

Albion Academy Historical Society

Discovering slice of history at Pie and Ice Cream Social

Submitted by Deb Stoddard of the Albion Academy Historical Society

Albion is a quiet, sleepy hamlet just outside of Edgerton.

Each summer, AAHS sponsors a traditional, old fashioned pie and ice cream social at the museum, located on the former Albion Academy school grounds where three buildings of co-educational higher education once stood.

Operating from 1853-1914, the academy employed and hosted many notable scholars during the turbulent Civil War

and beyond. We are proud of our local museum and park, and each summer there are car and craft shows, family picnics and celebrations, and hometown ball games to enjoy on the historic grounds.

On this particular day, I was standing on the steps of the museum in my vintage apron taking a break from serving pie to the loyal, dedicated crowd. People from everywhere seem to find us, and come back year after year to enjoy a bit of nostalgia and community.

Some local folks walked up to speak with

members of our board concerning a bit of history they had found. A diary was discovered while going through family things, and was thought to be written by someone in the Bliven family. Bliven is a common name in Albion history, so we were happy to obtain this for our collection.

Being an amateur historian, and loving a mystery and treasure hunt, I interrupted and boldly took the aged, tattered book and exclaimed that, "I'll read it, and then we'll know which Bliven wrote it and just what reference it has to Albion Academy."

Little did I know that the road would be a long and sometimes painful one

I opened the diary-
Jan 1. The tolling of the bells last night at midnight gave place to a joyful chime, who told to those whose eyes were not closed in sleep, of the birth of the New Year. Yes! Dear old 1868, with all of its lights and shadows was at rest and the new 1869 came gladly into life.

Nineteenth century penmanship is very different than 20th, and completely foreign to 21st. It's written in a florid, fluid, cursive hand almost unrecognizable at first. So started the labor of love that continues today. Long hours hunched with a magnifying glass, old dictionaries, and a

spelling and grammar learning curve difficult to master after 150 years of change.

When she wrote the first entry in 1868, Ms. Emily G. Scribner was a teacher. I was, to say the least, surprised and curious to find her teaching at a school that I didn't know had even existed in Madison.

The three story octagon limestone home of Governor Leonard Farwell overlooked Lake Monona. During the Civil War it became the Harvey United States Army Hospital. After the war, the building was converted into the Soldiers' Orphans Home. Over the years it was a home and school for 300 children, all orphans of Civil War veterans.

Emily writes of the children, friendships and conflicts during her stay at the school. The governor and several generals visited and committees were held. Her uncle, the superintendent, leaves under pressure, and Emily follows. It was a painful, tearful goodbye to her students at the Soldiers' Orphans Home.

She then goes home to Fond du Lac on March 10, 1869. Emily, happy to be home.

Soon, she marries James Barnett, a physician and Civil War 1st lieutenant. They move to Lafayette, Ill., where he practices medicine and she practices being lonely



The Soldiers' Orphans Home, where Emily Scribner once worked. (Photo from Wisconsin Historical Society archives)

and missing her family. When, at last they return to Wisconsin, she is thrilled to take up residence in Neenah.

Emily was one of the first members of Neenah's public library board and was an early member of the Chautauqua Club, which was the beginning of the Tuesday Club.

There in Neenah they raise a family, and live out the rest of their lives. James died in 1917, Emily in 1939. Both are buried there.

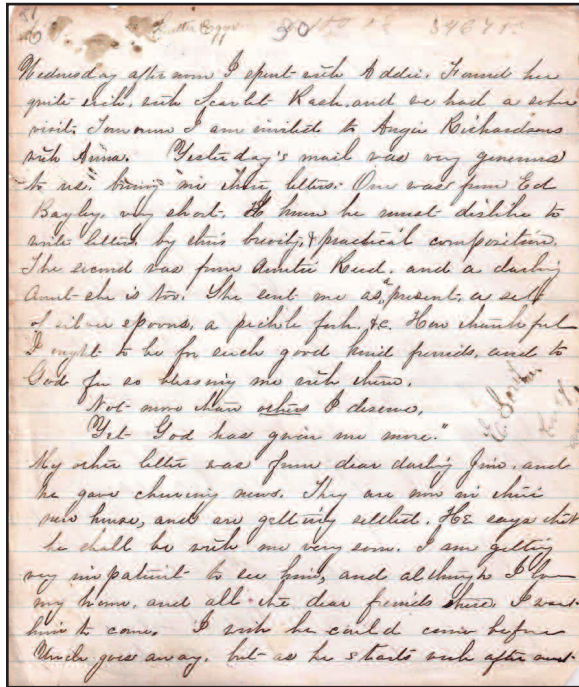
Written between 1869-1871, the diary of young Emily is full of names, places and details of a 19th century life. There were many heart-breaking, difficult times

and many simple joys. Skating, buggy riding and traveling long distances to visit with friends and family made her happy then.

I continue my research and hope to give back her private words to a family member someday.

Until then, I will keep searching for a connection to Albion Academy. It may be waiting in an archive somewhere, in a familiar, flowery cursive hand.

If you would like to learn more, please join us at Albion Academy Historical Society, Saturday, July 21, for our annual Pie and Ice Cream Social. You too may run into an old friend, or better yet, make a new one.



A page from Ms. Emily G. Scribner's historic diary. (Photo courtesy of Albion Academy Historical Society)

Edgerton Library is ready to rock this summer

By Kirsten Almo
Edgerton Library Director

Built in 1906 and serving the community of Edgerton ever since, the Edgerton Public Library welcomes everyone to visit and make use of the many services available. Although the library provides vital services to our community all year, activity increases in the summer as the school year winds down and library patrons of all ages are encouraged to join in the fun of our Summer Reading Program. The 2018 program, "Libraries Rock!" kicks off on June 11 and runs through August.

The Edgerton Public Library is a member of the Arrowhead Library System. In January, the system joined a consortium with two other library systems to share materials and offer patrons access to more than two million books, videos, music CDs, audiobooks, and more. With our shared catalog, patrons can order materials from any SHARE consortium library and have their items delivered to Edgerton every Monday through Friday.

With a library card, patrons also have access to downloadable eBooks, audiobooks, and videos through two different services for libraries, Hoopla

and Overdrive. If you need assistance getting your E-reader, phone or other mobile device connected to these products, we're happy to help you.

Need computer time? Access our free Wi-Fi using your own device or log onto a library computer. Need technical assistance? Our friendly staff is eager to help. Investigating your family history? Search the MyHeritage database resources or explore our local history room. Need a place to hold a meeting? Reserve one of our conference rooms.

If you're new to the area, we look forward to meeting you! If it's been awhile since you've been to visit the library, welcome back! If you're a regular visitor, we hope to see you again soon!

The Edgerton Public Library is part of the Arrowhead Library System and is located at 101 Albion Street. Reach us at 608-884-4511.

Hours: Monday-Thursday from 9 a.m.-8 p.m., Friday from 9 a.m.-5 p.m., and Saturday from 9 a.m.-3 p.m.

You can visit our website at als.lib.wi.us/EPL/index.html and our Facebook page at www.facebook.com/pages/Edgerton-Public-Library/324208738816.

Summer programming for kids and teens

In addition to our reading records where children can read and earn prizes, here's a lineup of what you expect to find at the Edgerton Public Library this summer for families with kids of all ages:

Mondays
•Storytime at 10 a.m.: Stories, songs, rhymes and a craft for the youngest patrons.

•Rockin' Monday Programs at 1 p.m.: A variety of program offered - guest presenters, crafts, activities. Fun for all.

Tuesdays
•Teen Donut Club at 11:30 a.m.: Informal program featuring books, crafts, games and donuts.

•Storytime at the Edgerton Pool at 2 p.m.

•Super Veggies: Stories at Silverwood at 6 p.m. June 19 and 26, July 17 and 24.

Wednesdays
•Libraries Rock Fun Night at 6 p.m.: Crafts, activities, and a rockin' good time (June 13 and 27, July 18, and Aug. 8).

•StorywalkTM - all day: While you walk from the library to Central Park, enjoy reading a story on signs posted along the way! (June 20 and July 11). Enjoy the 6:30 p.m. Concert in the Park on the same days, sponsored by the Arts Council of Edgerton.

Thursdays
•Dance, Sing & Play

at 10 a.m.: Early literacy activities, songs, and movement activities

Fridays
Movies at 1:30 p.m.: A variety of musical movies for kids, teens, and adults.

Mark your calendars for some of our summer programs with special guests:

•Wednesday, June 20 - 6:30 p.m. - David Landau Concert (at Central Park)

•Monday, July 9 - 1 p.m. - Doug the Jug Rockin' Juggling Show

•Monday, July 16 - 1 p.m. - Welty Center Rocks & Minerals Presentation

•Monday, July 23 - 1 p.m. - Magic Show with Dan Hulstrom

•Thursday, July 26 - 6 p.m. - Tony's Creepy Crawly Zoo

Summer Programming for Adults at the Edgerton Public Library

The kids aren't the only ones with all the library fun! We have over a dozen programs for adults as well - choose from book club meetings, a ukulele jam session, gardening programs, and bike to the library activities. There's something for everyone! Please check our website for specific dates and times. We also have a fun reading record for adults and the chance to earn prizes as you read!

'Creepy Crawly' bug show at library July 26

By Kirsten Almo
Edgerton Library Director

Can you imagine an animal show in Edgerton where you'll have the chance to see (and perhaps even hold) hundreds of live animals?

On Thursday, July 26, at 6 p.m., the Edgerton Public Library will welcome Tony (the Bug Whisperer) and his Creepy Crawly Zoo Show for an exciting, fun-filled program.

The Creepy Crawly Zoo introduces kids to Entomology by letting them participate as scientists for the evening.

Insects and other invertebrates are the perfect tools for scientific study. Why? Because no child has to go far to find insects on their own! More than one million different species of insects have been identified and there are many more to go! This life form is everywhere and they affect everything. The food we eat, the clothes we wear, the gardens we grow, the houses we live in, the fish we catch, the medicines we discover, the birds we watch and even our other pets like dogs and cats are all affected by insects.

To be introduced to insects is to get a glimpse of the great biodiversity this planet really holds and how all living things affect other living things.

Tony (the Bug Whisperer) is so passionate about sharing the world of insects with children and their families, that he has started the Gateway Science Center in Milwaukee. This insect- and reptile-themed natural science park will allow visitors the chance to explore nature in a hands-on setting all year around. Tony can also be found sharing his Creepy Crawly Zoo Show at Discovery World in Milwaukee.

The Edgerton Public Library will welcome the Creepy Crawly Zoo Show as part of the Summer Reading Program. More information on the Gateway Science Center can be found at www.creepycrawlyzoo.com.

The Edgerton Public Library is located at 101 Albion Street. For more information call 608-884-4511.