

ELGIN PUBLIC MUSEUM

Of Natural History & Anthropology

COLLECTIONS

Learning Through Adventure



MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of the Elgin Public Museum is to enhance understanding of the Natural Sciences and Anthropology through exhibits and interactive experiences.

EPM Hours

Memorial Day to Labor Day
Saturday & Sunday 12 - 4 pm

Labor Day to Memorial Day
Tuesday through Sunday 12 - 4 pm
Closed Mondays

Special Hours for Touching on Traditions

For additional information or to register in advance for an event or program please call : 847-741-6655
Visit our website for more information at www.elginpublicmuseum.org

Our Current Exhibit

Illinois Rocks!

A Guided Tour Through Geologic Time



"However much we shape the earth, it shapes us more. ...we remain the products of this planet and its processes. Our culture and our individual lives are molded by the forces and features of an ancient origin..."

Raymond Wiggers, *Geology Underfoot in Illinois*

This exhibit tells the story of the geological history of Illinois as revealed through rocks and landforms we see today.

ELGIN PUBLIC MUSEUM HISTORY 101 Chapter 1

by Mike McGrath

When a family enters the museum for the first time, what immediately catches their eye is the Irish deer mount above the store. And usually the first question they will ask our attendant is: What is that? or Where could I see one of those? We have to explain to them that it is an extinct Ice Age mammal and was hunted by their ancestors over 8,000 years ago. Images of this animal have been identified in prehistoric cave paintings in France.

Here are a few Irish Deer facts. The scientific name for the Irish deer is *Megaloceros giganteus* which means giant antler. Our specimen's antlers have a span of over 9 feet. Other antlers have been dug up in Northern Europe that were close to 12 feet across. And remember, what you're looking at are antlers, not horns. Antlers are the defining characteristic of the family Cervidae and are not found on any other animal. Unlike horns, they are shed every year. Imagine what a relief it was for this animal to drop well over 100 pounds of bone at the beginning of winter, only to have a new pair start growing from their skull in the spring. Talking about antlers, did you know that there is no other species of deer, either alive or extinct, that had a larger set than the Irish deer.

Theories as to the causes of extinction of Ice Age mammals have been refined over the last several decades. I came across an article in a buried box here at the museum of a column titled: *Youth's Viewpoint, Elgin Audubon Museum Filled With Exhibits*, dated October 1955. Elgin High School student Margaret Molitor writes this about the Irish deer: it "...probably killed itself with the weight of its own antlers..." Today, most scientists understand that extinction is the result of the combination of stresses put on species from several directions. When stress comes from only one direction a healthy population of animals might be able to survive. Hunting from an expanding human population at the end of the Ice Age could be one. If you factor in climate change during this time, the transformation of tundra and steppe to forested land, and maybe genetic susceptibility to forms of fatal diseases, sooner or later you reach a tipping point of no return. Whether it's extinction of an animal, or the collapse of a civilization, the path is not a straight line with either a "this" or a "that" answer, but rather a complex web of factors.

Our specimen is the Museum's most valued treasure and was part of the Museum's logo before its redesign several years ago. According to notes left by Nancy Epping, George P. Lord purchased the specimen (skull and



From the Director - Margaret "Peggie" Stromberg

After a hot, hot summer, things are cooling down in the Park, but we are still busy in the Museum. The staff recently began planning a calendar for 2012 and we are confident we will have exhibits and programs of interest to everyone and every age.

Family Science night began again in September and continues through the school year. Sara has a lot of fun activities planned. Marge Fox will again be holding P.A.W.S programs which were discontinued earlier. Preschooler Awareness of the World has been a good program, but attendance was down. We are hoping the revival will bring in some new children aged 3 to 5.

I had the honor of being invited to a reception for Eduardo Arnal, the new Consul General to Chicago from Mexico. Sr. Arnal expressed his gratitude to the Museum for hosting exhibits of interest to the Hispanic Community, especially Landscapes of Mexico, commissioned by the Mexican government. We have been offered another exhibit from the government, but it appears it is too large for our space. At any rate, we are happy to have a good relationship with the Consulate.

We also have a good working relationship with Monsieur Graham Paul, Consul General from France. We are working on a possible sister museum relationship with a museum in his hometown of LaRoche, France, also the home of René-Robert Cavelier, Sieur de LaSalle. Our Museum has an excellent permanent exhibit about the original LaSalle expedition through Illinois, as well as artifacts from the LaSalle II expedition by Reid Lewis and other Elginites back in the 1970's. We are planning a special LaSalle Day in the Spring of 2012.

Our membership is down this year and we would like to have more new members join us. Advantages to membership include a 10% discount in the store, a lesser fee for some programs, and special members only events. It is easy to become a member online at our website. If you are already a member, please remember to renew.

Of course, funding is also down considerably and staying solvent is always a concern. The staff here is doing the best we can to continue operating the Museum with quality programming of interest to all age groups. If you are able to help in any way through a contribution, sponsoring a program or becoming a member, please let us know. Contributions may also be made online at www.elginpublicmuseum.org. If you like what you see at the Elgin Public Museum, it would help a great deal if you could let the Mayor and City Council members know you value the Museum. That is a crucial component to continuing the contract we have had with the City for so many years.

If you would like to suggest programs or exhibits, please call me. I would love to hear your ideas and know what will keep you coming back to the Elgin Public Museum.

EPM STAFF

Margaret "Peggie" Stromberg

Executive Director

Michael McGrath

Museum Coordinator

Sara Russell

Education Coordinator

Marge Fox

Educator

Amanda Wolf

Museum Attendant

Elizabeth O'Toole

Collections Supervisor

MUSEUM GOLD

A special THANKS to all those who support our mission. We couldn't do it without you!

New and Renewed Membership

Magdalena Trojnacki (NEW)
Dwight & Betsy Armistead (since 1999)
Diane Ramsay Shedd (since 1987)
Helen (Terri) Scibetta (since 2006)
Gordon Garcia (since 2010)
Carl & Mary Ellen Flaks (since 1991)
Bill & Margarete Schmoltdt (since 1991)
John Lafleur (NEW)
John & Ruth Bradburn (since 2010)
Lawrence & Joan Damhorst (since 1996)
William & Janet Jones (since 2010)
Shirley Sotomayor (NEW)
Carol Burkholder (since 2010)
Gary & Dana Vierck (since 2007)

Donors

Gil & Mary Nore
Dwight & Betsy Armistead
Carl & Mary Ellen Flaks
Bill & Margarete Schmoltdt
Gary & Dana Vierck

The Elgin Public Museum is a public institution whose purpose is to enrich the lives of the people within our community. Your membership and donations are vital ingredients in the success of our mission. Because of your support and generosity we are able to present programming either free or at reasonable rates for all, in the hopes all our citizens can greater understand and appreciate the complexity of the world around them.

THANK YOU!

EPM BOARD MEMBERS

Martha Yochum

Gilbert Nore

Dwight Armistead

Mark Havemann

Clare Ollayos

Diane Ramsay Shedd

Don Quillman

Native American Family Day

It's right around the corner!

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 1st, 10 am to 4 pm

Joining Us This Year



Joseph (Standing Bear) Schranz of Midwest S.O.A.R.R.I.N.G. will conduct a Bison Blessing at Noon.



Dancers and Drumming of the Black Hawk Performance Company



Musician Bill (Conquering Bear) Buchholtz will be playing songs on the Native American Flute.

This is shaping up to be a great day with plenty of activity. The event relocates to the hill overlooking the Bison pen at Noon as Standing Bear blesses Pokey, the zoo's resident female animal and reconnects us to the natural world from which we get our strength. Red Hawk always has a crowd around him learning what life was like for Indians at the turn of the 19th century. Conquering Bear will entertain us with songs played on the flute and Mike Becker will be selling these beautiful instruments. Ken Geier is returning and brings his passion for the creation of stone tools. Thanks to the American Indian Association of Illinois we are going to have several dancers and drummers performing in the afternoon. There will also be Native American arts and crafts on display and some for sale. Pack a picnic lunch and make a day of it.



Ken Geier will be discussing and demonstrating the art and skill of flint knapping.



Sal Red Hawk will be presenting his Lifestyles of the Potawatomi with authentic wigwam and period artifacts.



Sara Russel and company will be engaging children with games and craft programs throughout the day.

TOUCHING ON TRADITIONS

by EPM Staff

Once again, the time is almost upon us for our traditional Touching on Traditions exhibit. It's been an annual holiday staple at the Elgin Public Museum since 1986, although its first years were at the Hemmens auditorium. Believe it or not we're going to try and squeeze in an additional country or 2 this year. We're also going to rotate displays that have not been shown since we brought the exhibit from the Pavilion to the Museum a few years ago. Touching on Traditions will be open to the public starting Saturday, December 3rd on weekends and then daily starting December 17th until New Years Eve.

A special Invite to EPM members. Each year families in the Elgin area with diverse cultural backgrounds come to the museum one evening to help decorate trees and set up the displays. Each family brings a dish or 2 with cultural significance and after a couple of hours of decorating; a smorgasbord of culinary delights is set up for all the hard workers to sample. We're always looking for help this evening, which will be Monday November 28th this year. With close to 50 displays to set up, there is plenty to do. Where do your ancestors come

from? Several countries are already spoken for, but if you would like to adopt a country and join in the festivities, give Peggie Stromberg a call at 847-741-6655. She'll have a list of all the countries that need a friend.

One other December note. This year we will again be conducting our Winter Solstice program on the day of the solstice, December 22nd, which is a Thursday evening.



State Senator Mike Nolan, along with his family, gave us a hand decorating displays.

The actual time of the solstice is 5:30 am, however, our program will take place in the evening. Not sure if we would have much of a turnout if we started the program at 5:00 in the morning. Watch our website for more information as the time gets closer.

Who Remembers P.A.W.S.?

by EPM Staff

Pre-School Awareness World Series

After a 2 year hiatus, we're bringing the program back for a limited run this coming winter and spring. Our own Marge Fox, who has delighted youngsters for more than a generation, will be developing and conducting the programs. Her enthusiasm with song, stories, games and crafts makes this an event that children will want to return to month after month. To get a flavor of what Marge will bring to the program see her article on Page 8.

The programs are geared toward children between the ages of 3 and 5 years old. As parents, we must do our best to encourage a child's natural curiosity for the diverse

world around them. It is in this way that we fulfill one of the countless responsibilities we are challenged with in the rearing the future citizens of the world. And remember that you don't have to wait for that summer vacation to enjoy the many wonders of Mother Nature. She is around every day, morning, noon and night, right outside the back door.

The theme for this 5 program series is In Our Own Backyard, and will be conducted between 10 and 11:30am on the 3rd Saturday of each month starting in February.



February
Tricky Tracks



March
Scampering Squirrels



April
Dandy Dandelions



May
Lucky Ladybugs



June
Funky Frogs

UP COMING EVENTS AND PROGRAMS

Native American Family Day

Saturday, October 1st, 10am - 4pm

A Bison Blessing by a Native American elder, Sal Red Hawk and his Potawatomi wigwam and 19th century lifestyle, flint knapping, Native American flute music and traditional dancers, activities for the kids all day long and much, much more. Come and immerse yourself in the culture of the People.

It's FREE

Illinois Fossils and More or Less

Friday, October 7th, 7 pm

Mark Kuntz, professor of Geology at ECC and president of the Elgin Rock Club will be here to give a talk about why there are no dinosaur fossils in Illinois. Our geologic past has a lot to do with that. Maybe there are no dinosaur fossils but that doesn't mean that this region doesn't have an intriguing past with world class fossils.

**Fee: \$6, EPM members \$4.
Call to reserve a seat.**

Winter Birds of Northern Illinois

Friday, November 4th, 7 pm

Join the Andrinis as they give a pictorial presentation about many of the birds that winter in Northern Illinois.

View both permanent residents as well as winter visitors found in fields, streams and backyards. You will also learn about adaptations birds have developed to withstand the inclement conditions they are subjected to.

**Fee: \$6, EPM members \$4.
Call to reserve a seat.**

Science Night Schedule

Our monthly hands-on science experiences for the kids

Space Odyssey Part II

Friday, October 14th, 6-8 pm
Gas planets, red dwarf stars, solar systems...expand beyond your horizons and discover the universe. Explore space through experiments and demonstrations set up throughout the museum. This is a completely new program from last years Astronomy Science Night.

Science Magic

Friday, November 11th, 6-8 pm

A flick of the hand here, a magic word there and magicians seem to make something out of nothing! But what is magic but science used to trick our senses. Discover optical illusions, laser tricks and other "magic" as explained through science in experiments and demonstrations set-up throughout the museum.

A Night with Traditions

Friday, December 9th, 6-8 pm

Enjoy a night of cultural traditions through Elgin Public Museum's Touching on Traditions exhibition. Kids and adults alike can enjoy the stories, crafts and foods of different winter holidays highlighted in this interactive, drop-in program.

**Cost \$2 per person
EPM members FREE**

Science Nights are Drop-in programs so no registration is required

Continue to check our website for the latest in
Learning Through Adventure.

What Your History Teacher Didn't Tell You About Thanksgiving.

Friday, November 11th, 7 pm

Thanksgiving is a quintessentially American holiday. But what do you really know about that historic event in Plymouth in 1621? Who was there? What did they actually eat? Investigate the roots of the holiday through the perspective of the Native Americans in attendance, the Wampanoag, the traditions, the food and more, as we separate fact from fiction.

**Fee: \$6, EPM members \$4.
Call to reserve a seat.**

Junior Girl Scout Badge Workshop

**Saturday, October 22nd,
9 am - Noon**

Earn your Jewelry and Outdoor Creativity badges at the Elgin Public Museum. We're teaming up with Hawthorne Hill Nature Center for activities inside and out. This program will take place at the Elgin Public Museum. Please dress for the weather.

**Fee \$2 per scout. Registration
Required 1 week in advance**

Bison Feeding Schedule

You have no idea how big and impressive these creatures are until you're nose to nose with them.

Oct. 29th, Nov. 26th and Dec. 17th.
Programs start with an introduction at the Museum at 7 am, except in Dec.

**\$2 per adult, \$1 pre child
EPM members FREE**

Reservations Required

www.elginpublicmuseum.org

F - Family Program

A - Adult Program

MUSEUM LIGHTING

The Elgin Public Museum has been around for quite a few years, to say the least. And, if you ever attended evening programs here at the Museum you might have noticed that the lighting in the main hall and the adjacent west wing could be a little better. Well, thanks to the City of Elgin, who by the way own and maintain this structure, funds have been appropriated to replace the track lighting and beacons in both those areas. Installation is being completed, as this is written, for new track lighting.

Light can be devastating to organic materials as you might realize. We've all seen the affect of sunlight on fabrics in our house. Because we are illuminating very old and delicate objects, the lights being installed at the Museum cannot give off any infrared or ultra violet radiation. Ringing the skylights in both these wings are low wattage, eco-friendly, LED fixtures. Each light requires only 27 watts of electricity. The older canisters that they are replacing required at least 75 watts, and there were twice as many. That's not



From the 2nd floor looking into the main hall.

counting the 4 spot lights that were installed at the top of the arches. Better lighting to showcase the Museum's collection and more efficiency. What you might call a plus – plus solution. Thank you City of Elgin.

Goodbye, Yet Again



Rachel Camacho, one of our summer attendants, headed back to school at St. Olaf in Minnesota earlier this month. This coming semester she will be taking classes including American History and Film, a course on how the movie industry portrayed our culture over time, Introduction to Film Studies, Great Conversations: the Enlightenment, Canoeing, and maybe even Norwegian. On top of that she's on the school's Rugby team. Everyone here wishes her the best as she tackles her sophomore year in college.

Summer Volunteers

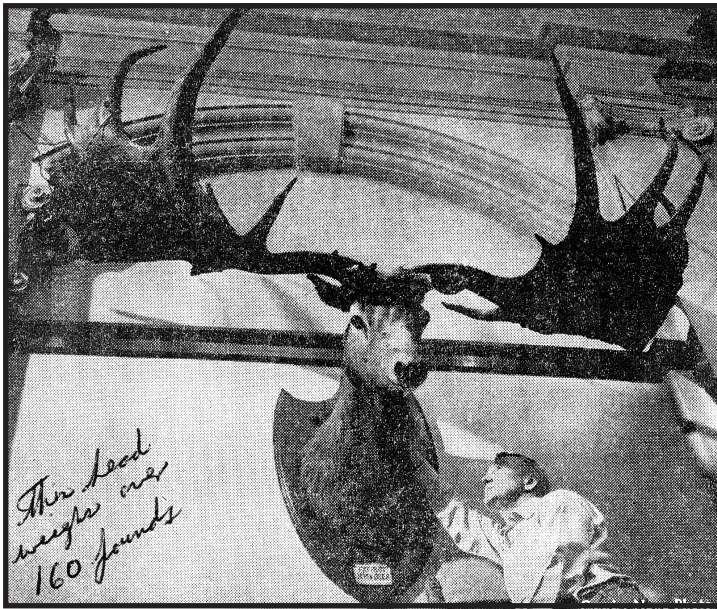
The Elgin Public Museum was extremely fortunate to have 3 very competent and dedicated volunteers this summer, Mike Grande from Bartlett, Brittany Johnson from Elgin and Elaine Lord from Schaumburg. Together they put in about 70 hours conducting an inventory of the Museum's Geology collection. The last time this task was done was the year 2002. Since then many objects have been moved around, and it was necessary to get an up-to-date record of the location of each and every object we are responsible for. It is only when this is done that we can relocate the entire collection to a new storage area. They tackled our rocks, minerals and fossils in the lower level storage room, shelf by shelf. Each object was brought out and examined. They cross referenced accession logs, hard copy paperwork, computer records and location logs to make sure all information was recorded and consistent. When it was all completed a total of 558 objects were inventoried from the permanent collection in the storage rooms. Some objects were as small as 1 cm across while others were up to 50 cm. Let me tell you some of those large rocks weighed a ton, or at least it seemed like it.

The entire relocation project for the Geology collection has only just begun. There is still a lot of work to be done. The room that will be this collections new location is still in the process of being cleaned out. Once that is done shelving units will have to be constructed. With the work that Mike, Brittany and Elaine have done this summer, when this room is ready, the transition will go very smoothly and be much better organized.

We wish them well as they continue their college and high school education and hope when they get back and have some free time they'll want to spend it here helping us out.



Known as 0022-0002-072 to our volunteers or 1 large heavy piece of Muscovite to our visitors.



Museum curator Carl Gylleck shown cleaning the head of the Irish Deer. This photo appeared in the Courier-News in May 1955.



View from the second floor of the museum looking into the main hall. This photo appeared in the Free Press May 12, 1965.

antlers only) from an antique store in Texas in the 1890's. An elk hide seems to have been added in the 1920's by the Audubon Society for aesthetic reasons. From what I understand an attempt was made to return the specimen to its original purchased condition but the bone underneath the hide was too delicate to carry this out.

The object was originally displayed at the Lords Park Pavilion in 1897. It was moved to the Museum when it opened on November 12, 1920, and originally was mounted

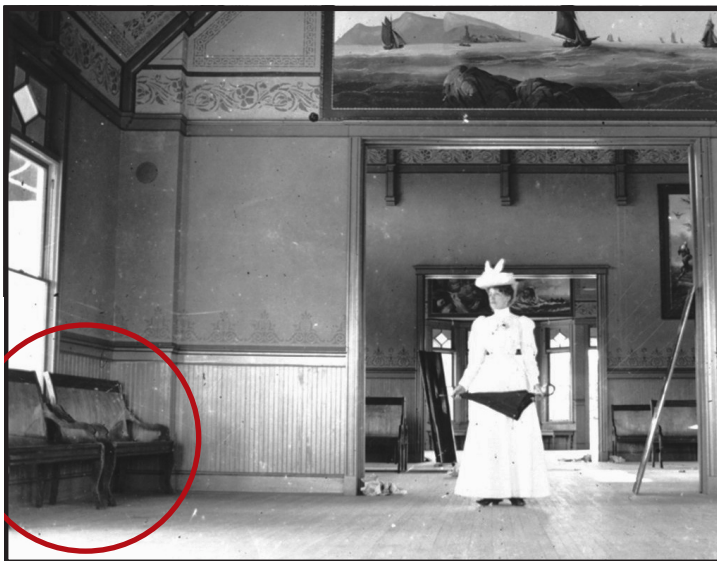
on the east wall above a window. That wall is now the entrance to the Discovery room, completed in the year 2000. Today the Irish Deer occupies its rightful place of distinction for all our Museum visitors.

In the above photograph on the right there is a black bear mount sitting on top of a display case. That's Tillie, and she also has a colorful past. Watch for her story, and others, in the next chapter of Museum History 101.

They Don't Make 'em Like They Use To

As we were looking through newspaper articles, museum records and old photographs for information on the Irish Deer we ran across this picture of the Pavilion and noticed some interesting furniture. Has anyone ever sat on one of those 2 red benches in the Discovery room?

They were at the Pavilion a long, long time ago. Looking at the apparel of the woman in the center, I know the picture was taken decades before my time. It could even have been before my parents time and they're in their 80's.



FIFTEEN MINUTES

by Marge Fox

Can you find the time to check on what is going on outside your door? In your backyard? Fifteen minutes is all it takes – that's 5,475 minutes a year or 90 plus hours. It's easy, it's fun, and it's amazing what you have been missing! Here are some ideas to get you started.



A Week in Fall

- Day 1 – Feel the fresh clean air and cool breezes.
- Day 2 – Hear the crunch of dried fallen leaves.
- Day 3 – Smell the scent of a wayward skunk.
- Day 4 – See the flocks of birds in the sky.
- Day 5 – Watch the squirrels hunt and bury acorns.
- Day 6 – Visit the apple orchard and pick and eat.
- Day 7 – Revel in the beautiful leaf colors.

“Why do the leaves change colors?”

A Week in Winter

- Day 1 – Follow animal tracks in the snow – make your own.
- Day 2 – Catch a snowflake on your tongue.
- Day 3 – See the Milky Way on a dark night – the big dipper.
- Day 4 – Follow the phases of the moon – its face.
- Day 5 – Make a snow angel in a snowbank – a snowman.
- Day 6 – Listen for a calling owl or the swish of a fox.
- Day 7 – Find an animal's cozy home.

“How do icicles form?”

A Week in Spring

- Day 1 – Splash in rain puddles in your rubber boots.
- Day 2 – Listen to the thunder as a storm arrives.
- Day 3 – Pick a bright yellow dandelion – blow the seeds away.
- Day 4 – Hear the birds singing – a cardinal? A blue jay?
- Day 5 – Look closely at a leaf bud – a flower.
- Day 6 – Watch a bee buzz around the apple blossom.
- Day 7 – Give a tree a hug and feel its bark.

“What makes a rainbow?”

A Week in Summer

- Day 1 – Follow your shadow on a sunny day – make shadow pictures.
- Day 2 – Catch a bug and watch a butterfly.
- Day 3 – See the colorful flowers along the roadside.
- Day 4 – Sit in the cool shade of a tree.
- Day 5 – Hunt for some neat rocks.
- Day 6 – Scoop up pond water and see what you find.
- Day 7 – Take a trail walk – lie down under some tickle grass.

“Why do you go to bed before the sun sets?”

You have just begun your discoveries and there are many more to come. It's easy, it's fun, and it is amazing!

And it took only fifteen minutes a day!

Need more ideas?

Joseph Bharat Cornell
“Sharing Nature with Children”

Docent of the Children's
Nature Institute
“Trails, Tails and Tide Pools in Pails”

Richard Louv
“Last Child in the Woods”

Rockwell, Sherwood, Williams
“Hug a Tree”

Northword Press, Inc.
*“Fun With Nature
Take Along Guide”*

Capture the Moment

**Capture the moment
Follow their lead
Build on the wonder
Build on the need.**

**Look for beginnings
For reasons to know
Capture the moment
And knowledge will
grow!**

Jean Warren