

Since 2015

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### THE CHAIR'S REPORT



**Philip Gregory, Chairman**  
Canton Area Heritage Center  
Executive Board  
Cell: (309) 208-2943

My New Year's resolutions and retirement aren't the only things on my mind today, as I plan this column. I've been busy finishing up my work for the year.

Why? My last day with American Pest Control will be December 27. I've completed over 21 years. [Wishing you a happy, productive retirement, Phil! -- Editor]

My resolutions: I will get more involved and spend more time at the museum. I'll be looking for people to volunteer with us.

In this issue. Read descriptions of eight lesser-known artifacts. Also, learn more about John Keets who became an AIDS activist as he himself contracted the disease.

Front Row: Jack Pollitt, Mary Pollitt, Dana Smith and Debbie Stephenson.

Back Row: Mike Walters, John Froehling, Jim Morgan, John Putman, Mary Lou Kuchan, Harold Rose, Phil Gregory, Dean Gibson and Cheryl Bielema

Not pictured: Erika Davis, Roy Hopper

#### It's time to renew your membership.

You'll find a membership form if you haven't yet renewed or joined us for the first time. If you've already renewed and/or donated for 2022, you are receiving a membership card, with our thanks. We value your support in this important way.

Hope you have a Happy New Year, everybody. -- Phil

P.S. The Senn-Soldwedel Dairy items I'm holding are rare--a paper carton bank and temperature gauge.

### OUR TOAST TO THE NEW YEAR, 2022

"Here's to a bright New Year and a fond farewell to the old; here's to the things that are yet to come, and to the memories that we hold. May you have a prosperous, healthy and happy New Year."

### MUSEUM IN SPOTLIGHT

Canton Main Street chose to put the museum in their December, 2021, SPOTLIGHT. We were featured in their newsletter and on their web page, as well as in local media.

In part, we were recognized for our success in meeting the mission of "fostering a deeper understanding and appreciation of Canton's and the surrounding area's history, culture and industry."

Dana Smith, President of Canton Main Street, made the announcement at our November board meeting. Dana was also among those who helped found the Heritage Center in 2015.

We were given an opportunity to describe our progress and volunteer opportunities. We so appreciate the recognition as we work to preserve, display, and describe Canton's unique history.

Below are our current board members and Dana Smith, CMS President.

**Cheryl Bielema**, Newsletter Editor

### Special points of interest

- FOLLOW OUR PROGRESS IN THIS QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER
- MEET MOVERS AND SHAKERS, THEN AND NOW
- LEARN INTERESTING FACTS ABOUT OUR COMMUNITY
- VOLUNTEER WHERE AND WHEN YOU CAN



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### 2022 Executive Board



Our hours are  
Fridays, 10am-12 noon  
Saturdays, 10am-2pm  
Sundays, 1pm-4pm  
Come see us!

## LESSER-KNOWN ARTIFACTS IN THE HERITAGE CENTER

A museum representative reports monthly on “facts, artifacts, and features” at our local radio station, 94.1 B.Y.S. Kevin Stephenson, a member of the Acquisitions Committee, compiled and shared this list of lesser-known artifacts recently.

### \*\*\*ARTIFICIAL HEART/LUNG PUMP

In the Graham Health System room, there's an artificial heart/lung pump developed in a physiology class at the University of Illinois at Chicago Medical School in the early 1950s. Dr. William Taylor, who later was a long time family practice physician in Fulton County, was a student in that class and was involved with the pump's development.

The pump on display was never functional but used principles later put into use as heart/lung machines were, and still are, used successfully with human patients. We all know the procedure as “heart bypass surgery.” It was first performed later in the 1950s and has since saved millions of lives around the world.

### \*\*\*V-J DAY IN CANTON

We can read in history books about “Victory over Japan (V-J) Day” on August 14, 1945, marking the end of World War II. A display at the Canton Area Heritage Center localizes that day. Professional photographer Elmer Martin of Canton took pictures of a celebration on the Canton square, most likely just minutes after the Japanese surrender was announced by President Truman. The pictures were donated to the museum by the Elmer Martin family. We also have the front page of the *Canton Daily Ledger's* August 14<sup>th</sup> edition, thanks to Dean Gibson of Canton, with the headline “PEACE!”

Two QR Codes will take you to films of other V-J Day celebrations in the U.S. and to a film of the surrender papers being signed on the USS Missouri in Tokyo Bay on September 2, 1945.

### \*\*\*MISSION OAK ENGINEERING TABLE FROM THE P & O FLOW WORKS AND INTERNATIONAL HARVESTER

John L. Smith of Canton just donated the table that was built in 1909. “Mission” was a style of furniture used at the time emphasizing horizontal and vertical lines that highlighted the quality of the wood used.

Engineers used the table to look at blueprints and other drawings stored inside the wooden filing cabinet. Interestingly, it still contains original P & O and IHC blueprints.

It's approximately four feet by four feet...and thirteen inches deep. Then, it opens up to a five-foot-square work area.

### \*\*\*THE DOORS PLAYED IN CANTON SEPTEMBER 13, 1967

The Canton Area Heritage Center has had a “Doors in Canton” display for a long time, but from the Daily Ledger archives at Parlin-Ingersoll

Library, we've found another article about their appearance here that was not part of the original display. A highlight of the article is a brief review by the president of the Canton Community College Student Senate at the time, Dan Kelly. He basically panned the Doors, saying they would not last.

### \*\*\*CHARLIE WRIGHT'S FINAL WBYS BROADCAST

We have a recording of Charlie Wright's 16,929<sup>th</sup>, and final, broadcast from February 16, 2001. He started doing “Around the Square” October 5, 1954. The program plays on a continuous basis at the museum.

### \*\*\*TOM ZABORAC'S CLEVELAND BROWNS NFL CONTRACT

Tom Zaborac was an outstanding athlete at Canton High School who's a member of the Little Giants Hall of Fame. He went on to play football at the University of Illinois. He signed a contract in 1949 with the Cleveland Browns of the National Football League for \$5,000. He never played for them, however. We have the actual contract framed at the museum.

### \*\*\*THE ALTRUISTIC CLUB OF CANTON

The mission of the club is “To alleviate suffering among individuals of Fulton County who are needy and worthy.” We have a display describing the history of the Club, which dates back to 1897.

### \*\*\*CANTON HAD A MINOR LEAGUE BASEBALL TEAM IN 1952

The Canton Citizens were a Class-D franchise that had relocated from Vincennes, Indiana, on June 7, during the 1952 season. Class-D was the lowest level of minor league baseball. The Canton Citizens were members of the Mississippi-Ohio Valley League...the predecessor to today's Central League where the Peoria Chiefs play. While playing in Vincennes, they were known as the “Velvets.”

The Citizens played at Ems Field. They had no affiliation with a major league team as minor league teams do today. In 1952, they had a record of 39 wins and 54 losses while in Canton. Including their time in Vincennes, they were 56 and 68...and finished sixth in the eight-team Mississippi-Ohio Valley League.

The museum has a team picture taken at Ems Field. They were still wearing their Vincennes Velvets uniforms.

Their best hitter was Edward Glide who batted .303 with one home run and 90 RBIs. John Finigan led the team in home runs with three; best pitcher was McPherson Crum, who won twelve games and lost nine with a 4.42 earned run average and 119 strikeouts in 163 innings.

None of the Citizens ever played in the major leagues. The Canton Citizens franchise disbanded following the 1952 season.

The other seven teams in the Mississippi-Ohio Valley League in 1952 were the Centrailia Zeros, Danville Dans, the Decatur Commodores, the Hannibal Stags, the Mattoon Indians, Mount Vernon Kings, and the Paris Lakers.



**Kevin Stephenson**

Acquisitions Committee Member



## WHAT'S NEW AT THE MUSEUM

### Special Christmas Feature: "A Very Merry Homemade Christmas"

We love celebrating Christmas and family traditions. This year, we displayed handmade blankets and quilts, old dolls, doll beds, and handmade toys, wooden cars and trucks by Paul Hurst (a well-known woodworker), cutting board, push toy, and bookshelf crafted at woodworking classes by Noah Davis and his grandpa Joe, and a bird house from the family's barn. We wanted favorite recipes with serving pieces, and the Gregory family cookbook, *Hummingbird Wings with Toast*, and a WWII Army Cookbook with recipes in multiples of 100, were offered. Visitors also found a train and tracks from the 1930s, vintage tin toys, and handmade ornaments and decorations. We thank all those who loaned these keepsakes.



Loaned by Phil Gregory, Connie Ludlum, Jack and Mary Pollitt, Jim Morgan, Cheryl Bielema, Debbie Stephenson, JoAnn Williams, Erica Davis, and Joe and Lydia Davis.



### John Keets, Teen AIDS Activist

John Keets was 15 years old when he was diagnosed with acquired immunodeficiency syndrome (AIDS). He lost his battle with the disease five years later, but in those intervening years, he spoke around the country about the disease and the needs of those similarly infected. It didn't matter to him how people "got" the disease. Their needs for treatments, research and acceptance were the same as his. His own infection was traced to blood transfusions he needed for an inherited blood disorder.

A classmate helped in organizing the John Keets AIDs Walks, raising \$20,000 to donate to the Salk Institute. John attended rallies to speak about AIDs, both locally and nationally. He founded the John Keets Foundation for AIDS Research and Education.

With the help of his mother, Elizabeth Keets, we have created a tribute to John Keets in the museum.



"Remembering John Keets" story was placed on our Facebook page, December 1, World AIDS Awareness Day. More of John's life and pictures were included along with snippets from his mother's journal. Programs Committee member Erika Davis wrote the Facebook article. Read more about this amazing teen there.

## DONORS AND MEMORIALS

We recognize donor Dr. Roland Pettit of Canton for his gift of \$1000 (Founder level). Thank you, "Doc."

And, we honor these former Cantonites as their family has donated to the museum in their memory.

...Karen Phillips Korf, 1938-2021. Class of 1956 (inducted in Florida State Golf Assn. Hall of Fame), by husband Calvin Korf, Nakomis, FL

...Robert Raymond Hubbs, 1936-2021. Class of 1954 (teacher of 45 years; active in civil war preservation), Sunnyvale, CA, by sister Adrienne Cowan, Macomb, IL

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Find us on:  
**facebook®**

We're on the Web:

[www.cantonillinois.org/  
heritage-center](http://www.cantonillinois.org/heritage-center)

## WE HAVE QR CODES AT THE MUSEUM

If you have a QR Code scanner or app on your smartphone, you can point it at the QR code on the display or exhibit and be taken to more information, including pictures, films, and videos relating to that display.

## BOOKS, CEMETERY WALK DVDS (continued in column 3)

Want to learn more about extraordinary people who have made a difference in our community? We have these books available at \$25.00 (includes mailing):

**Legacy: The Story of Three Families**, by Michael Walters and Brooks Carver

**On the Corner of Union and Prairie: Canton Stories**, by Brooks Carver and Michael Walters

**Plowboys to Little Giants**, by Roy Hopper and Brooks Carver

## DO YOU DO NEW YEAR'S RESOLUTIONS



From board member Dean Gibson

## BENEFITS OF A RESOLUTION TO VOLUNTEER

"This new year, make it a point to join a noble cause and volunteer regularly. Giving back to society and signing up for a cause that will benefit the underprivileged will have a positive effect on your mental wellbeing.

"Besides reducing stress, volunteering also helps in improving your leadership qualities and making you part of a community. People who do random acts of kindness and service to the community [often move] ...out of their comfort zone to do something different.

"This New Year's resolution will be fun and is easy to commit to once you start enjoying the cause or the service. More, it gives a fulfilling feeling once the job is done.

"Be it helping at the local community [agency], cleaning the road or beach, serving at an old-age home or volunteering for [your community museum], there are many such activities you can try."

Source: Adapted from "Volunteer Regularly" <https://www.lifestyleasia.com/bk/living/wellness/new-years-resolutions-for-2022/>

We've come a long way this year, through unexpected obstacles, infections and illnesses, as well as serendipitous moments. We have the chance to re-start and redo our priorities at the beginning of every year. I've asked a few of my friends to share their resolutions as we look to the New Year. What is it they want to accomplish in 2022?

**Mary Lou Kuchan:** Finish all the sewing, knitting, quilting, painting, etc. projects that are in various stages and NOT start anything until all completed. Oh, and maybe exercise more...or maybe not.

**Debbie Stephenson:** My New Year Resolutions are to learn a new historical fact every month by visiting the Canton Area Heritage Museum and to dust my house before a layer of dust is visible on the furniture. The first resolution will be easy...the second, not so much.

**Mike Walters:** I want to make the location of this museum well-known by everyone.

**Cheryl Bielema:** I'll be more active inviting people with interests in history and our community to get involved in the museum, and we'll work on writing new narratives and descriptions for our unique and growing collections in 2022.

**VOLUNTEER**

What would you like to do in the New Year? If you have an interest in volunteering, contact me directly at (314) 440-0326, or email [cahcpo19@att.net](mailto:cahcpo19@att.net). I'll suggest some options to match your interests and available time.

**Cheryl Bielema**, Chair  
Programs Committee

## BOOKS, CEMETERY WALK DVDS (continued from column 1)

**WWII Camp Ellis: Homefronts and POWs**, by Mary C. Kerr

We have DVDs of the 2019 and 2021 Cemetery Walks. You can help support the museum with a donation of \$20.00 per DVD, or \$35.00 for both.

Phone or email us (listed above), or send a check, specifying the books and/or DVDs you'd like. We'll mail them right out to you.