

Summary Information:

Collection Title: Joliet Area Historical Society Records

Collection Number: MSS.15

Date Range: 1922, 1981-2002

Size: 5 Linear Feet

Location: RR.9.2

Creator: Joliet Area Historical Society

Abstract: The Joliet Area Historical Society Records collection contains materials relating to the history of the Joliet Area Historical Society. The collection contains printed materials, photographs, newspaper clippings, meeting minutes, exhibit records, newsletters and other records relating to the history of the Joliet Area Historical Society from 1981 through 2002.

Acquisition Information: This collection has been composed from various accessions relating to the history of the Joliet Area Historical Society. There was no reasonable original order to these materials, so an order has been created for research purposes. All materials are appropriately labeled with their accession numbers, and more information regarding acquisition can be provided if requested.

Separated Materials: None

Citation: Item Description. MSS.15 Joliet Area Historical Society Records, Joliet Area Historical Museum. Box #, Folder #. Date Accessed.

Restrictions: None

Processed by: Kailee Lowry

Background Information:

History: In May of 1980, over 100 people attended a meeting at the Jacob Henry Mansion called to order by Alan and Virginia Ferry, owners of the Jacob Henry Mansion, and Tom and Sue Roach. The four organizers invited Dr. Robert Sterling to speak at the meeting and share slides on the history of Joliet. During the meeting it was decided to continue meeting on a regular basis in some of the city's historic commercial buildings and homes. After attending several meetings, a core group from the community interested in the preservation of the history of Joliet, decided to formally organize the Joliet Area Historical Society (JAHS). This group included Joule Mead, Carey Williams Jackie Garcia, Mary Barr West, Gordon Armstrong and Dorothy Crombie, Alan and Virginia Ferry, and Tom and Sue Roach. On March 24th, 1982 the group filed articles of incorporation, formally establishing the third historical society in Joliet.

By 1984 the JAHS opened a "minimuseum" in the Fehrenbacher building on Ottawa St across from the Joliet Public Library. Operating on a limited budget with a volunteer staff, the museum was open just one day a week. When space in the Fehrenbacher building was no longer available, the JAHS relocated

to a storefront space on Van Buren Street in the Rialto Square Building. The Society continued operation of this space until 1989.

As chairman of the Joliet Area Historical Society's Museum committee in 1989, Mel Schroeder worked with the Joliet Park District to enter a joint agreement whereby the Park District would use its taxing authority to levy for museum funds sufficient to hire a full-time director for the first time since the Society's founding. Beth Sheehan accepted the position in 1989 and served as director until 1992 when the Park District severed the agreement and withdrew funding from the museum. Nonetheless, the Society continued to operate its small museum on Van Buren Street. From 1992 to 2002 the JAHS presented programs, planned historical excursions, collected artifacts, designed exhibits, and operated its storefront museum with a volunteer staff.

In 2000 Joliet City Council approved a \$55 million Economic Development Package that included funding for the new Joliet Area Historical Museum. The city purchased in Ottawa Street Methodist Church at Cass and Ottawa streets for the new Museum location which opened in 2002.

Scope and Content Arrangement: The Joliet Area Historical Society Records collection contains meeting minutes, committee reports, membership information, scrapbooks, newsletters, event programs, exhibit information, photographs, and other materials relating to this history of the Joliet Area Historical Society. The materials in this collection have been divided into three series, and each series has been arranged chronologically:

Series 1: Organizational Records, 1922, 1981-2002

Series 2: Documents and Printed Materials, 1982-2002

Series 3: Photographs, 1989-2002

Related Materials:

Content Listing:

Series 1: Organizational Records, 1922, 1981-2002

Location: RR.9.2

Scope: Materials in this series includes meeting minutes, Joliet Area Historical Society bylaws, committee reports, and membership information. Of note is a ledger from 1922 discussing the organization of the Joliet Historical Society, originally the Committee of the Joliet Association of Commerce. This series has been arranged chronologically.

Folder Title:	Folder #:	Box #:
Record Book of the Joliet Area Historical Society, 1922	1	1
Constitution and By Laws, 1981	2	1
Treasurer's Ledger, 1981-1988	3	1
Articles of Incorporation, 1982, 1988	4	1

Board Meeting Minutes, 1982-1992	5	1
Board Meeting Minutes, 1982-1987	6	1
Board Meeting Minutes, 1987-1992	7	1
Board Meeting Minutes, 1988-1991	1	2
Board Meeting Minutes, 1989-1992	2	2
Board Meeting Minutes, 1992-1998	3	2
Board Meeting Minutes, 1998-2002	4	2
Board Meeting Minutes, 2000-2002	5	2
Joliet Area Historical Society Bylaws, 1983	6	2
Acquisitions Committee, 1983	7	2
Joliet Park District and Joliet Area Historical Society Agreement, 1988-1991	8	2
Membership Directory, 1991	9	2
Committee Reports, 1995-1997	10	2
Treasurer's Report, 1995-2002	11	2
Joliet Area Historical Society By-Laws, 1997	13	2
Trustee Rooster and Membership List, 1999-2000	14	2

Series 2: Documents and Printed Materials, 1982-2002

Location: RR.9.2

Scope: Materials in this series includes scrapbooks, newsletters, event programs, newspaper articles, correspondence, and exhibit information. For preservation purposes scrapbook materials were removed from the original scrapbook but kept in the original order. This series has been arranged chronologically.

Folder Title:	Folder #:	Box #:
Joliet Area Historical Society Scrapbook, 1982-1986	1	3
Joliet Area Historical Society Scrapbook Newspaper Clippings. 1982-1986	2	3
Joliet Area Historical Society Newsletters, 1982-1988	3	3
Joliet Area Historical Society Newsletters, 1988-1996	4	3
Joliet Area Historical Society Newsletters, 1997-2002	5	3
Programs and Events, 1982-1991, 2002	6	3
Newspaper Articles, 1984-2002	7	3
Mary Barr West Will and Donation Papers, 1987	8	3
Elizabeth Sheahan, Museum Director Application, 1988	9	3
Correspondence, 1988-1989	10	3
Exhibits, 1989-1991	11	3

Series 3: Photographs, 1989-2002

Location: RR.9.2

Scope: Materials in this series include photographs from the grand opening of the Joliet Area Historical

Society Museum, photographs of exhibits, Society outings, events held by the Society, local tours, and the construction of the Joliet Area Historical Museum. This series has been arranged chronologically.

Folder Title:	Folder #:	Box #:
Joliet Area Historical Society Grand Opening Photographs, 1989	12	3
Joliet Area Historical Society Misc. Photographs, 1989, 1995, 2001-2002	13	3
Joliet Area Historical Society Museum Opening, 1984	1	4
Exhibit Photographs	2	4
Meetings and Museum Events	3	4
Midewin National Prairie Tour	4	4
Silver Cross Hospital Tour	5	4
Rialto Tour	6	4
Oakwood Cemetery Programs	7	4
Abraham Lincoln National Cemetery Tour	8	4
Tour of Chicago	9	4
Waterway Daze Presentations	10	4
Will County Historical Society Event	11	4
Union Station Tour	12	4
Virginia Ferry House Tour	13	4
Sacred Heart Church Tour	14	4
St. Mary's Carmelite Church Tour	15	4
Joliet Area Historical Society Collections, 2001	16	4
Joliet Area Historical Museum Groundbreaking, 2001	17	4
Joliet Area Historical Museum Construction, 2001-2002	18	4
Joliet Area Historical Museum Construction, 2001-2002	1	5
Joliet Area Historic Museum Opening, 2002	2	5