



It's coming!!! The transformation from a farmhouse-on-the-hill to a museum is rapidly approaching. The progress at the "large" house in five short weeks is truly amazing; all new wiring, all new plumbing, new walls, insulation, drywall, and paint. All this is due to the HUNDREDS of hours donated by dedicated volunteers. I don't dare mention them by name here for fear of missing someone, but their day of recognition will come soon.

However, there is still MUCH to do. As soon as the weather breaks, there's a garden to plant, shrubs to prune and stumps to remove. The shutters on the museum need to be removed, primed, painted and then remounted, outside scraping and painting of the "small" house also needs to be done. And there is more I am sure.

And please keep in mind that we are MOVING the museum...that will require several trucks (large and small), and MANY extra hands to accomplish. So please, contact Michelle and let her know when YOU (and a friend or two) are available. WE NEED YOUR HELP. I appreciate any amount of time you can give, an hour, a day, GREAT.

Many of us have worked hard on this project. OUR NEW MUSEUM will be a special treat to the City of Sycamore and to the entire community. The work done at the Engh Farm since last September has been a journey indeed. Please consider my above request for your assistance so WE can complete our journey and present to the people of Sycamore the Smithsonian Exhibit, "**Journey Stories**" on May 31, 2009.

Thank you,

Tom Oestreicher

Get in motion and visit *Journey Stories* at the Sycamore History Museum

Americans are all about going places. We savor our freedom to travel, and we have always been an intensely mobile society. That mobility spurred the development of transportation modes and systems: trains, cars, boats, and airplanes; trails, roads, and massive highways—all to make "getting there" as easy as possible.

Where have YOU gone? How did you get there? We all look back on our travels and recall our own journey stories. Whether we remember moving from one city to another, driving across the country in the family station wagon, traveling from Chicago to Los Angeles on a train, or taking our first trip on an airplane, everyone has a tale to tell.

Or perhaps there are stories in your family of how your ancestors came to America, how they made the arduous journey, where they settled once they arrived. From Native Americans to recent immigrants, regardless of our ethnic and racial backgrounds, we all bring something to a complex history of travel, immigration and transportation in America.

We want your story, photo or drawing for the exhibit! Submit by April 15 (either my mail or email)

to be included in the exhibit or on the on-line exhibit.





The Newsletter

Published quarterly by

Sycamore History Museum
 308 W. State Street
 Lower Level
 P.O. Box 502
 Sycamore, Illinois 60178
 815.895.5762
 sychist@tbc.net
 www.sycamorehistory.org

Hours:

Closed until May 30, 2009

Journey Stories exhibit hours:
 Starting May 31, 2009
 Tuesday - Sunday
 10:00 - 4:00

Admission:

\$5.00 for adults
 Children 14 and under free

Executive Director

Michelle Donahoe

Directors

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 Vice-President: Jim Lyon
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Board Meetings are held on the first Monday of each month starting at 6:30 p.m. at the Museum. All members are welcome.

A Letter From The Director

I cannot believe it is already March. We have been talking about moving to the Engh Farm and opening "Journey Stories" for so long, it is amazing to see all of the hard work coming together. The progress out at the farm is impressive. Not only have volunteers renovated the small house, the decision was made to also make major renovations at the large house – adding insulation, windows, and taking down some walls!! That work is almost finished! I cannot say thank you enough times to the people who have donated many, many hours on this project. The generosity of our community is truly one of the reasons why Sycamore is so special.

In preparations for our move, the museum is now closed – it is packing time. Our archives will be open on a limited basis, by appointment only.

We continue full steam ahead getting ready for "Journey Stories." Tom Oestreicher and I attended an exhibit workshop in Champaign in early March. It was good to see that we are on track for the May 30 opening. Representatives from the other museums are looking forward to visiting Sycamore and seeing the exhibit for the first time. We will be the model for all of the other museums hosting this exhibit. We are very honored to be the first stop for the exhibit.

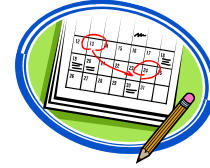
Mark you calendars – STEEPLES OF SYCAMORE is on April 25. This is another great event that reflects Sycamore's community spirit. This year five churches are all opening their doors for us to share their stories and show off their beautiful buildings. We hope to see you there.

Speaking of programs – check out our list of upcoming programs. Take full advantage of the Smithsonian exhibit and its resources! Please bring a friend!

Along with the newsletter you received a brochure about the *Making Our Dream Come True* campaign for the Engh Farm. We are working hard to secure funds for the museum and its future. The money will go towards renovations, capital items – new computers, chairs, tables, etc, as well as a nest egg for the future. We have raised almost \$70,000 with grants and donations. In these tight economic times, we understand that giving is harder to do than in the past. Every bit will help us to achieve our goal. Donations or pledges over two years are being accepted. Thank you in advance for your consideration. The museum is a 501(c)3 non profit.

Finally, with all of this excitement do you feel like you want to jump right in? Great! Check page 5 for all the details about volunteering.

Michelle



Calendar of Events

Steeple of Sycamore April 25 9:00 - 3:00
\$20, \$17 for seniors 65+, \$15 for groups of 10+.
Children under 14 free
 See details on page 5

Garrison Keller Documentary \$5
April 27 at 1:00; April 28 10:30 and 1:00;
April 29 1:00 Sycamore Theater
 Enjoy a documentary about this great story teller.
 Proceeds to benefit the Sycamore History Museum

“History of the Little Seven Conference” Free
April 28 Sycamore High School 7:00 p.m.
 Hear memories about the oldest high school conference in Illinois. Pete Johnson, former principal and coach will share his recollections along with other Sycamore High School Alumni. Dr. Stan Arnold, sports historian from NIU will be moderating. Stories from the audience welcome!

“Illinois Journey Stories” Brown Bag Lunch
Sycamore History Museum
Thursday, May 7 12:00 p.m. Free
 Discover Illinois stories that connect to the national exhibit, “Journey Stories.” Dr. Dennis Cremin, Illinois State historian for this exhibit will be sharing his research. This talk is highly recommended for anyone interested in volunteering!

Grand Opening - Invitation only 6:00 - 8:00 p.m.
Saturday, May 30 “Journey Stories”
 Members, volunteers, and donors sneak preview of “Journey Stories” help us celebrate our new home and new exhibit!

Grand Opening - Public
1:00 - 5:00 p.m.
Sunday, May 31
“Journey Stories”
 Come and see our new exhibit, go on a tour, and just enjoy the new museum.



“Illinois Journey Stories” by Dennis Cremin
Saturday, June 4 1:00 p.m.
 Encore talk about Illinois connections to the “Journey Story” exhibit.

“History of the Illinois Prairie” Brown Bag Lunch
12:00 Free
 Ken Robertson will share the journey of the Illinois prairie and explore how settlers converted it to meet their agricultural needs to survive.

YMCA DAY CAMPS week of June 4
 Call the YMCA for details 815-756-9577

“Quilts and the Underground Railroad” by
Barbara Samuelowitz 7:00 p.m.
Tuesday, June 9 Sycamore Public Library
 Learn amazing stories about how slaves escaped along the underground railroad using codes from quilts.

Sycamore 101 “History of Sycamore’s Rail
Transportation” Charles Stats 7:00 p.m. \$5.00
Thursday, June 11

Sycamore’s history would be very different without the railroads. Charles Stats will share his research and slides showing the great history of rail transportation in Sycamore.



“Journey to the Future”
Family craft 1:00 - 2:00
Free
Saturday, June 13

The exhibit explores our past journeys. Children are encouraged to look to the future and explore how Sycamore will look and how we will travel in 100 years.

Heartland a Folk Music concert 6:30 p.m. Free
Wednesday, June 24
 A family concert at the Engh Farm with David HB Drake. Bring picnic dinner!

And more programs are scheduled for July!

Unless noted programs are at Sycamore History Museum at the Engh Farm

Please note that all programs connected to “Journey Stories” are part of the Museum on Main Street, a collaboration between the Smithsonian Institution and the Illinois Humanities Council. Museum on Main Street is generously supported by the United States Congress.

What have we

been up to?



Oral History Project
 Left: History Students from the Kishwaukee Education Consortium interview Oak Crest residents for "Journey Stories." Right: Fourth graders interview local farmers for the upcoming "Memories from the Farm" exhibit.



A fun time was had by all during "A Fireside Chat with FDR" on January 31.



Al Golden shares "Our Agricultural Heritage" during the **March Brown Bag Lunch**.



Eng Farm Renovations: These photos are of the main house. We have added new windows, insulation, and walls. Painting begins soon!



NEWS & NOTES

How Can I Help?

We are expanding our hours. Now more than ever volunteers are needed!

“Journey Stories” Hours: Tuesday - Saturday 10:00-4:00. For the Fall, we are still determining the hours, but hope to be open at least five days a week.

Greeters/Docents

Volunteers are needed to greet visitors, collect admission, and answer general questions. Docents are needed to provide tours. Training will be provided

Gardeners

The Sycamore Master Gardeners have agreed to work with us as we plan the community and kitchen garden at the Engh Farm. We will need help spring, summer, and fall to maintain the garden. Let us know if you are interested!

Renovation/Moving

Work on the homes continues, and we will need help to move the collection and office.

Archives

We will still need help in the office with the archives and collection.

If you have time, we can find a job for you!!

Anaconda, Diamond Wire and Essex Wire Reunion At Blumen Gardens Sunday, June 28 1:00 p.m.

Are you a former employee or know someone who worked at Anaconda, Diamond Wire or Essex Wire? We are working with Blumen Gardens to host a Reunion this summer. Former employees and their families are encouraged to attend and share their stories about this important part of Sycamore history! Call the Museum at 815-895-5762 for details.



Steeple of Sycamore Historic Church Walk will be April 25 from 9:00 - 3:00. Featured churches include: Bethel Assembly of God, Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints, Federated Church, St. Peter's Episcopal, Sycamore Baptist Church.

There will also be a talk by Dr. Jerry Meyer: “Through a Glass Brightly: A Short History of Stained Glass” at the Federated Church 12:30 p.m.

Tickets are \$20 per person, \$17 for seniors 65+, \$15 for groups of 10 or more. Children under 14 free. For more details visit sycamorehistory.org. Tickets are available in advance and at each church on day of the event.

WISH LIST

As we move to a larger space, we our needs are changing. As you go through Spring cleaning, before you through something out give us a call!

New computers – minimum Pentium 4
Outdoor tent
Mini refrigerator
Chairs and tables - for office and outdoor events
Desks
Craft supplies for hands-on activities
Video camera to record public programs

e - Script

Shop at Schnucks and support the Sycamore History Museum! Simply ask about their e-Script program at customer service. A portion of your purchase will go to the Museum.

SYCAMORE HISTORY MUSEUM



Sycamore Historical Society and Museum
P.O. Box 502
Sycamore, IL 60178
Return Address requested

Nonprofit Organ.
U.S. Postage
PAID
Permit No. 60

SYCAMORE HISTORY MUSEUM



Membership information

Join Us Today

**Receive Free Admission to the Sycamore History Museum and
Receive an invitation to a special "Members Only Sneak Preview"
Of "Journey Stories"**

Individual	\$30	Patron	\$300 - \$499	Benefactor	\$5000+
Family	\$50	Sponsor	\$500 - \$4,999		

Name _____

Address _____

Phone _____ Email _____

Please contact me about volunteer opportunities! _____ Yes _____ No