

Since 2015

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The Chair's Corner



Dear friends,

I'd first like to take a moment to call your attention to someone who has been a major part of our community for several years.

At her retirement reception, she was celebrated for her dedication in the performance of her duties at the Spoon River Partnership for Economic Development on behalf of Fulton County for the past ten years.

She has been involved with the Canton Area Heritage Center project from its inception, as well.

THANK YOU...Dana Smith. And, we look forward to seeing you in our midst as you can now pursue your own favorite activities on which to work!

I attended my first board meeting in October, 2015. We've accomplished so much since. A dedicated group of individuals planned together, worked together and celebrated together when we opened the Heritage Center to visitors, September of 2018.

Happy Retirement to Dana Smith! Among those attending her party, board members Mary and Jack Pollitt, Cheryl Bielema and her husband Ron.

WE NEED MEMBERS!!!

The commitment of many, most for four years, has led us to 2019.

We do have a long journey yet to be traveled. Our *Proof of Concept* must be reinforced by action in the next nine months.

*A stable and regular income base, (i.e., membership dues and annual donations) is of utmost importance. When a dependable and predictable cash flow is established, annual budgets can be created and funds allocated appropriately.

Having this base income will allow us to improve our visibility, expand our open hours, grow our collections, improve our display options, add programs, and eventually, locate a building that will house our expanding collections.

*Grants, large gifts and other fund-raising activities will obviously add to our future planning abilities, too.

Applications for corporate, foundation and government grants all require significant detail. A committee has been formed to pursue these "next steps." We'll introduce the persons involved in a later issue.

In the meantime, we want to focus on building our membership base.

WE NEED MEMBERS!!!

We need you, your relatives, your friends, your co-workers, your employers, your employees, your organizations and your businesses to join and support us on our journey to preserve the first 200 years of our 'shared history.'

I am challenging all readers, current members or not, to join and sign-up two (2) members per month for the next six months. When they join, challenge them to do the same!

Work the numbers... see how many we could have by July. Join us in our Membership Challenge, won't you?

Joe (J.D.) Stone, Chairman

P.S. To assist you, please find a Membership Form on our webpage. You may download and copy for mailing or save the file and email to those you're contacting.

Heritage Center Contact Information

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We monitor frequently, and replies can be expected within 48 hours.

Webpage: www.cantonillinois.org/heritagecenter

Special points of interest:

- FOLLOW OUR PROGRESS IN THIS QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER
- MEET MOVERS AND SHAKERS, THEN AND NOW
- LEARN INTERESTING FACTS ABOUT OUR COMMUNITY
- DISCOVER HOW TO DONATE OR LOAN ITEMS TO THE HERITAGE CENTER

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Newsletter

Graham Hospital Governance

We ended a previous issue's article with sisters, Misses Alice and Caroline Graham, moving back to Canton to oversee the construction of a hospital which was dedicated in 1909. Bylaws specified how board directors were named.

"The initial form of governance sprang from the determined leadership of Misses Alice and Caroline Graham, and has evolved as the hospital encountered greater responsibilities. The sisters decided that a board of directors for their new hospital would come from eight selected churches and fraternal organizations. Upon moving to Canton they recruited one individual from each of these organizations to constitute the first board.

"There are several interesting provisions to the original Bylaws... In addition to the eight members... 'during their lifetime either Miss

A.L. Graham or Miss C.J. Graham, donors of the hospital shall act as a director.' Another article provided grounds for some interesting speculation... 'no person connected with or interested in the manufacture or sale of any kind of spirituous, malt or fermented liquors, or holding any municipal office, nor any physician shall be eligible for membership.'

"The only significant change ever made in the Bylaws regarding governance came in 1970. At this time board membership was loyal to its heritage and took comfort in the combined support of their sponsoring organizations. However, they sought to make the best talent of entire service area eligible to serve... [and] the expertise of physicians which... was not available in the form of a physician fulfilling the legal and moral obligations of an

office [on the board]. Their answer to all of this was to retain original sources of appointment, remove all membership restrictions, and to seek additional members.

"With the 1970 changes the hospital has been able to look to the entire community for its governance. The board was enlarged and new members have brought new energy and insight to its deliberations. The hospital has continued to expand its services. The initial dreams of the donors have been more than realized by the continued dedication of their hospital to the welfare of the community, as well as a memorial to [John and Lydia,] the parents of Alice and Caroline Graham."

*Ken Etcheson, hospital president, 1960-1990, for the **Memories of Canton** publication, 2001. Several more histories are available in Graham Hospital's School of Nursing library.*

OUR MISSION

The mission of the Canton Area Heritage Center (CAHC) is to foster a deeper understanding and appreciation of Canton's and surrounding area's history, culture, and industry.

Upcoming Exhibits

Bill Cook and his early medical equipment at The Radiological Society of North America, 1963.

Bill Cook was a Canton graduate, inventor, and entrepreneur/businessman who didn't forget his hometown when we needed him. We are proud to showcase Cook's early inventions at the center, February-August, compliments of the Cook Group, Inc. of Bloomington, IN.

Spring-time and Easter in Spoon River Country.

Watch for more details about the collections we're seeking to celebrate Spring in the heartland.

'Little Toot' added to International Harvester Collection

[At the 2018 Annual Meeting] board member Jack Pollitt, who had worked at IH and was Plant Manager for 2½ years before it closed, spoke about the history of the two whistles there.

Pollitt said Little Toot was often referred to as the backup since it was used when the main whistle was idled for repairs or cleaning. Usually, repairs were made to the standpipe and guy wires holding Big Toot upright and elevated above the buildings, not the whistle itself, he said.

Over the years, Pollitt said, new rigging was prepared before lowering the main whistle to the roof, and the whistle returned upright and ready for its next sounding. Employees were trained to clean it, adjust valves or make other small repairs to the fittings in short order. Little Toot did not need to be used as much then, he said.

Nonetheless, Little Toot was blown for many years to let employees know they had eight minutes to get to their work stations, so it was known as the "eight-minute whistle." Its sounding also advised workers on the job that their shift soon would end.

Pollitt noted the smaller whistle's location was not known

for 35 years. It disappeared during the closing months of the IH plant in 1983. "It was feared it was destroyed for scrap or lost to this area forever," he said.

"Its re-appearance is welcome and its condition indicates that the caretaker took pride in it and respected its place in history, and we are thankful for that," he added.

"Canton Area Heritage Center is proud to be its new caretaker, keeping it as part of our heritage. Now both IH whistles have come home and will remain... for future generations to know the story of both Big Toot and Little Toot," said Pollitt.

Excerpts from The Fulton Democrat, 11/07/2018

John Froehling, Board Member/
Editor, Fulton Democrat



Meet Mike Walters, Acquisitions Committee Chair

The center benefits from our board members' expertise. Mike stepped up to lead acquisitions. He tells the story of Bill Cook contacting him as they wanted to add historic photos to Canton Harvester Inn's decor. Today, you can see the photographs assembled by Mike at the hotel.

I was raised in the Canton area and my love of Canton history has grown over the years. Early on, my father was interested in finding Canton memorabilia. I can remember trips he made to obtain unique items.

My parents acquiring the Orendorff Mansion and helping them refurbish it also helped fuel my desire to learn more about our town and the famous philanthropists who once resided here. As a result, I have dug into the archives, researched and talked to many people over the years. Now, I'm known as one of the "go-to people" if anyone needs Canton History questions answered.

I own and operate Canton's NAPA Parts store, which was opened in 1959 by my father and uncle, and will soon be 60 years in business.

I am the co-author of two books with Brooks Carver, including The Legacy of Three Families and At the Corner of Union and Prairie, which are based on Canton's founding and the lives of three well-known philanthropists.

I am currently in the process of writing another book about the automotive pioneers in Canton beginning around 1905.

I've coached baseball for the last 27 years in the Canton School District. I'm involved in our community as an Elder at the First Christian Church, am a past YMCA board member, past member of Graham Hospital's Board, including President, and was named, along with my wife Susan, Canton Chamber of Commerce Citizens of the Year in 1994.

I'm asked to speak about Canton-area history at civic organizations, reunions,

church events, school history classes, and other functions throughout our community.

For these reasons... my love of sharing the history of Canton and wanting to preserve our town's historical artifacts... I joined the Canton Area Heritage Center Board. And, I have enjoyed seeing our collections grow.

Mike Walters, Acquisitions Chairman

"THERE IS NOTHING NEW IN THE WORLD EXCEPT THE HISTORY YOU DO NOT KNOW."

HARRY S. TRUMAN

Happy
New Year!



Mike Walters describes his boyhood train set to visitors at the center's holiday exhibit, "Favorite Toys of the Decades."

Congratulations with our Thanks, Kelvin Sampson

Kelvin Sampson, Facilities Committee Chair, and our source of "all-things-museums" was recently **named a Founder** of the Canton Area Heritage Center for his expert guidance and work in all phases of development. His name has been added to a Major Donors plaque in the reception area.

"We have benefited from Kelvin's knowledge of best practices in museum management, his design and construction skills, and his gifts of our logo, signage and the historic timeline at the center," explained Cheryl Bielema, Chair of the Programs Committee.

"Thank you, Kelvin, with sincere thanks from all of us involved in this important effort."



Kelvin Sampson provided the initial blueprint and his remodeling expertise for the Heritage Center.

Canton Area Heritage Center Executive Board



Preserving our history...

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2018 CHRISTMAS EXHIBIT FAVORITE TOYS OF THE DECADES



Thank you to all who contributed their toys for this special exhibit. Kudos to Erika Davis (pictured above) who oversaw our first Christmas exhibit.

