

The Saengerfest sponsored by St. Joseph Maennerchor, a local musical society, was a major event for the city in June 1883. Held June 14 through 18 that year, the Saengerfest was the biennial song festival of the Pioneer Saengerbund, an association of singing clubs of mostly German-American membership in several midwestern states.

Two of the biennial song festivals of the group were held in St. Joseph. The earlier Saengerfest was held on April 30, 1873, and coincided with the opening of the first bridge over the Missouri River at St. Joseph.

The 1883 Saengerfest attracted thousands of people to the city to enjoy the festivities surrounding the event, which included receptions, picnics, parades, a concert at Tootle's Opera House, and a ball at Maennerchor Hall, the meeting rooms of the local musical society.

Saturday, June 16, began with a parade at 10:00 a.m. and ended with the concert that evening. The parade began at the intersection of Third and Francis Streets where a triumphal arch had been constructed and (according to an article in *The St. Joseph Gazette*) "draped in the national colors, burdened down with evergreens. . ." The *Gazette* also reported that "the line of march was an exceedingly long one, and owing to the mud was not entirely an agreeable one. . . The procession disbanded at 1:15 o'clock, after a march of three hours."



Third and Francis Streets - June 16, 1883

The above picture was taken on Saturday, June 16, 1883, at the intersection of Third and Francis Streets, looking south down Third Street. The parade is beginning to form by the triumphal arch. Maennerchor Hall was on the third floor of the McLaughlin Building at the southwest corner of Third and Francis. In 1883, the west side of Third Street was lined with businesses. Today it is a parking lot.

HAPPENINGS

St. Joseph Museum

December 1998 / January & February 1999

Over the years, we have had several very positive experiences with interns from the University of Iowa, Drake University, and Missouri Western. So, when I received a letter inquiring about an internship from Rena Vannoy, a museum studies graduate student at the University of Nebraska, Lincoln, I was interested in discussing the possibilities with her. She was seeking a museum in which to do her internship prior to graduation this spring. Rena said she has always had an interest in history and had planned to be a teacher. She went to Truman State University (formerly Northeast Missouri State) in Kirksville to pursue that dream. As her interest in history grew, her desire to teach in the classroom dwindled.

While volunteering at the Osteopathic Museum at the Osteopathic School in Kirksville, she found that she particularly liked the varied educational opportunities and programs that museums can offer. She realized she could combine her history, education, and fondness for museums through a career in museum work. Rena looked around the country and chose the University of Nebraska for her museum studies. Nebraska

FOCUS ON COLLECTIONS

The featured artifacts for this *Happenings* were chosen to complement the cover photo of the 1883 Saengerfest in St. Joseph. Upon close examination of the cover photo, you will note that there are several uniformed marching units. The men in one of the units are wearing helmets very similar to that shown here on the right. We have not been able to identify each group in the cover photo, but we do know that the celebration included the Fort Leavenworth Band,

HAPPENINGS is published by the

St. Joseph Museum, Inc.,
a not-for-profit corporation.
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Artifacts

Edith Wolf

had a fairly new museum studies program, but the curriculum was impressive. Rena's major is museum studies with a minor in curriculum and instruction. Although Rena had offers from other museums for an internship, she chose the St. Joseph Museum. When asked why, she responded that she likes St. Joseph and the historical background associated with it; the way in which the staff works together and responds to each other; the opportunity to do lots of different things and really be a part of the professional staff and contribute to the museum; and finally she loves this old house. I'm very pleased to have Rena as a part of the museum staff. She is involved in the Storyliving Program going to the schools. She is also working on the development of programs in other educational areas. Rena fits right in with the staff. I'm glad she chose the St. Joseph Museum.

Infantry Band of Omaha, Pryor's Military Band, Turner Rifles, Knights of Pythias, and the Mutual

continued next page



Two helmets from turn-of-the-century fraternal organizations. These helmets are in the collections of the St. Joseph Museum.

Benevolent Society, as well as 13 singing societies of the Saengerfest. In all, about 500 men marched in the celebration parade.

The helmet on the left was owned by John Connett, a St. Joseph attorney in the early 1900s. The one on the right belonged to a member of the Knights of Pythias.

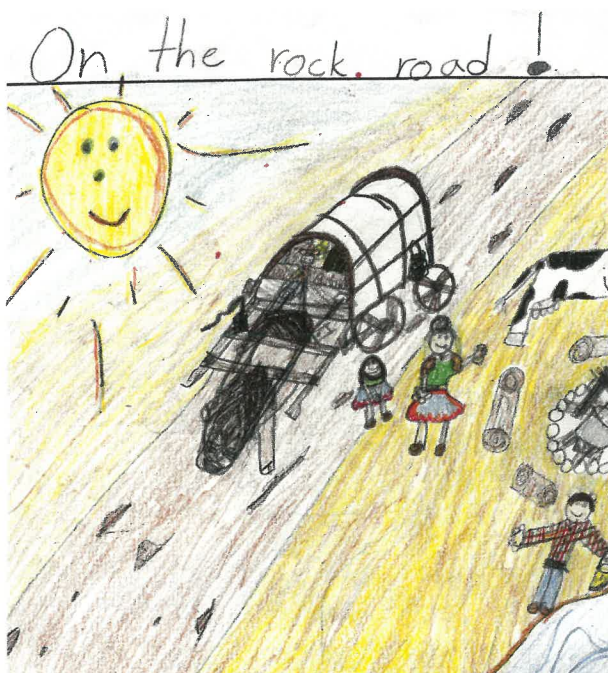
The Knights of Pythias fraternal organization was founded in 1864 with the purpose of doing charitable work as well as providing a social outlet for the members. Like other fraternal organizations, the group had its own secret rites with an emphasis on moral character, patriotism, and religion—although men from any religion could belong.

STORYLIVING

Features

The St. Joseph Museum Storyliving program is in full swing in the schools. “Jump Off at St. Joe” brings alive the story of the 1849 California Gold Rush and St. Joseph’s role in making history. One of three teams (each made up of two museum staff members and one musician) spends two hours with each scheduled class. Students in third and fourth grades travel back in time to become people who make decisions that change their lives and help create our city’s future.

Music is a key element of the program, and the St. Joseph Museum has contracted with two excellent musicians, Jason Riley and Phil Vandel, to be part of Storyliving.



Letters from students are always appreciated by the Storyliving teams. This drawing is from Troy fourth grader Laura Tharman.

Jason Riley became interested in music as a child, listening to his grandfather and other family members play bluegrass music. His interest grew as he played percussion in the band and sang in the choir through middle and high school. Jason began playing the guitar in the seventh grade and now plays a number of instruments. In college, Jason earned a B.A. in classical guitar performance and commercial music performance. Currently, he has about 40 guitar students ranging in age from 7 to the mid-40s. This year he added the teaching of Suzuki Guitar at Missouri Western State College to his schedule. Jason also plays in

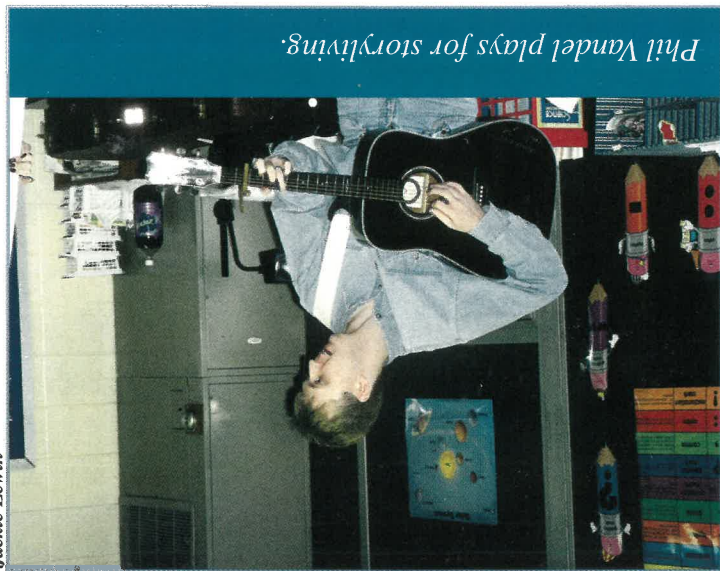
Under the Influence, a band which performs “rock and roll” style music. He is especially pleased that music is used in Storyliving to help children learn about their community’s history.



Jason Riley entertains a group of students.

Phil Vandel also remembers growing up in a musical family—both his father and grandfather played the guitar. About 10 years ago, he decided that what he wanted to do the most and what would make him the happiest in life was to be a full-time musician. He began his career with the Union Mill Opry and then “went on the road” as a guitarist for several bands. He has performed all over the United States and in Canada and Mexico. While living in St. Joseph with his wife Dawn, he plays in Hot Wire, a regional band, and continues to pursue his professional musical career in various arenas. Phil says he is inspired by

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Phil Vandel plays for storyliving.

watching the reactions of the children in Storyliving and likes seeing that at some point in the program every child is involved. Phil agrees with Jason that it is important for children to be involved in and enjoy the arts. Both of these young men are positive role models for the students.

Jackie Lewin



Martlyn Taylor

The St. Joseph Museum Storyliving program, "Jump Off at St. Joe," is funded in-part by Walgreens Drug Stores, Commerce Bank, and the Charles H. Taylor Memorial Trust Fund. Chuck Otting, manager of the Walgreens in St. Joseph, is thanked for his support by Rich Nolf in the above photograph. In addition to funding, Walgreens is sponsoring two special drawings for students who take part in Storyliving. The prizes are two Sony CD, AM/FM Stereos.

GOLD RUSH

The opening of the Gold Rush room is scheduled for early March, and the staff is busy putting the final touches on the exhibits. The exhibit is funded in-part by Altec Industries, American Family Insurance, the Bradley Family Trust, Commerce Bank, Heartland Regional Medical Center, Hillyard Companies, Missouri-American Water Company, and St. Joseph Light and Power Company. Upon entering the room, the visitor will feel he has entered a gold mine. Exhibits are built into the mine walls. St. Joseph's role in the California gold rush, the journey west, destinations of gold miners, and mining techniques are all featured. One unique item on display is the diary of a California



"Devil's Gate in Wyoming" is one of the photos by David Lincoln which will be on exhibit at the St. Joseph Museum.

David Lincoln

emigrant. This diary, which has never been publicly exhibited, is on loan from the family of Marian Anderson. Adjacent to the Gold Rush room will be "Path of the 49ers," a photo exhibit by David Lincoln of Bellevue, Washington. The exhibit features 30 photos of the California Trail as it appears today. You are invited to meet David Lincoln at the opening. The St. Joseph Museum and David Lincoln are cooperatively offering the photo exhibit to other museums throughout the next two years.

You will receive a mailing announcing the opening of these exhibits. We hope you will attend.

Exhibits

Speakers Bureau

programs presented by staff members:

December

- | | |
|----------------------|--------------------------|
| 15 Native Americans | Edison Elementary School |
| 16 Christmas Customs | East Side Lions Club |

January

- | | |
|-----------------------|-------------------------|
| 4 Victorian Fashions | Saxton Care Center |
| 21 Victorian Fashions | Saxton's Tiffany Square |

February

- | | |
|---------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| 8 Native Americans | Saxton Care Center |
| 11 Museum Program | American Business Women's Association |
| 18 Trail Program | Golden Agers |
| 22 St. Joseph and the Gold Rush | St. Joseph Archaeology Society |
| 25 Miss Hyogo | Saxton's Tiffany Square |

Storyliving

presented to the following elementary schools:

December

- 8 Troy (2 sessions)

January

- 5 Amazonia
7 Cathedral
11 Coleman
12 Mark Twain
14 Mark Twain
19 Amazonia
21 Mark Twain
25 Coleman
26 Children First
28 Hall

February

- 1 Webster
2 St. Joseph Christian School
4 Neely
8 Webster
11 Pickett
16 Skaith
18 Parkway
22 Seventh Day Adventist School
22 Dallas, Texas (modified version)
23 Skaith
25 Parkway

Since June 1998, the Speakers Bureau and Storyliving have reached 1602 adults and children through a total of 66 programs.

RECENT DONATIONS to the COLLECTIONS

Artifacts

James Lehr - Photographs of St. Joseph sites around 1930: a Rotary Club directory; atlases of the United States and Canada; a Lyceum Theatre program; and booklets about construction by-laws and regulations.

Fred and Ann Slater - A chair that belonged to the Tootle family when they lived where the St. Joseph Museum is now housed.

Mrs. Mary Hillix - Two, 1900 Eastlake chairs.

Mary Jo Sprague - Baby shoes that belonged to the donor's uncle, Eldon Wyatt Dittmore, born in 1904.

Gordon Ragle - Advertisements for "Dr. S. A. Richmond Nervine Co., St. Joseph Mo." Dr. Richmond practiced medicine in St. Joseph around 1875.

Nancy Hillyard-Hampton - A tall, wooden bobbin from the early 1900s.

Lieutenant Colonel David Thompson - Several items from Indonesia including a mounted tiger that was collected west of Palembang.

LIGHTING CEREMONY

On December 4 from 6:00 to 8:00 p.m., more than 400 people enjoyed the 1998 Christmas Lighting ceremony at the museum. The twinkling white lights outlining the former Wyeth/Tootle mansion are an anticipated sign of the Christmas season. Other highlights of the evening included the opening of the Jim Dick carvings exhibit; Santa and Mrs. Claus; a Community Chorus quartet; hot spiced cider and Christmas cookies; and personalized ornaments for everyone attending.



L. to R.: Judy Holtz and Maxine Brewer enjoy a chat with Jim Dick.

The 22 bird carvings on display are the work of Jim Dick, a 1957 graduate of Lafayette High School, who



Santa and Mrs. Claus give all their attention to Jessica Ann Wilkerson as she tells them about her wish list.

Events

Annette Clayton watches as Martha Clark personalizes a Christmas ornament for her. Each visitor received an ornament inscribed with "St. Joseph Museum, 1998" and the recipient's name.



Jackie Lewin

recently retired from the Royal Ontario Museum (ROM) in Toronto, Canada. He has shown his work at a number of shows and galleries in Canada and has won approximately 50 awards since 1988. The carvings, which will be on exhibit until March 1, may be purchased. They represent extinct, endangered, or threatened species, including the spotted owl, Labrador duck, Eskimo curlew, passenger pigeon, and Carolina parakeet.

Amanda Watkins was chosen from the audience to press the switch that lit the building for the 1998 holiday season. The winner of the Museum Shop gift certificate was Lois Carrillo. Ms. Carrillo chose 432 as the number of candy kisses in the jar. She came closest to the correct number which was 469.

Sponsors and volunteers helped make the event possible, and we sincerely appreciate their support. Thank you, Dennie Howe, Dorothy Pettijohn, and Museum Hill Neighborhood Association members for volunteering to work at the Lighting Ceremony. Museum Hill members who volunteered were Rudy and Martha Clark, John Hammer, Tom and Ginny Rinderknecht, Nancy Sandehn, Greg Sekula, and Del and Joyce Sutherland.

Thanks to the following sponsors, the event was free to everyone: Clayton Paper, Cub Foods, Quaker Oats, Ken Smith Autobody, Phil Acuff, Bob Brown, Carlos Moya, Rich Nolf, and Ron Wade.

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MEMORIALS

In memory of Jacob M. Ford, II
From:
Mr. and Mrs. Clark Hampton
Mr. and Mrs. James A. Lehr

Memberships and donations received after January 31 will be recognized in the next issue.

CHILDREN'S ORNAMENT WORKSHOP

Events

On Saturday, December 19, 1998, 15 students, ages 7-12, attended the eighth annual Children's Christmas Ornament Workshop.

The students made four ornaments this year. They kept three and placed one on the Children's Tree in the Touch & Go Room in the museum. The ornaments the students made were a picture frame, star, snowman, and reindeer. After the workshop, the participants, their parents, and grandparents enjoyed cookies and hot chocolate.



Sarah Elder

Staff members Kathy Reno and Carol Wills assist at the workshop.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS



March 11, Thursday

Members and Sponsors Opening of the Gold Rush Exhibit, 5:00 to 7:00 p.m.

March 14, Sunday

Gold Rush Exhibit open to the public, 1:00 to 5:00 p.m.

April 4, Sunday

Easter - Museum is open 1:00 to 5:00 p.m.

May 15, Saturday

Children's Day - 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.



St. Joseph Museum

1100 Charles Street, PO Box 128

St. Joseph, Missouri 64502-0128

Monday through Saturday 9-5 p.m.

Sundays & Holidays 1-5 p.m.

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