

CELEBRATING CHICAGO'S FAMOUS FOODS

2022 Annual Report

2022: BACK DOWN TO BUSINESS

As we look back on highlights from 2022, it is hopeful to see the museum get back down to our core business of engaging the community with history in many ways. The Elmhurst History Museum team bounced back in 2022 with a return to a full exhibition schedule and robust program offerings. Conditions related to the COVID-19 pandemic eased, and the Elmhurst History Museum team was in full swing with more in-person programming, school field trips, and an uptick in foot traffic that was welcomed by all.

Here are just a few of the interesting numbers from a year that took our audiences on an eclectic journey through history. In 2022, we traveled back in time to learn about the indigenous prairie people of northern Illinois; we took a nostalgic trip through Chicago's culinary history—from pizza to hot dogs and Rainbow Cones—to consider the city's best-known foods; and we ended the year with an insightful and powerful retrospective featuring the stories of local immigrants to consider what it means to be an American.

INDUSTRY AWARDS & GRANTS

2022 Award of Excellence, Illinois Association of Museums, Community Partnerships

For collaborative work with Elmhurst University in honor of their sesquicentennial including exhibit and related programs.

March 2022: Illinois Public Museum Capital Grant

For creation of a public performance space on museum campus (slated for completion in 2024).

BY THE NUMBERS

13,939 total patrons served

6,772 visitors explored our exhibits

5,481 people participated in on-site programs and special events

1,077 beer lovers attended the Elmhurst Craft Beer Fest in September

1,000 foodie fans converged on our lawn for the Picnic on Park in July

784 students experienced our Portable History Programs in their classrooms

500 friends were involved in the November Day of the Dead Celebration

416 children took part in living history programs at the Churchville Schoolhouse

360 participants toured the Elmhurst-Chicago Stone Quarry in October

150 guests experienced the Graveside Stories Cemetery Walk in October

133 fans watched the Vintage Baseball Game at Elmhurst University in June

104 research inquiries were handled



painting of Elmhurst resident Jane Byrd Bryan by renowned painter G.P.A. Healy was restored and returned to the museum for permanent display

EXHIBITS





February 4 – June 5, 2022: People of the Prairie: 12,000 Years in DuPage County

The Elmhurst History Museum continued to support our mission to engage with the community by offering a diverse selection of exhibits throughout the year. 2022 opened with *People of the Prairie: 12,000 Years in DuPage County,* which explored indigenous life in this area from the Ice Age through the establishment of the Cottage Hill settlement now known as Elmhurst. This exhibit offered opportunities for curriculum-aligned field trips and included many fascinating artifacts and interactive displays.

June 24 – October 2, 2022 Eat Your Heart Out: Iconic Chicagoland Foods

Following the museum's tradition of taking a look at the lighter side of history in summertime, in June *Eat Your Heart Out: Iconic Chicagoland Foods* opened to enthusiastic response from both history and foodie fans across the region. The exhibit was a celebration of the culinary delights that are Chicago trademarks with a spotlight on the "big three": pizza, hot dogs, and Italian beef. The exhibit garnered significant foot traffic and publicity during its popular run with more than 3,400 visitors.







IN PURSUIT OF HAPPINESS:

October 28, 2022 – May 14, 2023 In Pursuit of Happiness: Immigrants in Our Communities

In fall of 2022, *In Pursuit of Happiness: Immigrants in Our Communities* took a comprehensive look at the changing tapestry of people who call the western suburbs home. The exhibit showcased the immigration stories of many residents of DuPage County through interviews and the objects they shared to be displayed in the exhibit. This exhibit continues its run through May of 2023.

Ongoing Exhibit:

By All Accounts: The Story of Elmhurst

Of special note is that several enhancements to the *By All Accounts: The Story of Elmhurst* exhibit in our second-floor gallery were initiated in 2022. A portion of *People of the Prairie* was adapted to create a new introduction to our core exhibit, providing an important facet of our local history that precedes white European settlement in the area. In addition, the exhibit's mini-theatre was enhanced with the addition of a selection of staff-produced short videos for viewing.





PROGRAMS

The Museum's Supervisor of Education Services, Jessie Wandersee, spearheaded the effort to return to normalcy with a diverse offering of Public Programs for audiences of all ages. Many of these learning opportunities were designed to connect with exhibit themes, and a few seasonal favorites returned as well. Some of the key programs and special events from 2022 included:

In Spring, EHM hosted Spring Break activities for families including an Atlatl to Archery Workshop and a Three Sisters gardening program. Museum Day returned in May with authentic Native American dancers and musicians.

Summertime activities included a Family Pizza-Making Workshop, Iconic Chicago Foods lecture, a visit from the Sandwich King, and a festive Picnic on Park that welcomed the Oscar Meyer Wiener Mobile and Rainbow Cone truck to the museum campus along with approximately 1,000 people.

Fall's programming was led by special events that included the Graveside Stories Cemetery Walk with GreenMan Theatre Troupe, an amazing Day of the Dead Celebration led by Immigrant Solidarity DuPage, and the Immigration Stories Showcase at the Elmhurst Public Library. The highlyanticipated Elmhurst Quarry Tour in October, which sold out in minutes, enabled more than 360 ticketholders to take a rare behind-the-scenes tour of the facility.





EDUCATION

The Education market made a slow post-Covid return in the Spring of 2022 with 416 children visiting the **Churchville One-Room Schoolhouse** for living history programs. A noted trend was the rise in **Portable Programs** which are provided by museum educators in the classroom, and 784 students were served at area schools through this offering. A new program was developed for the *People of the Prairie* exhibit and proved to be popular with teachers, and it has been added to the regular roster.

In the summer, EHM's sold-out **Museum Explorer Camp** was back in place with a full week of fun STEAM-focused activities for curious kids in grades 2 – 5.

COLLECTION & RESEARCH

The Collections staff, led by Curator Daniel Lund, continued the ongoing work of managing, organizing, digitizing, and caring for the Elmhurst History Museum's collection. Some of the projects accomplished in 2022 included:

- A major achievement in 2022 was the implementation of the Catalogit Hub, a new collections database with more than 6,000 photographs available for public viewing on our website.
- Another key achievement was the restoration of the G.P.A. Healy portrait of Jane Byrd Bryan, which was acquired by the museum in 2020 with private funding and assistance from the Elmhurst Heritage Foundation. The painting was painstakingly restored over the past two years and will be officially unveiled in April 2023 and installed permanently in the *By All Accounts* exhibit later this year.

Weekly Throwback

Thursday posts continued to be the museum's most popular social media stars. The most popular post was a photo of the Yankee Doodle Dandy restaurant circa 1970 which garnered a reach of more than 15,000.



A new Elmhurst History in Focus video on Elmhurst restaurants was created as a feature in the Eat Your Heart Out exhibit and was added to this popular series on our YouTube channel.

History Spotlight rotating displays were added to the By All Accounts: The Story of Elmhurst exhibit. New topics included the Elmhurst Kiwanis Club, a history of catalog/kit homes, and a feature on the incorporation of Elmhurst as a village in 1882.

2022 Notable Donations to the Collection:

- A WWI-era naval ensign jacket belonging to Elmhurst resident Royal Burtis.
- A large selection of Elmhurst University **artifacts**.
- A scrapbook detailing the history of the Weaver-Young Dodge car dealership.
- A large **collection** of Elmhurst Fire Department records.



Mission

To engage people with history through thoughtful collection, enlightening exhibits, and diverse educational experiences.

Staff

As of December 2022

Dave Oberg Executive Director

Sarah Cox Curator of Exhibits

Jane Grossman Weekend Coordinator

Daniel Lund Curator of Collections Marnie O'Reilly Administrative Assistant

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ELMHURST HERITAGE

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ELMHURST HERITAGE



The Elmhurst History Museum is fortunate to have a dedicated source of support provided by the Elmhurst Heritage Foundation. The Foundation's guidance and financial assistance ensures that the Elmhurst History Museum and the Churchville One-Room Schoolhouse will continue to thrive for years to come. Here are some of the successes for the Elmhurst Heritage Foundation in 2022:

The **Elmhurst Craft Beer Fest** was once again the year's highpoint with 1,077 attendees and more than 53 sponsors, raising key funds for future exhibits, programs, and other enhancements.

More than 130 people joined in the old-fashioned fun at the **Vintage Baseball Game** at Elmhurst University in the classic "town vs. gown" matchup.

The Elmhurst Heritage Foundation provided a **generous annual grant** to the museum which provided critical funding for programs, exhibits and more.

The Foundation celebrated Members and Donors with a **special April event** that included dancing to the popular Neverly Brothers band.





The Foundation hosted **after-hours exhibit opening receptions** for members, donors, and sponsors, including a special event in November with the Elmhurst Chamber of Commerce.

The Foundation awarded the prestigious **Alben F. Bates Award** to Feze Roofing, Thomas Marcucci, and Pints-Elmhurst.

The Foundation continued to manage the **museum's membership program** offering special benefits and activities in support of the museum.

The **year-end annual appeal** invited donors to support our local community gems and received a generous response.

The Development Committee marketed and procured a **record number of platinum, gold, and silver sponsorships** in support of the museum's exhibits program.

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Cover photos from Picnic on Park, July 2022.

Archaeological Survey