



THE MUELLER RECORD

Fall 2000

SNAP! SNAP! SNAP! SNAP! SNAP! SNAP! SNAP!

We are bringing back our popular "SNAP" photo exhibit for the winter months which features "SNAPS" from the 1950s of the huge Mueller Christmas parties.



For the Record . . .

by Nancy Jo Batman, Manager

One of the most interesting parts of my job is getting gifts. They aren't for me; they are for the Museum.

In the last three weeks, we have really been blessed in that department.

First, Marilyn Black walked in and wanted to know if we wanted a rocking chair that had been a wedding present from the Mueller Co. to her parents, Mr. and Mrs. Oscar Stratman in November, 1930.

This is one item we have been wanting, as we already have the baby "coop" which was presented to new parents who worked at the company. (Adolph presented over 100 of these handy beds, which included wheels and netting.) When a baby outgrew it, the family gave it back to the company for the next family to use.

In the 1915 issue of the Mueller Record, there is an article about the "Rocking Chair Club," where employees were given a rocking chair and a dining room chair when they were married. The article states that this is a "long-held tradition," but we don't know when this was started. Perhaps Hieronymus even instituted this practice before his death in 1900.

The rocking chairs changed in design from year to year, according to other articles and photos in the company's monthly magazine.

Then, Vernon Brunner walked in with a package he ordered over ebay on the internet. It is an item I didn't even know the company made: a refrigeratorman's kit, which was made in 1943 in the Mueller Brass Co. at Port Huron, Michigan. The kit contains all the tools needed to repair or inject ammonia or freon into a variety of refrigerators. All of the tools are either brass or steel and are nestled in their own little built-in space inside the black box.

Then Bill Brooks walked in with a red fire hydrant decanter--another item I have been coveting since we had one on loan from Del Parks during our "Vibrant Hydrant" exhibit several years ago. The decanter was made in 1975 in celebration of the new Mueller Centurion hydrant. They originally held Kentucky Bourbon and sold for \$80 with most of the receipts going to the International Association of Firefighters Scholarship Fund. It was built 1/4 the size of the actual Centurion Hydrant, made by the Mueller Co.

We have received many exciting gifts over the Museum's four-year history. But we still don't have a Crown roller skate, manufactured by the Mueller Co. in 1884-1888. Know where we could get one? (A total of 5,000 pairs were shipped to Australia when the skating craze dropped dead in 1888.)

--Nancy Jo Batman, Manager

Members since last newsletter

Benefactor - \$1000

Ms. Gillian L. White

Sponsor - \$100

Mrs. Phyllis Pinterich

Mr. and Mrs. Larry Schultz

Family - \$25

Mr. and Mrs. Leonhard G. Mau

Regular - \$20

Ms. Margaret Chainski

Mr. and Mrs. Robert K. Howie Sr.

Mr. and Mrs. Ben Jones

Mr. and Mrs. Ron Riley

Mr. Preston Ruthrauff

Senior/Student - \$15

Mrs. Pauline E. Jurgens

Mr. and Mrs. Ray Mounts

Ms. Doris V. Neece

Visitors & other numbers

Since opening our doors four years ago, a total of 3557 visitors have signed the guest register. We estimate another 300 have visited and not signed. We think these numbers are "not bad," as we are only open three days a week (Friday-Sunday.) But, on the other hand, I had time to count all the names, so . . .

The majority of our visitors have been from outside Decatur. Some of the remarks on the visitors' ledger include: *Pretty cool, Fascinating, lots of memories, Beautiful, We loved it, Lovely museum, Excellent, Great, Extremely informative, I'll be back, Very impressive, Wonderful place, Good graphics, Good use of display space, A great accent to Decatur history, Awesome*,--to my all-time favorite from a chubby 8th grader: *You need a vending machine.*

The museum has 77 volunteers and 160 members. Since opening, we have had 16 temporary exhibits, which resulted in an award from the Decatur Area Arts Council.

Nationwide, mega-museums are seeing big increases in the number of visitors; but small museums are seeing a decrease. So far, no one has figured out why; just one of those weird things.

The Hieronymus Mueller Museum will observe its 5th birthday on Memorial Day, 2001.

Museum receives awards

The Hieronymus Mueller Museum received two awards during the Annual Awards Banquet of the Illinois Association of Museums October 25 in Zion, Illinois.

The museum received an Award of Merit for its video, "Mueller Co.'s 75th Anniversary Revisited," a 40-minute video made from approximately 140 lantern slides which the museum has in its archives.

The original slide show was presented July 16, 1932, for Mueller Co. employees on the 75th anniversary of the company and was narrated by Adolph Mueller, president. A copy of the narration was added to the video, along with the songs which accompanied the original slide show. The video was produced by S. Turner Communications, and the music was researched and provided by Jason Butterick of Millikin University.

The committee noted: "We felt the video was a great way to make the slides accessible to a wider audience and that it provides a terrific archive of information on life in that time period, not just the company's history. The conservation work done on the slides was also commendable."

An Award of Merit was also presented to the museum for its Hieronymus Mueller Museum Calendar 2000, which was produced by Nancy Jo Batman, museum manager, as Christmas gifts for its 77 volunteers.

Each month was represented by a photograph from the archives of the museum or a reproduction of a Mueller Record cover.

In presenting the award, the committee noted: "The calendar was a clever idea as a gift for your museum volunteers and especially in keeping with the museum's mission statement."

The videos are available for \$20 plus shipping and handling. The calendars include many interesting Mueller scenes and pictures of the volunteers and are free while the supply lasts.

Our sympathy to the family of Claude Stacey, a volunteer at the Museum, who died November 17.

Museum Hours

Friday-Sunday

1-4 p.m.

Year-Round

Closed on Major Holidays

How to become a Museum Member in 2 Easy Steps:

- 1) Fill out the enclosed card.
- 2) Send it to the museum.

Annual Membership Information

Student/Senior Citizen: \$15

Free admission for member and one guest, museum newsletter subscription, 10% discount on gift items.

Regular Membership: \$20

Free admission for member and one guest, museum newsletter subscription, 10% discount on gift items.

Family Membership: \$25

Free admission for member and up to four guests, museum newsletter subscription, 10% discount on gift items.

***Support Membership:** \$50

Free admission for member and up to four guests, museum newsletter subscription, 10% discount on gift items.

***Sponsor Membership:** \$100

Free admission for member and up to four guests, museum newsletter subscription, 10% discount on gift items.

***Patron Membership:** \$500

Free admission for member and guests, museum newsletter subscription, 10% discount on gift items, recognition on museum donor board.

***Benefactor Membership:** \$1000

Free admission for member and guests, museum newsletter subscription, 10% discount on gift items, recognition on museum donor board.

Please circle the type of membership preferred.

* A portion of these membership fees are tax deductible.

**Please send this form and payment to
HIERONYMUS MUELLER MUSEUM**

61 South Country Club Road
Decatur, Illinois, 62521
(217) 423-6161

Name _____

Address _____

The Hieronymus Mueller Museum is a privately funded non-profit museum and depends upon donations for its operations.

Do You Remember?



Back row (left to right): John Boldt, Harold Moats, Charles Horn, Fred Waggoner; front row (left to right): Oscar Stratman, James (Barney) Morrison, Joe Dial, (Supt.), Heck Whittington. (Photo courtesy of Marilyn Black)

◆ Iva Fravala, Thelma Endsley, Beverly Blakeman, Ruth Brownlow (Wampler), Mary Lou Wheatley and Joyce Schlesier make up the Wednesday night bowling team. The Thursday night team includes: **Beverly Boutcher, Sonja Brooks, Virginia Benton, Virginia Isome, and Sue Stratman.** --*Main Connections*, December 1958

◆ Recipients of service awards for July, August and September, 1958, at the Decatur plant: **Raymond Larus, J. Warren Sexson, Walter F. Salefski, Galen N. Hutchens, 25 years; Irvin E. Keller, Edgar N. Stark, Henry W. Stratman, Albert L. Rokash, Opal L. Jackson, Robert D. Walley, George S. Sanderson Jr., and Samuel Jolly, 30 years.**

◆ Officers for of the 4-X club in 1958 were: **Earl Lowe**, president; **Brick Kramer**, vice-president; **Paul Parsons**, secretary; **Rex Smith**, treasurer; and **Jim Mahoney**, program chairman.

HIERONYMUS MUELLER MUSEUM

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