



Sainte Marie Foundation News

To celebrate our very special hometown's winter season 2014

Volume 7, Issue 1

Worst Winter Ever in Sainte Marie

Sainte Marie was not spared during the “polar vortex” event that happened in early January 2014. “It was the coldest I can ever remember,” said Jack Thompson, village president. The cold spell brought 8-10” of snow, 30 mph winds, and then 15-below zero temperatures for several days. Businesses were closed. County schools were closed for a week. Police ordered people to stay off the roads. “It was a rough week,” admits Thompson, “but, thank heavens, we did not lose electricity!” A week later, everything was back to normal, but few will forget the winter of 2014.

First Wedding at Foundation House



On Saturday, Nov. 16, 2013, we had our first wedding at the Foundation House. **Carrie Ochs-Frichl** married **Ralph Joseph Weiss** on the front porch. They then had their wedding reception at the Parish Hall. Carrie is the daughter of **Ted and Susie Ochs**. We wish the happy couple many years of happiness.

Museum To Open Labor Day Weekend

The Foundation's long-awaited museum will formally open on Saturday, August 30, Labor Day weekend. Our first exhibit will be called **Sainte Marie: Touched by War**.

The program for that afternoon will include a ribbon cutting and a program honoring people who have contributed in a significant way to the development of the Foundation.

The War Exhibit will feature individuals from Sainte Marie who took part in wars starting from the Civil War up to present-day Iraq and Afghanistan. There will be short programs during the year related to the topics of the exhibit.

What we need from you: Do you have **artifact or pictures** from any war that we could borrow for the year? We promise to return it to you. If it relates to a story from your family member, we would like to know the story. Our exhibit will be very personal, showing how tiny isolated, rural Sainte Marie found itself caught up in wars just like the rest of the country. Call Mike Hartrich at 618-673-8678 or mdhartrich@hotmail.com.

We Get Mail

From **Freda Yost Keller**: *I would like to sign up for the e-mail Foundation newsletter. You people are doing a great job. Thanks.* (Editor's note: We love getting e-mails like this from people who sign up for the e-mail newsletter. Welcome, Clarence and Freda. You get more news when you get the e-mail newsletter.)

From a person who stayed at the Foundation House during a family funeral: *Thank you for opening this beautiful home for me! What a treasure for the town of Sainte Marie!*

From **Sherry Gormley Crane and Chelsea Crane**, Eau Claire, WI, who stayed at the Foundation House during the Mattingly Reunion: *“Thank you to everyone who worked on this treasure of a house!”*

From **Evelyn Radke Null**, Joliet, IL: *I just want to thank everyone who has done so much for Sainte Marie. It makes me proud to say that's my home town. Those of you who still live there deserve so much credit for your hard work. I want you to know you are appreciated – and thanks, Pat, for starting it all. Your parents would be so proud. Blessings to all.*

From **D. Kathryn Weintraub**, Chicago: *After scanning your newsletter, I would like to suggest that you provide space for meetings at your Foundation House. For example, knitting is very popular, and knitters really like to get together to discuss techniques and show off the items they make.* Editor's note: Thanks, Kathryn. Any group interested in meeting at the House (weekdays or nights only), contact **Ron or Carolyn Kirts** 618-455-3153.

In the News



John Michl, Sainte Marie, was recently presented with the Third Annual Crossroads Beekeepers' **Beekeeper of the Year Award**. John, a charter member of the club, received the award in recognition of his dedication to promote, encourage, and

educate others in the practice of beekeeping.

Crossroads Beekeepers is a local beekeeping club based in Effingham and serving beekeepers in all surrounding counties.

Cindy Sheridan Carlson, Mahomet, IL, was one of five artists featured in an art show in late November, sponsored by the Champaign/Urbana Art Coop. Cindy was among twenty-four artists chosen from hundreds of candidates throughout Illinois to participate in a three-day intensive career development program arranged by a nationwide project. Artists were selected based on their artistic portfolio, résumé, career prospects and written statements concerning their career goals. Cindy is the graphic artist who designed our 175th historical book, *Stories and Reminiscences 1837-2012* (still available at the bargain price of \$20).

Special Thanks

-To the **Ste. Marie Community Club** for giving the Foundation stamped-envelopes they had left over from the 2012 Quartoseptcentennial. The Foundation used them for its 2013 Fundraising and Annual Report mailing in Nov. Also, a big thank you to the Community Club for the lovely Christmas display they mounted in the old hardware store windows. (*Yes, we are sorry to report the closing of The Corner Pocket as of early Nov. 2013.*)

-To **Jason Warfel** for setting up the Foundation's Facebook account. Log on and see what's happening in Sainte Marie.

-To **Jim Hartrich**, Morton, IL, who donated Dr. G. C. Brown's old stethoscope and blood pressure cuff to the Foundation's museum. We continue to seek items like this for exhibits. Thanks much, Jim.

Remember: We are looking for war artifacts and stories for our first exhibit at the museum. Call Mike Hartrich at 618-783-8678 or mdhartrich@hotmail.com.



Sainte Marie Accepts Award!

WE DID IT! Sainte Marie won a 2013 **Governor's Hometown Award** for its celebration of the 175th Anniversary of the founding of the town. Accepting the award at the November ceremony in Springfield, IL, are: (l - r) **Jason and Julie Warfel** (Jason is a Foundation Board member and Julie chaired the 2012 event); a representative of the Governor's office; **Jack Thompson**, village president of Sainte Marie, and his wife **Marge**. They are standing in front of a sign that will be posted at the three entrances to Sainte Marie.

We announced the winning of the award to all our e-mail list and here are some replies:

-Congratulations to your little town & to all of you loyal home town folks who have worked so hard to keep Ste. Marie a jewel. I will keep this in my heart for momma; she was always so proud to say... "I'm a Ste. Marie gal". **Diann Graham** (daughter of artist Helen Keller Graham), IL

-Congratulations to all who made Ste. Marie the winner of the Governor's Home Town Award. **Jean Barthelme Regas**, IN

-Congratulations to Sainte Marie and all of those who worked hard to earn this award. **Roger Picquet**, CA

-Congratulations. Ste. Marie has always been a great example of Americana at its best, and I think it is most deserving of this recognition. **Eileen Franke, MO**

Congratulations! It's nice to see Ste. Marie being recognized! **Chris Young, WI**

Awesome achievement! Congratulations. **Will Handzel, MI**

Congratulations. It is a great recognition for all the fine people who worked so hard to make the events happen. **Fr. Kurt Hartrich, Chicago, IL**

Terrific, you all have done a good job! I can't think of a more deserving and successful project. **Dorothy Hitt, MO**

This is great news for my "adopted" hometown village. My wife, **Mary Jo** (Spitzer), read this notice as she beamed with pride for what you and many others have accomplished. Good for you, and I came this close to being present when Ronnie received his accolades at the Springfield State Fair. Tell him we were thinking of him on that day. Again good for you!!!! **Chuck Martin, IL**



Foundation House Update

Replacing the Roof at the Foundation House

Last fall when the weather was just about ready to “turn,” our roofers arrived (see pix at left). For several weeks, they worked, tearing off three old roofs and replacing with a lovely new roof. The cost so far: \$15,240.93. Yes, an expensive project, but it had to be done. They will return in the spring to finish – replacing the tin roofs above the kitchen and back two rooms. At that point, the House will be secure and dry. Another big job accomplished!

And just in time, for our museum will open this summer. (Hear, hear – a blast of trumpets!).

Other plans: Thanks to the donation of \$2,000 from **Sandra Hartrich**, Newton, in memory of her husband, **Kenny**, we are planning to place a patio near the back of the House where we can do our popular outdoor programs without having people trip on broken concrete sidewalks. As soon as we know the plan, we may be asking for donations to buy an engraved stone to honor or memorialize one of your family members.

We are also seeking donations for several new mattresses so that our visitors are more comfortable when they stay at the House.

Two Major Family Reunions in Sainte Marie in 2014

The **Barthelme Family Reunion** will take place on July 19-20.

The Hartrich/Picquet Reunion: August 2-3 On Saturday, August 2, there will be a 4 p.m. mass at St. Mary's followed by a catered meal at the parish hall. On Sunday at noon, come for a cook out/BBQ at Picquet Park. The reunion will also include tours of the town and the Foundation House. Contact Mike Hartrich at mdhartrich@hotmail.com or 618-783-8678 for more details and registration, including hotel availability.

The Foundation House will be “home base” for both reunions.

Sainte Marie Foundation
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Veteran's Day at the Jasper County Court House, and the Sainte Marie American Legion was well represented: (l – r) **Bob Helregel**, **George Kirts**, **Bill Hartrich**, former commander of Post 932.

(Picture by Maxine Calvert)

The Sainte Marie Foundation newsletter is published quarterly. Send comments to writer/editor Pat Reis, patreisprpr@yahoo.com. The Foundation is a tax exempt 501(c)(3) organization, duly recognized as an Illinois charitable corporation. Donations are tax deductible to the fullest extent of the law. Do you have a Sainte Marie story you would like to share? Write your own and/or contact Pat Reis patreisprpr@yahoo.com. We reserve the right to edit.

Foundation Board Members 2013-2014



Sainte Marie Foundation board members pose outside the Foundation House in mid-October. (L-R) Ed Reis, Robinson; Mike Hartrich, vice-president Newton; Patricia Reis, president, Chicago; Donna Keller, Sainte Marie; Ron Kirts, treasurer, Sainte Marie; Kevin Parker, secretary, Newton; and Jason Warfel, Sainte Marie.

THELMA (SPITZER) HOETZER TURNS 104

A belated Happy 104th Birthday to **Thelma Spitzer Hoetzer**! Thelma was born December 31, 1909, in Sainte Marie in the family home on South Main Street across the street from her father's blacksmith shop.

Her parents were **Emanuel (Mon) and Mathilda (Houser) Spitzer**. Thelma is the last living child (#6) of nine brothers and sisters. She is in good health and lives in assisted living in Sarasota, FL. See her complete story (written by her daughter **Joelyn Gentry**) in the Bonus Pages available on the e-mail version of this newsletter. *Pix: Thelma (center) with her daughter (r-l) Joelyn Gentry, Joelyn's husband Ron and son Jeff in Nov. 2013.*



Editor's note: In talking with **David Wiltshire**, Thelma's nephew, about this tribute to Thelma, I learned that he has access to some World War I artifacts from his uncle Edmund Spitzer who served in that difficult war. We will be including them in our first exhibit at the Museum. Thanks, David, and also thanks for volunteering to help us mount our exhibit during the spring and summer.

Bonus Pages for E-mail Subscribers

Planned Giving to the Foundation

How can we keep the Foundation viable in the future?

One way is to leave a **bequest**, which could be cash, land, securities or a percentage of the residue of one's estate. Here's some wording you might include in your will or trust: "I ____ (name) hereby bequeath to the Sainte Marie Foundation the sum of \$_____ (or percent of my estate), or (____ percent of the remainder of my estate). The Foundation's tax ID number is 26-1199788. One of our expert Board members will answer your questions if you have any. Just drop us an e-mail at www.saintemariefoundation.org/CONTACT. Or if you just want to send us a check, you may do so by sending it to the Sainte Marie Foundation, P.O. Box 186, Sainte Marie, IL 62459.

THELMA (SPITZER) HOETZER TURNS 104

From her daughter, Joelyn Hoetzer Gentry, Cicero, IN

Thelma was born December 31, 1909, in Sainte Marie in the family home on South Main Street across the street from her father's blacksmith shop. She turned 104 years old New Year's Eve day, 2013.

Her parents were **Emanuel and Mathilda (Houser) Spitzer**. Thelma is the last living child of nine brothers and sisters: **Charlotte (Spitzer) Smith, Joseph Spitzer, Aretta (Spitzer) Hartman, Julia (Spitzer) Wiltshire, Eugene Spitzer, Edmund Spitzer, Mary (Spitzer) Schuch, Herbert Spitzer, and John Spitzer**. Thelma was number six in the line.

As a girl Thelma loved to read and wherever she was, she had a "stack of books" nearby. After completing high school she earned her nursing degree in 1930 from Saint John's College in Springfield, Illinois. More schooling in psychiatric nursing led her to Chicago. Later it was on to Indianapolis where she worked as a surgical nurse at St. Francis Hospital. There she met **Dr. Eldore Hoetzer**. They were married in 1940. They had their first son **Stephen**, and soon after Eldore enlisted in the Army. He was stationed in Alaska for the WWII effort. After the war they moved to Ft. Wayne close to Eldore's family. They had three more children, all girls: **Karen, Joelyn, and Gretchen**.

Thelma gave up her nursing and was a stay-at-home Mom. She participated in many church and social organizations and became an avid bridge player.

Volunteering at the Red Cross was a way for her to continue to use her nursing skills. She enjoyed returning to the beloved Sainte Marie. Many of her brothers and sisters would gather at the homestead with their children on holidays and special occasions. The house would be filled from top to bottom with the lively Spitzer family. Memories were made that have lasted a lifetime.

She is best known for her thoughtful, caring ways and strong Catholic faith. She believes in "everything in moderation". All of these traits have helped her to achieve her longevity.

Her immediate family now includes 8 grandchildren and 2 great- grandchildren. She is in good health and lives in assisted living in Sarasota, Florida. Playing bridge is still her favorite pastime!

Editor's note: We all wish Thelma a very happy belated birthday and thank all the Spitzers who contacted us regarding her birthday. Stay in touch, all of you people who spent so many happy years visiting with your grandparents and other family members in Sainte Marie.



Flower Baskets

Everyone loves our hanging flower baskets!

This year **Tammy Frye** will be making sure that they will be ready to hang by

mid-May. **Carolyn Keller** has volunteered to help plant them in February. Anyone else interested in planting at the greenhouse north of Oblong should contact Tammy.

We need at least ONE MORE WATERER! If you are interested, contact Ron Kirts 618-455-3153. The “waterers” take turns watering daily for one week at a time. We like to have four individuals/ teams so that everyone gets a rest in-between watering responsibilities.

And if you misplaced the letter we sent out about sponsoring the 2014 flower baskets, you can contact **Donna Keller** – no later than Feb. 1. Call her at 618-455-3452 or e-mail her at rakeller73@gmail.com. Sponsor names will be posted on the *old bank* windows for the summer season.

An Interesting Find for the Museum

While looking at an old scrapbook that had been buried for 25 years in the time capsule (opened in 2012), we discovered a very interesting item. Here is a summary of some 2013 correspondence with **Gina Mullinax Fox** regarding this item:

Pat Reis' letter: *There was a scrapbook in the Time Capsule that I first saw last weekend.*

*The inside cover says that the scrapbook was prepared by your mother and father. **Rosemary and Paul Mullinax**. It is full of news clippings and pictures from 1982 - 1987 -- a wonderful resource for us! The last item in the scrapbook is a **copy of a letter from Abraham Lincoln to the St. Cecelia Band**, regretting that he (Lincoln) could not come to their concert. I think the date was 1861.*

Question: Do you know anything about this letter? Where did it come from? Where is the original?

Gina's reply: I remember the letter you are referring to. I don't remember who had the original. It seemed

like it was someone on the Historical Committee...maybe Martha Ruth Logan or Catherine Kocher.

We didn't doubt its age, but we were pretty sure it was not authentic due to the timing of the letter and the fact that Lincoln usually signed A. Lincoln rather than spelling out his first name.

I am positive that Dad doesn't know anything about the letter. He was more interested in the photo aspect of the centennial, while Mom focused on the historical.

A good discussion piece for sure!

If anyone reading this knows more about the A. Lincoln letter, we would like to hear from you. Another mystery to be solved.

Some Thoughts about the War Exhibit From Pat Reis

I have been talking to people about ways to display Sainte Marie's involvement in the many wars that involved our country from the Civil War to present-day Iraq and Afghanistan. Co-committee members **Mike Hartrich and Donna Keller** are doing the same.



One of the people who responded to our request was former resident, **Ken Stone, (1.-1959 pix)** oldest son of **Hamer and Martha Faltemier Stone**. Ken's service in the Army included nine years of active duty, mainly flying army reconnaissance planes. He was in Vietnam in both 1962-63 and 1966-67 when he was

command pilot for the commander of the 1st Infantry Division.

He retired as a “bird colonel after 20 years of service, with awards including the Silver Star, Distinguished Flying Cross, Bronze Star, Air Medal, Distinguished Service Medal, and several others.

Ken sent us his unpublished autobiography, completed in December, 2012. We will be publishing more in later newsletters, but here is an excerpt from his very interesting introduction and part of Chapter 4 on the WW II years:

I WAS ONE LUCKY GUY: Autobiography of Kenneth Eugene Stone, b. 1936

INTRODUCTION

I suppose that most readers would assume that anyone writing an autobiography was a very vain person. I don't feel like I am vain; my initial purpose in writing this was to create a written record of growing up during the Great Depression and World War II and achieving more than I probably deserved. However, I admit that I got carried away as I started writing about the career aspects of my life and probably wrote more detail than anyone cares about. Hopefully my descendants and siblings will find something of interest in this tome and if it answers some of their questions, so much the better.

Each generation passes through various eras, but I truly believe that someone born during the Great Depression and having the good fortune of living as long as I have, has witnessed more dramatic changes than just about any other generation. For example, in the early to mid-1940s, several farmers around Sainte Marie operated less than 100 acres and were still farming with horses. Alex Leinhart, who lived down the street from us would get his horses from the barn across the street from us and go to the river bottom each morning during the farming season and trot the horses back in the evening for feeding and bedding. Several farmers from the Bend would bring their cream and eggs to town in a horse-drawn buggy and conduct their meager shopping afterward. Today, one farmer with modern equipment and supplies can farm 1,000 acres and still have plenty of time for other things.

From these primitive times we saw the complete mobilization of the country to fight the Second World War, culminating with the development of the first atomic bomb and its deployment over Japan. We witnessed going from wall-mounted crank telephones that sometimes required hours to complete a barely audible long-distance call, to a world where nearly everyone carries their own cell phone, many of which can connect to the Internet and can call to or from anywhere in the world. We witnessed the development of the first digital computers which took up most of a large room and performed simple calculations, not much faster than a manual calculator, to fantastic super computers of very small size that can perform trillions of calculations per second. A retired computer science professor friend of mine says that most people now have much more computing power in their cell phone than the room-size computers in use as late as the 1950s, had.

We saw the development and use of the first antibiotics that treated bacterial infections. We witnessed the miracle of the Salk vaccine in the mid-1950s that virtually eliminated polio, the scourge of young people during our early lives. Also, during our early lives, rural electric cooperatives brought electricity to the rural areas, and many small towns got water and sewage systems that eliminated privies and brought pure water to households and businesses. We witnessed the first satellite that was placed into orbit (Russian Sputnik, 1957) and the first man (Neil Armstrong) to set foot on the moon (1969).

We watched as air travel progressed from the 20 passenger propeller driven DC 3 (Gooney Bird) that flew at 150 miles per hour to the current massive jet aircraft that can carry as many as 500 to 700 passengers thousands of miles at nearly 600 miles per hour.

The last 70 years has provided many fantastic advancements in science, medicine and other facets of our society. The opening of the Internet to the public in the early 1990s has completely changed the way people communicate and learn. It is for these reasons that I am writing of my memories of growing up, starting 76 years ago.

CHAPTER 4

THE WORLD WAR II YEARS

World War II started and ended while we lived at the Octavia Ochs' house. Our main contact with the outside world was our radio. It was a table model, standing about two feet high with a rounded top. I will never forget when the radio program was interrupted on December 7, 1941 to tell about the Japanese bombing of Pearl Harbor. I distinctly remember how upset Dad was. I was a little young at the time to understand the significance of the event, but it wasn't very many months before various young men around Sainte Marie either enlisted or began getting drafted into the military.

Dad was 28 years old at the time, but he secured a 4-F classification (a deferment) because of being in a critical occupation (trucking). However, Paul Hartrich, who lived in the next house north of us enlisted in the Navy, even though he too was classified 4-F because of age and having four children. Others from Sainte Marie that I can remember going into the military were: Ed Faltemier (Buck) and Paul Faltemier (Mouse), my uncles; Eugene Hartrich (Hop) and his wife-to-be, Maxine (an Army nurse), Sonny Hartrich, Wally Hartrich, Jimmy Hahn, Buddy Pictor, the three Hunzinger boys who lived next door to us, Paul, Dick, and Harry; George Moran, Bob Swisher, Leonard Sheridan, Lawrence Huber, Gerald Geltz, Joe Barthleme and Don Spitzer, a farm boy who ended up bringing a French wife back with him after the War. I apologize to those that I may have forgotten. Jasper County had 47 men killed in the war, but I don't think there was a one from the town of Sainte Marie, although Gerald Geltz and Joe Barthelme each lost a leg and came back with artificial ones. Several farm boys went into the military, even though most of them could have been deferred because of being in a critical occupation.

It wasn't long before a general rationing was imposed on all us civilians. Every family had ration books with allowances depending on the size of the family. Some of the things that I remember being rationed were sugar, meat, coffee, shoes, women's hosiery, gasoline, tires and many other things that I can't remember. In general, anything that would be needed to further the war effort was rationed. Dad soon found that many of the rationed items impinged upon his trucking business. He quickly found out that he could get tires and critical truck parts on the black market in Terre Haute, Indiana for a price. He often talked about having to go to Terre Haute to deal with the Jews. Whether or not the black marketers were Jewish is in question, but it made a good story. I remember one time when Dad took Mom and us kids along with him to Terre Haute to purchase some item. While Dad was inside transacting business, the rest of us waited in the car. It was then that I saw my first black person (Terre Haute had a sizable black population). In the common vernacular of the time, we were fascinated by seeing our first "Nigger."

The people of Sainte Marie were very patriotic, and coped with the rationing as best they could. I remember that the Moose Lodge in Olney, where Dad was a member, had a big Christmas party each year that included eggnog and spiked punch. The recipes they used required substantial amounts of sugar. Most members of the Moose Lodge saved up what little sugar they could so that they could donate it at Christmas time to sweeten the eggnog and punch. In addition to rationing, there were frequent paper drives and salvage drives to recycle scrap metals for the war effort. Various metals such as steel, copper, bronze, etc. were quickly sent off to recycling centers.....

**Continued in the 2012 book, *Sainte Marie: Stories and Reminiscences 1837-2012*, p. 41- 44.
By Ken Stone, Dec. 2012**

More to come in future Sainte Marie Foundation newsletters.