

# Field Notes

Volume 2 - Number 2

Summer 2017

## Teddy Bear Picnic

Since its debut in 1902, the teddy bear has become a toy that represents childhood. Not living to see the invention of the teddy bear, Eugene Field likely would have made the beloved bear a main character within his poetry and stories. With an origin story that spreads across two continents, and involves a German toy maker and a sitting American president, it is no wonder the teddy bear is so popular.

The teddy bear and its history will soon be coming to the Field House Museum with the opening of the new exhibit, *Teddy Bear Picnic*, on June 14, 2017. The story of the teddy bear begins with Margarete Steiff, a German toy maker and seamstress. Steiff was the founder of the Margarete Steiff GmbH, otherwise known as the Steiff Toy Company. The company began production of its jointed teddy bears in Germany in 1902. It is believed that none of the original Steiff teddy bears still exist today.

Also in 1902 and an ocean away, the American story of the teddy bear began. Candy shop owners Morris and Rose Michtom of Brooklyn were inspired by a political cartoon of President Theodore Roosevelt and his refusal to shoot a captured bear. His actions became the inspiration for their teddy bear. Only two plush bears were originally made, one for the President and another for the Michtoms' shop, and they were called Teddy's Bears.

To celebrate the story of the teddy bear, the Field House Museum's exhibit *Teddy Bear Picnic* will be displaying Steiff bears dressed in their picnic finest, as well as scenes of bears enjoying various picnic settings. To honor the many patriotic holidays that occur over the summer, some of the bears will be in their best red, white, and blue. The exhibit will be both educational and imaginative, bringing visitors back to their childhood memories full of backyard parties and picnics. Guests are encouraged to bring their favorite teddy bear for a picnic photo.



Alongside the new exhibit, the Field House Museum will be hosting a weekend of fun and teddy bear related activities on Saturday, July 15, and Sunday, July 16, 2017. On the 15th, visitors can enjoy a hot dog picnic lunch from noon to 1 p.m. and on the 16th from 1 p.m. to 2 p.m. Everyone will be able to experience and participate in fun craft activities, storytelling in the library, tours of the Field House, a teddy bear parade, and more! Thanks to a generous donation from Build-A-Bear, all children under 15 will be able to take home a new furry friend that can accompany them during the picnic.



The Teddy Bear Picnic event will be held on Saturday, July 15, from 11 a.m.-3 p.m. and Sunday, July 16, from noon to 3 p.m. Tickets are \$15 for those over 7 and \$8 for ages 6 and under. Tickets include a tour of the Field House Museum and hot dog picnic lunch.

### Upcoming Events at the Museum

***Teddy Bear Picnic Exhibit Opening*** – Wednesday, June 14

***Hidden History of Downtown St. Louis*** – Book signing, Saturday, June 17, 1 to 3 p.m.

***Teddy Bear Picnic Weekend*** – Saturday, July 15, 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. & Sunday, July 16, Noon to 3 p.m.

## Treasures From The Collection

### A Steiff Quartet

Regardless of the name of your favorite, fluffy bear when you were young, teddy bears are very special and receive all types of monikers. Was yours named after Winnie-the-Pooh or perhaps Smokey Bear or even Mishka, the Russian bear symbol of the 1980 Olympic Games? Teddy bears are popular, no matter the age of the owner. *The Telegraph* reported a few years ago that one-half of all Brits still have a teddy from their childhood. The newspaper further reported that one-third of adults in Britain regularly take teddy to bed with them!

Teddies have a long history which began in Giengen, Germany with Margarete Steiff's birth in 1847, thus making her a contemporary of Eugene Field who was born in 1850. Margarete was handicapped at an early age with polio which partly determined her career as a seamstress, allowing her to work from home. While making clothing for customers, she formed a pincushion in the shape of an elephant, using felt material which she had in the shop. The little elephant became a favorite toy of her nephew, playing with it while Margarete entertained him and other children with stories ...not unlike Eugene Field and his stories for children.

In 1880, Margarete's brother took eight of the tiny elephants to the market in Heidenheim, Germany as an experiment to determine if the toys would appeal to the locals. All eight were sold in one day! A mere six years later, in 1886, the small "factory" produced over 5,000 elephants, which by 1892 morphed into monkeys, donkeys, horses, pigs and camels, rabbits, mice, dogs and cats ...with not a bear in the collection. Eventually the soft animals were sold at larger markets and fairs. The firm was even represented at the 1904 Louisiana Purchase Exposition in St. Louis—locally referred to as the 1904 World's Fair—where Steiff won the Grand Prize due to the exceptionally high quality of workmanship.



Margarete Steiff

The teddy bear gained prominence in 1906 with the wedding of Theodore (Teddy) Roosevelt's daughter, Alice. Decorations for the wedding included little stuffed bears to signify the President's love of hunting and his disdain for shooting a bear cub. From that time forward, the President's nickname and the stuffed bear were forever entwined. By the following year, production at the Steiff factory reached 974,000 teddy bears. Around the same time, the company began riveting a metal label in each toy's ear in order to ensure the authenticity of the animal. The label identified the product as a genuine Steiff, in language appropriate to the destination of its origin: *Knopf Im Ohr* for Germany, Button in Ear for USA and *Bouton à l'Oreille* for France. Today, celebrating nearly 140 years of production at the Giengen location, the company menagerie encompasses more than 20,000 different animals.



Steiff teddy bears, along with others, have taken over the new display space at the Museum. There are bears in myriad dress, male and female bears, baby and bear cubs, and bears enjoying a picnic. The bears represent a recent donation to the Museum from Shirley and Don Zork. Of the hundreds included in their donation, four unique furry animals stand out as the Zork's favorites and true treasures from their collection. The limited edition quartet taking place of pride consists of a baby bear along with small, medium and large bears which are all white and they, along with other bears including Muffy VanderBear, are sure to enchant you. All these teddies would love for you to join them at the upcoming Teddy Bear Picnic on July 15 and 16 at the Field House Museum. The events will include activities which will be both fun and educational with a couple of surprises you won't want to miss! This will be a great opportunity for parents and grandparents to bring the young ones and introduce them to the Museum. Additional information is available in the article on page 1 and on the Museum website.

By Marianne Gleich



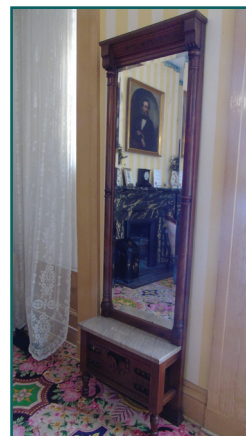
## Like New Again!

At the Field House, we pride ourselves on the care taken with our furniture and collection pieces. Recently, some of these items have been restored to peak condition, thanks in part to generous donations to the museum.



One of our favorite items is the corner curio cabinet in our Ladies' Parlor. This 1851 cabinet, created by George Gesielle, is one of a pair. When they were made, these cabinets were gifted to the City of St. Louis, which then gave one to the Field House. This lovely dark wood cabinet holds some of Eugene's glasses and decanters, as well as other pieces of attractive dishware.

The Walnut Pier Mirror stands tall and sturdy after its restoration. It has been refinished nicely, giving the wood and marble that like-new shine.



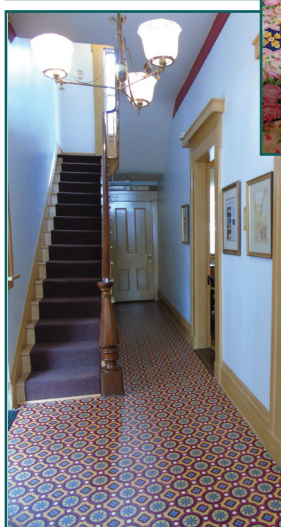
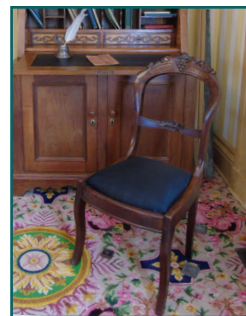
One of the ladies' chairs that currently takes up residence in our first-floor Gentlemen's Parlor has received a major facelift. The solid mahogany wood has been renewed and sports a lovely, high-gloss finish. The formerly mustard-yellow upholstery has been replaced with a stately burgundy red velvet.

Our little walnut side chair might sometimes be overlooked, but even the smallest furniture pieces need attention now and then. This little chair typically sits in front of the secretary in our first-floor Gentlemen's Parlor. The horsehair seat has been recovered,

and the back of the chair, with its classic motif of grapes and flowers, has been refinished.

Most recently, the floor cloth in the entrance was replaced and sports the same hand-stenciled, hand-painted design as the previous floor cloth. Now more than ever, the bold colors of the floor pattern jump out to catch any visitor's eye. Gracewood Designs continues to impress with their amazing craftsmanship.

With additional donations from guests and Museum Members, we can continue to restore our furniture pieces at the Museum.



## A Day of Giving!

The Field House Museum once again participated in Give STL Day! Once a year, St. Louisans come together to support their local nonprofit organizations with a day of giving. Whether big or small, the idea is that together these donations make a significant impact on our local community. This year, we were excited to raise money to help restore the third floor of the historic house. We want to give a special thank you to all who donated to the Field House Museum during Give STL Day:

.....

**give**  
**STL**  
**Day.org**<sup>SM</sup>

*If you missed Give STL Day and still want to donate to the Field House Museum, visit our website at [www.fieldhousemuseum.org/donate](http://www.fieldhousemuseum.org/donate) or call us at 314-421-4689.*

Anonymous  
Susan Abernathy  
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Francie Futterman  
Karen L. Klohr  
Elyse McBride  
Taylor McMullin

Edward Nickels  
Brian O' Gorman  
Maurice Quiroga  
David Whitney

Marianne & Peter Gleich, in memory of Janice Tiffin, a true lover of teddy bears  
Barbara Decker-Franklin, in memory of Edward Mangan  
Zina Tissi, in memory of Joann Hayes

## Third Floor Restoration

The new expansion of the Field House has received lots of positive feedback and has been greatly enjoyed by visitors since its opening. In a continuing effort to keep making improvements, the museum is now focused on restoring the third floor of the historic house. This exciting project will complete the narrative of the Field family and upper middle-class life in 19th century St. Louis. Plans for the restoration will follow the guidelines of the William Seale report, as was done with the rest of the house.

Eugene Field's inspiration for his writing stemmed from childhood, and, although the Field House Museum is Eugene's childhood home, the house does not fully

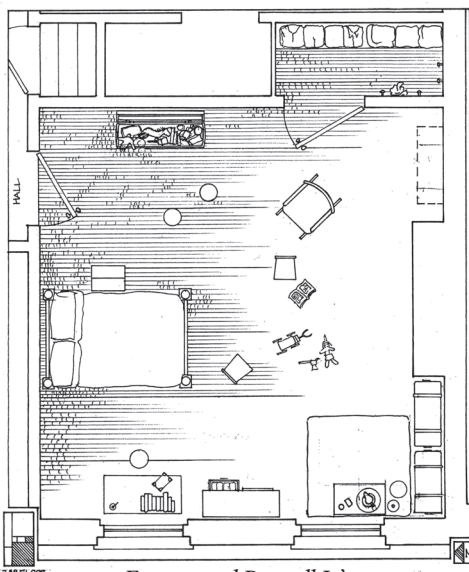


reflect that. With the restoration of the children's room on the third floor, the story of Eugene's life in this residence will be complete. This room will also permit the museum to rotate some of its toy collection in a way that is fun and comprehensive.

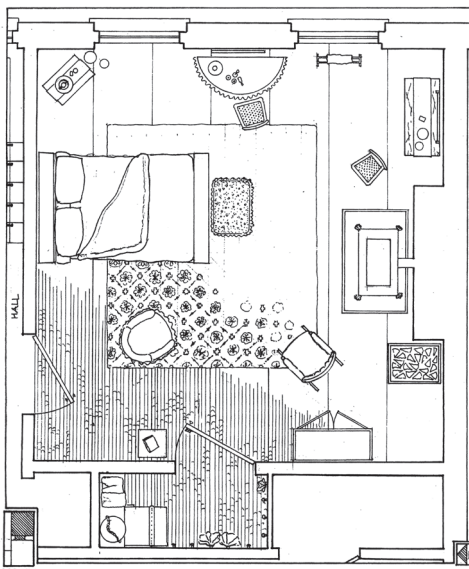
Adjacent to the children's room is Arabella Reed Angier's room. Arabella was Eugene's aunt, and she helped run the house while Frances, Eugene's mother, was pregnant. Seale's report suggests that Arabella treated this room as more of an apartment than just a bedroom. Besides the standard bedroom set, she also had several chairs around a wood-burning fireplace. The bedroom set itself is described as being a painted cottage set with hand-painted floral designs.

Finally, the third-floor hall space will be converted into exhibit space featuring information on the half-house, or flounder, that no longer exists at the rear of the historic house. This will truly allow visitors a complete picture of family life as it will outline the kitchen, dining, and domestic quarters. Specifically, it will focus on the two Mormon girls who worked for the Fields, Temperance and Mercy Westwood. It will also include floor plans of what the inside of the half-house would have looked like and how the family would have used the various spaces.

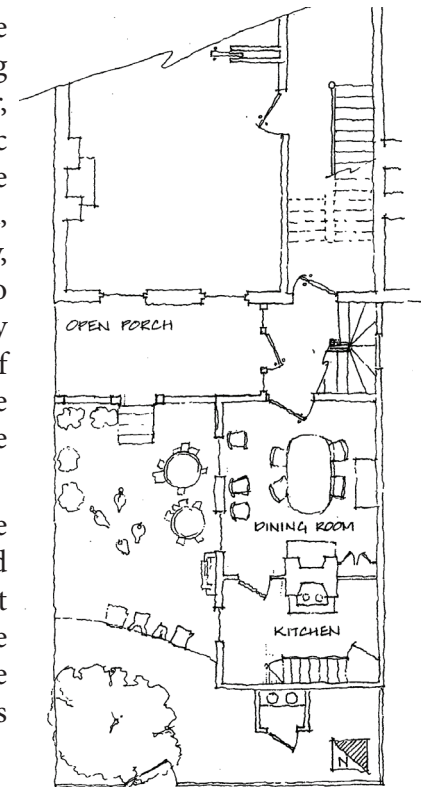
Finishing the third floor restoration of the historic house will create a fully immersive and comprehensive guest experience. This project will not only help tell the personal stories of the Field Family but also give visitors a complete illustration of what life was like for individuals in St. Louis during the 1850.



*Eugene and Roswell Jr.'s  
Childhood Bedroom*



*Guest Bedroom*



*CONJECTURAL RECREATION  
REAR WING OF THE ELIENE FIELD HOUSE*

*Flounder Depiction*





## Questers Continuing the Cause

If you have visited the Field House Museum since it reopened last December, you might have seen our new exhibit, *What's Past is Prologue: A House Brimming with Stories*. One of those stories within the exhibit is that of the Eugene Field Questers Chapter #151. The Questers Organization was created in 1944 as a way for people to learn about each other's collections of antique items. Since then the organization has created chapters in 41 states and 2 Canadian provinces and has become an "international organization dedicated to conservation and restoration of antiques and historic buildings."

Here at the Field House Museum, the Eugene Field Questers have been dedicated to both the legacy of Eugene Field and the historic house where he once lived. Since the 1960s, the Questers have donated both their time and resources to the museum by volunteering as caretakers of artifacts. In the past, Questers members could be found mending drapes and taking care of the garden. Today, the Eugene Field Questers continue to help through the restoration of many artifacts, such as an oil painting of Eugene located in the Library on the second floor of the historic house. At our Grand Reopening last December, Susan Favazza, past Missouri State Questers President and current Eugene Field House Foundation Board Member, presented a donation from the Eugene Field Questers Chapter 151 to our Board President, Karen Klohr. We at the Field House Museum are thankful for all that the Questers Organization has done for the museum, and we look forward to continuing this great collaboration for many years to come!



## American Alliance of Museums

### Comes to St. Louis

Museum professionals from across the country joined together in St. Louis for the American Alliance of Museums' Annual Meeting and Conference in May. This year attendees came together to engage, learn, and connect through programs inspired by this year's theme, "Gateways to Understanding: Diversity, Equity, Accessibility, and Inclusion in Museums." The Field House Museum was proud to participate as one of the hosts for the conference's "Go Explore St. Louis" evening event helping to promote the museum on a national level.

## The Field House Museum Continues to Expand

The Eugene Field House Foundation Board and staff would like to welcome two new members to our team at the museum.



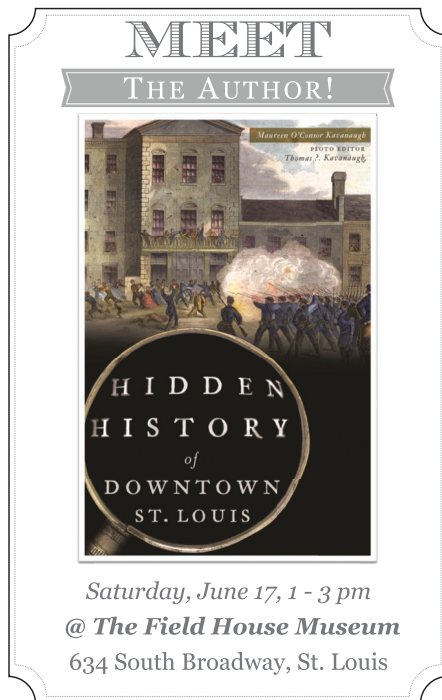
Caira Rudesill joins us after receiving her Bachelor's Degree in Historic Preservation from Southeast Missouri State University. Previously, Caira completed her internship here at the Field House Museum and is excited to become a member of the staff. Caira's role within the museum will be to help

promote the museum through public relations and social media, along with working on exhibits and collection displays within the historic house.



The new Special Collections Curator, Nikole Meyer, is a recent graduate of the Museum Studies program at the University of Missouri-St. Louis. Her experience includes a two-year internship with the St. Louis County Parks Department County Historian and an internship with Cahokia Mounds State

Historic Site. Currently, Nikole is hard at work designing the upcoming *Teddy Bear Picnic* exhibit and event.



## Uncover St. Louis' Lost History!

Join us on Saturday, June 17, 2017, from 1 to 3 p.m. as we welcome author Maureen O'Connor Kavanaugh for a book signing and author talk about her latest book, *Hidden History of Downtown St. Louis*! Don't miss out on this great read which covers everything from the Mississippian Mound Era to present-day St. Louis. Books will be on hand for purchase, or you may bring your own copy for the author to sign!

## Calling All Schnucks Shoppers!

You can help the Field House Museum just by shopping at your local Schnucks store. It's free and easy! All you do is pick up a "My Schnucks Card" and register your card under the Eugene Field House. Schnucks will contribute up to 3% of your purchases to our organization every time you shop and swipe your card!



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## Adieu



This is a piece I've expected to write for some time, at least in part. As many of you already know, our longtime board member Tom Farnam was told almost two years ago that he was suffering from pancreatic cancer. He succumbed on May 6th, having made as fine a fight as anyone I've ever seen. None of you who knew Tom will be the least surprised at this, for Tom was someone who anyone would want by their side in a scrap. Who else would wade into a Black Friday crowd to buy a flat screen TV for the good of the cause? Who else would be there with you at 2 a.m. of a sweltering night waiting for a locksmith to change locks on the House? We've had many fine board members over the years, but no one was ready to drop everything and do whatever job was needed like Tom. His advice was always clear and concise, but his willingness to act is the thing about him I valued most. I, and we as a group, will miss him sorely.



The part of this I hadn't expected to write involves an ally of a very different style. Chris Smith was taken from us more suddenly than was Tom, dying in mid-October last year. Where Tom could be brash, Chris was always a voice of reason. Perhaps this came from his experience as a municipal judge and as a mediator of labor matters. Chris would always be certain to see that we thought matters through, which is not always an easy matter in the cut and thrust of a board meeting. He also had a better gift than I for spotting when someone was reluctant to express a thought and bringing it out directly or getting the chair to notice that and get the matter aired. He was the embodiment of a counselor, as well as an attorney.

To Chris's wife, Sharon, and Tom's, Naomi, many thanks for sharing these two wonderful guys with us. The losses we feel are nothing like yours. I only hope our appreciation for all the things Tom and Chris did for the Foundation is some reward and comfort for you. They were as true as any of our little toy friends. Adieu

— William R. Piper

## WELCOME MEMBERS

The Eugene Field House Board of Trustees and the staff would like to thank the following members who have continued to support the mission, preservation, and programming of the foundation with their generous membership donations.

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November 2016 - May 2017

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November 2016 - May 2017

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*In memory of Victoria Wiseman*

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*In memory of Thomas C. Farnam*

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WHERE INSPIRATION HAS A HOME

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Great gifts are always hard to find, but not at the Field House Museum! We have gifts for all ages and occasions. If you can't make it to the museum, don't worry; you can visit our website, [shop.fieldhousemuseum.org](http://shop.fieldhousemuseum.org), to purchase your items, and we will ship them to you!



Contact Info:

P: 314.421.4689

F: 314.588.9468

info@fieldhousemuseum.org

fieldhousemuseum.org

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Content: Stephanie Bliss

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