
| Jun 21/23 | Fishing lessons at Leclaire Park |
| Jun 25 | Fishing Derby at Leclaire Park |
| Jun 26 | 4 pm Band Concert and Ice Cream Social at Leclaire Park |
| Jul 1 | Parkfest Applications available |
| Jul 12 | 7 pm FOL meeting |
| Jul 16 | FOL at Goshen Market |

205 Franklin Avenue - The Joseph A. Long House

In January, 1921, Joseph and Marian Long with their four daughters moved into a new bungalow at 205 Franklin Avenue. It was built by contractor John Schwager whose construction company was building more houses than any other company in Edwardsville at that time. Many of them, including Schwager's own home at 210 Franklin Avenue, were on the west side of Troy Road in Leclaire.

Joseph A. Long was one of two men of the same name living in Edwardsville at that time.

But unlike the other Joseph A. Long, this one lived in Leclaire and was born in 1884. When he was nine years old his family immigrated to the United States from England. He was a mining engineer who by 1908 had found his way to Bay City, Michigan, where he met and married Josephine Marian Roueche. Mrs. Long went by her middle name, Marian, and was one of four daughters born to a Bay City innkeeper and his wife.

The Longs moved to Edwardsville in April 1919 when Joseph was hired by the Madison Coal Company.

By that time the family had four daughters, the oldest being ten years old. They rented a house outside of Leclaire until purchasing their new home on Franklin Avenue.

The Longs were a family of affluence compared with others in Leclaire. They travelled often and every summer went to Cromwell, Minnesota, to their cottage on Eagle Lake to escape the hottest months of summer. They often attended ballgames in St. Louis and their daughters had active social lives.

In the late 1920s, Joseph took a position as salesman for a mining equipment company that required travel through all the northern Midwestern states. Since the company was headquartered in Terre Haute, Indiana, after their youngest daughter, Edith, finished school, Joseph and Marian moved to Indiana in 1935. By then two of the girls were married to Edwardsville boys, Arlene to

B. Murray Overbeck and Marian to Rodney Blake. Arlene's wedding reception was held at the house on Franklin Avenue in 1930. Dorothy and Edith both moved with their parents to Terre Haute and later to Columbus, Ohio. In 1939, Dorothy married Roland Raffaele, who was born in Glen Carbon, but by then both of their families had moved from Madison County.

The Longs retained ownership of the house on Franklin Avenue until 1946. During that time there were several tenants, including, for a short time, their daughter, Arlene, and her husband.

After 1946, there were a series of owners who for unknown reasons did not keep the house for long. For a dozen years, 1952-1964, it was owned by members of the Kayser family, but none occupied the home. In October 1964, the house became owner-occupied again when it was purchased by the Herschel Jones family. The family would own the house for a number of years, but after only a year in the home, the patriarch of the family met with an untimely death. In October 1965 Herschel Jones became the fifth man

killed in accidents during construction of the new SIUE campus. He was a 38-year-old father of four children.

As with most Leclaire homes built after 1920, this house was not built for a N. O. Nelson Company employee, and was probably not even built specifically for the Long family although they were the first occupants. It was built on one of many lots owned by the contractor who took out a loan of \$3,500 to build the house. That mortgage was turned over to the Longs when they purchased the house. As a result, although the Longs purchased and moved into the house in 1921, the deed was not filed at the court house until 1927 when the Longs refinanced the mortgage. Although the house has had many owners over the years, it was well-constructed by a prominent contractor and still presents an attractive appearance as it nears the century mark.



New Friends of Leclaire Board

At the 2016 Annual Meeting of Friends of Leclaire in April, two new members were elected to the FOL Board. FOL is grateful to returning board members as well as to new volunteers for offering their time and service. FOL also thanks retiring board members Ashley McLendon and Syvella Gregory for their past service. The 2016 FOL Board includes:

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| Mike Reinhardt | President |
| William Krause | Vice-President |
| Theresa Morrison | Secretary |
| Jim Milgrim | Treasurer |
| Bob Nickrent | Trustee |
| Al Pauli | Trustee |
| Cindy Reinhardt | Trustee |

Nature Classroom Planned for Children's Museum

The Edwardsville Children's Museum (ECM), at 722 Holyoake Road, has plans for a "Nature Classroom" on the museum grounds. The new classroom at the former Leclair Schoolhouse will allow children to explore and learn about the living world that surrounds them. According to Operations Director Lindley White, "This is not just something for ECM." Like other Edwardsville parks, the area will be open from dawn to dusk and no admission will be charged.

Community involvement is key to securing funding. Donations are accepted and there is a brick program (three sizes) for bricks or stepping stones for the outdoor classroom. Information can be found on the home page of the Edwardsville Children's Museum website.

Children, nature, and education - one can only imagine that Leclair's founder, N. O. Nelson, would approve of this project!

ECM SUMMER SCHEDULE

Also new at the ECM are expanded summer hours, special play times, camps, workshops, and more to entertain children of all ages throughout the summer. Details can be found on their website at www.edwardsvillechildrensmuseum.org or you can call 618-692-2094.



Recent News

New FOL Website

Within the next few weeks, Friends of Leclair will launch a new and improved website. Several features of the current website will no longer work after 2017, but the price for a new website was prohibitive for a small organization like ours. FOL Vice-President, William Krause, offered to create the new site at no cost. As a result of his research and work, by mid-June, FOL will launch a new and improved website. The FOL Board was given a sneak preview and is excited and pleased with the results.

Unless you were a programmer, making changes to the old website was difficult. The new site is much more user friendly so FOL will be able to add more features. The new website will be interactive, connecting to our facebook account, for example, and will also provide additional information for users.

The enhanced site will bring a better user experience by providing even more history for educators, school children, and students of history. A page with community service resources has been added to give Leclair residents a one stop place to find dates for local trash pick-up, contact information for the Leclair alderman, a list of recommended contractors who specialize in historic preservation, and more, all in one place. There will also be a bibliography of sources to research your Leclair home. Once the site goes live, we welcome recommendations for additions.

An announcement will be made on the "Historic Leclair" facebook page when the new website goes "live." Friends of Leclair is grateful to Will Krause whose work in creating the new website will save the organization thousands of dollars.

Pictures on Facebook

Often events in Leclair occur between newsletters, and in those cases announcements and photographs from those events are posted on the FOL facebook page: "Historic Leclair." The page will soon be linked to the FOL website and we encourage area residents to contribute with pictures of Leclair activities or a special photograph of Leclair Park. Of course submission of historic Leclair pictures is also encouraged!

Leclair Park Clean-Up

On April 16, a group of enthusiastic FOL volunteers spent a few hours pulling trash out of Leclair Lake and planting flowers. Additional photographs can be found on the Historic Leclair facebook page.



Back (l-r) Rob Nickrent, Mark Hartman, Jim Milgrim
Front: Al Pauli, Mike Reinhardt, Kim Pauli and Pattie Sommerfelt