



FRIENDS OF LECLAIRE NEWSLETTER

December 2013

Volume 23 No. 4

Leclaire Parkfest 2013

It was another great year for Leclaire Parkfest! Good food, toe-tapping music, wonderful vendors and exhibitors, beautiful weather, plus great volunteers make an unbeatable combination.

Thank you to all our volunteers, vendors and patrons as well as to the Edwardsville Parks Department and Edwardsville Police Department who always go above and beyond. As always we are grateful to all those who live in the neighborhood who tolerate the traffic and the crowds for a Sunday afternoon each October.

All of us working together made the 22nd Annual Leclaire Parkfest a wonderful success! Thank you!

Holiday Social - December 10th

Members of Friends of Leclaire are invited to join us for our Holiday Social at 953 Hale Avenue, one of our beautiful historic Leclaire homes. The Hickman family will be our hosts at the annual open house on Tuesday evening, December 10th at 7 pm. This members only event is a potluck of appetizers, desserts and other finger foods. All dues paying members of Friends of Leclaire are invited to stop by and wish a Merry Christmas to friends and neighbors. Please RSVP to 656-1294 if you plan to attend.

The Hickman home is a beautiful brick bungalow built in 1924. A history of the Hale Avenue house appears on page 3 of this issue.

Children's Museum Needs Your Help!

For ten years the Children's Museum at Edwardsville, located in the 1895 Leclaire School House, has brought education disguised as entertainment to the children of our area. But it was recently announced that without an infusion of cash, they will have to soon close their doors.

This would simply be a shame. One only has to visit the museum to see the joy it brings to children. Whether they are playing in the store or the doctor's office, watching themselves as they broadcast the news, expanding their imaginations with dress-up costumes and puppets or visiting the science room, there is something fun and exciting for each child.

Some children rush from place to place, unable to decide among the many creative stations, while others stop at the first place they see and don't want to leave. But it's OK. The Children's Museum keeps their prices affordable for young families so they can come back again and again. Annual family memberships are also available.

The Children's Museum, like similar organizations, has to

raise about 40% of their budget each year through fundraisers and donations.

Unfortunately since the 2008 recession, fundraising has not been as successful as they had hoped, forcing them to dip into reserves until their finances became critical. If they can reach their goal of \$100,000 their exhibit and reserve funds will be restored. Fundraising will still be necessary each year, but they will be in a position to educate and entertain the children of Edwardsville for many years to come. If you can, please consider helping the museum through a donation, by participating in fundraisers, or by visiting with your children or grandchildren.

To donate, go to edwardsvillechildrensmuseum.org/ and look for the box with the yellow daisies that says "Donate Today" or send a check to:

The Children's Museum
722 Holyoake Road
Edwardsville, IL 62025

For more information call 618-692-2084.



House History Contest

FOL members are encouraged to enter our Leclaire House History Contest to learn the history of their Leclaire home. To enter, send your name, address and phone number to

friends@historic-leclaire.org with the subject line "House History Contest." Please indicate which house you want us to research. Winning addresses are drawn randomly, four times per year. The winner this issue is Alan Vest of 805 Troy Road. See the history on page 4.

CHRISTMAS SHOPPING WITH FOL!

FOL has a variety of merchandise available for holiday gifts. There are hoodies, t-shirts and sweatshirts in a variety of colors and sizes for \$12-\$25, books on Leclaire (\$15-\$23.50), a DVD about Leclaire, and Leclaire fabric shopping bags (\$4). Leclaire merchandise & gift memberships can be purchased by contacting FOL President Mike Reinhardt at 618-656-1294.

FOL MEMBERSHIP

Thank you to all those who renewed or joined Friends of Leclaire at Leclaire Parkfest. Your support is greatly appreciated!

Your membership dollars make it possible for Friends of Leclaire to produce this newsletter and complete many gardening projects at Leclaire Park.

To join FOL or give a gift membership this Christmas, send a check for \$15 with your name address, phone and e-mail address to FOL, P. O. Box 644, Edwardsville, IL, 62025.

Please note that FOL members are not required to live in Leclaire. About half of our membership consists of former Leclaire residents or folks with an interest in history.

Leclaire newsletters are mailed to recipients of gift memberships who reside outside of Leclaire.

CLG GRANT: History of Leclaire is Documented

You may have noticed someone on your street taking photographs of houses in the last few months.

Edwardsville's Historic Preservation Commission was awarded a Certified Local Government grant by the State of Illinois last Spring to be used in surveying the buildings of Leclaire while preparing a re-submission of the district for the National Register.

Leclaire is one of the largest historic districts in the country, but because the application to the registry was submitted so long ago, it is incomplete by today's standards.

Architectural historian Michael Allen of Preservation Research Office in St. Louis was hired to prepare a new registry application. (preservationresearch.com) Part of this process is to document the architectural design of every house in Leclaire as well as determine the date each house was built. In many cases the date will be an approximation based on architectural style, but whenever possible, exact information will be utilized.

Since it is a matching grant, HPC Commissioners

are assisting with research to determine construction dates of the homes. Their time counts as a match for the grant, reducing the funds required from the city.

A first draft of the documentation is due in December, but as these things tend to move slowly, it could be a year or more before it has been completed and approved by the National Parks Service. After completion, it will be posted to the National Parks Service website. We'll notify you when it is available and provide a link from our web site.



The Bardelmeier House at 216 Franklin Avenue was built in 1930 for newlyweds Oscar and Alice Allen Bardelmeier.

New Source for Researching Your Leclaire House

A new resource for determining the age and original owners of Leclaire homes has been developed by Cindy Reinhardt while working on the above project. It provides an index of Nelson's Leclaire land sales after 1890, an index by street of city directory information from 1907-1940, and information on houses previously researched. Call 656-1294 for information if you are planning to research your home's history.

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

Dec 10 FOL Holiday Social

Jan 14 NO Meeting

Feb 11 FOL Business Meeting

Friends of Leclaire
P. O. Box 644
Edwardsville, IL 62025
Web: historic-leclaire.org
618-656-1294

953 Hale Avenue - The Edward Poos House



953 Hale Avenue in 1974

The home at 953 Hale Avenue was a wedding gift for Edward Poos and his bride, Wilma Smith Poos, from their families.

His parents paid for the new house which was completed in the summer of 1924. Her parents fully furnished the home down to the china. Their granddaughter, Diane Wolfe, said her grandmother was proud of the fact that the furnishings were of such quality that Mrs. Poos never had to buy a new sofa.

Edward and Wilma would enjoy their home in LeClaire together for over 50 years, although not without hard times.

Edward began his professional career as a banker, but was laid off during the Depression. He went seven

long years without a full time position. He was Edwardsville's City Clerk for two years, then was elected as City Treasurer, serving from 1937 to 1961.

Their home on Hale Avenue saw them through the hard times. They took out a mortgage to make up for the shortfall in income for their growing family. His granddaughter remembers when he was finally able to pay off the mortgage debt incurred during the Depression.

Edward and Wilma were both natives of Madison County. His parents owned a large farm near Fruit Station, but moved to 901 Troy Road in LeClaire when he was very young. Her family lived on North Main Street and her father was an officer of the Palace Store, a comfortable position in its own right, but her mother's family, the Ahrens, also contributed to the family's prosperity.

Edward was a member of one of Edwardsville's most exclusive organizations, the Last Man's Club. Formed in 1945, the group of World War One veterans met annually for a dinner on the eve of George Washington's birthday. Although at its inception the group was to meet until there was only

one man left, in 1977 they disbanded. There were still 20 of the original 69 left, but with an average age of 80 years, it was getting more difficult to attend.

Edward and Wilma had two daughters, Alyne and Doris, who grew up in the house. Alyne married Pvt. Melvin Trebing, a young man from Glen Carbon, on Christmas Day in 1943. After the war, they established a home, first on Holyoake Road, and later at 111 McKinley Avenue in LeClaire.

Edward passed away in 1976 and Wilma in 1982. Their daughter Doris, who never married, lived at the house on Hale Avenue until the early 1990s.



Edward and Wilma Poos with their daughter Doris (center) on the front porch of 953 Hale. (Photos courtesy of Diane Wolfe)

1924 Wedding of Edward and Wilma Poos

July 25, 1924

Edwardsville Intelligencer

Married Last Evening

A simple but attractive home wedding took place last evening at the home of Mr. and Mrs. William Smith of North Main street when their daughter, Miss Wilma, was united in marriage to Edwin (Edward) H. Poos. The impressive double ring ceremony was performed at 8 o'clock by Rev. H. Rahn, pastor of the Eden Evangelical church in the presence of fifty relatives and friends.

The ceremony was performed before a mantle of ferns and gladiolas, and the interior of the home was decorated with cut flowers in a color scheme of pink and white. Prior to the ceremony, Miss Laura Rahn sang "O Promise Me."

As Mrs. Alvin C. Bohm played the wedding march, the bridal party entered

the room. First came the maid of honor, Miss Malinda Poos, sister of the groom. She was followed by Miss Amanda Smith, as bridesmaid, and Christ Jahns, the best man. The bride descended the stairs on the arm of her father, who gave her in marriage, and was met at the altar by the groom.

The bride was lovely in a dress of gray flowered chiffon, in beaded effect. She wore silver slippers and carried a shower bouquet of bridal roses.

Miss Poos wore pale green French voile trimmed with wide lace and carried a bouquet of pink roses.

Miss Smith wore blue French voile trimmed with lace and carried a bouquet of Ophelia roses.

Following the ceremony, and the extending of congratulations, a luncheon was served.

Mr. and Mrs. Poos departed immedi-

ately on a honeymoon to Colorado and Oklahoma, to be gone several weeks. Upon their return they will take up their residence in LeClaire, where the groom has erected and fitted a handsome bungalow.

Mrs. Poos is one of the city's most charming and attractive young ladies. She has a very pleasant personality and has a large circle of friends in this vicinity. She is the oldest daughter of Mr. and Mrs. William Smith, prominent residents of this city.

The groom is the son of Mr. and Mrs. William F. Poos and has a wide acquaintanceship in this vicinity. He served overseas during the World War, and is active in the affairs of Eden Evangelical church and the American Legion. He is assistant cashier of the Citizen's State and Trust Bank, and has been connected with the bank in this capacity for several years.

805 Troy Road: The Stolte - Vest House

The two-story brick home at 805 Troy Road has a decidedly different appearance today than when it was built. When constructed as an investment property circa 1903, it was not a brick house.

In the mid-1920s the Richards Brick Company began offering “face brick veneers.” There were two houses in Edwardsville, 610 Hillsboro Avenue and 805 Troy Road, that served as advertising models for this work.

An advertisement on May 1, 1934, read, “Watch the progress of the modernization by Face Brick Veneer of the residence at 805 Troy Road. Look at this house before and after. Learn how a really permanent job of modernizing may be done at a reasonable cost – a job that will end painting and up-keep worries forever.”

On May 7, a new ad asked, “Are you watching the progress of the work at 805 Troy Road?”

And a few weeks later, on May 22, “Face Brick Veneer transforms an old frame or stucco house into a modern Face Brick House with no more worries about painting. The job just about completed at 805 Troy Road is an example of what can just as readily be done with any other old house.”

The house was not so old when this change was made, only a little over 30 years since construction. Henry and Elizabeth Langwisch bought the lot in 1901, hired carpenters to build a house, then sold it in 1904 for \$1,750. They were a well-known Edwardsville couple who invested heavily in real estate.

Henry, a Civil War veteran, was a coal miner who served as street commissioner of Edwardsville in the 1890s and several terms as alderman of the fourth ward. He was active in several lodges and with the Edwardsville Fire Department, but the avocation he became best known for was as a reader. He was said to have read all 6,000 volumes in the Edwardsville Public Library.

Henry and Elizabeth Langwisch never lived at 805

Troy Road, nor did any of a succession of owners until 1919 when it was purchased by a retiring Pin Oak Township farmer and his wife.



805 Troy Road

Herman and Elizabeth Stolte, Jr. were like many Leclair families, in that they found a home in an area near family. Their daughter, Ida and her husband purchased a house at 815 Troy Road in August, 1919, and Mrs. Stolte’s brother, William Voss, lived a few blocks away on Franklin Avenue. (The story of the murder of her nephew, Nelson Voss, was in the last newsletter.)

The Stoltes had four children, two sons, Harry and Edwin, who established homes outside Leclair and two daughters, Amanda and Ida, who resided in the village. After their children were all married and on their own, Herman and Elizabeth

rented the upstairs rooms as a separate apartment.

Ida and her family lived at 815 Troy Road until the early 1950s when they moved to 225 N. Buchanan Street. Her husband, Arthur Boeker, was a banker who eventually became president of the Edwardsville National Bank.

Amanda and her husband, Otto Krug, set up housekeeping nearby at 200 Franklin Avenue after their marriage in 1926.

Herman Stolte died in December, 1930. His wife Elizabeth who suffered from complications due to diabetes, moved in with Otto and Amanda Krug on Franklin Avenue where she died less than a year after Herman. The sisters bought the house from their parent’s estate and it once more became a rental property.

In 1947, Robert Vest, an accountant, and his wife, Iris, moved into the house. The young couple rented for several years before purchasing the house in late December of 1951.

The Vests had three sons in the late 1940s and early 1950s. Robert passed away in the 1990s and his wife Iris in 2002. Today their home remains in the family, home to a second generation of the Vest family, a continuing legacy of nearly 65 years.



Herman and Elizabeth Voss Stolte of Pin Oak Township, circa 1890.
(Photo courtesy of Clifford and Elizabeth Stolte)

