



OLNEY WALLDOGS

WALKING TOUR



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WELCOME TO OLNEY!

Whether you are a visitor or a resident, we hope that you enjoy spending time here in Olney! If you are holding this pamphlet, it is likely that you are interested in seeing some great art and learning more about our history. Let's give you a bit of a background on this Walldogs project.

We were officially scheduled to be the location for the 2020 Walldogs meet back in 2017. We were very excited about this endeavor and had laid out great plans for the 2020 event to be a success. As we all know very well, 2020 gave us quite a surprise with the havoc that the arrival of COVID-19 brought. We found ourselves in a difficult situation, and it quickly became apparent that it was no longer a responsible course of action to keep the originally planned dates, and we were also

no longer able to carry on with the project in the exact way that we had planned. Instead, we revised the scope of the project to make health and safety the top priority while still achieving the same end goal. The project was broken up into smaller pieces with smaller groups of artists completing the murals from May to September of 2021.

This pamphlet will focus mainly on the murals and topics from this Walldogs event, but as time goes on, more and more public art is popping up around town. Keep exploring!

Lastly, if you don't see an obvious squirrel in the mural, there is still one there. Some murals have hidden white squirrels. Can you find them all? For cheats, you can find these at cityofolney.com/visitors/walldog_murals.php



"ARMED FORCES MEDLEY"

115 E. Market Street

Full Wall Sponsored By: The Rotary Clubs of Olney & Richland County

Project Leader & Design: Wade Lambrigtsen, Menomonie, WI

This piece showcases images of our Armed Forces and valued Cummins Municipal Band. Olney & Richland County take pride in our service men and women, and we are home to several veterans organizations. Each member of the Armed Forces has contributed to our freedoms of today. We salute you!

Many people don't know the stories of our rich military history, especially from long ago. Reports showed that Richland County provided a total of 1,577 men during the Civil War, 1,000 during World War I (WWI), and 2,148 during World War II (WWII). Each person has stories to tell.

John Beck Flocken, Marines, was given the French Croix de Guerre and a Congressional Distinguished Service Medal for a single-handed raid of a German machine gun nest during WWI.

During WWII, Richland County boys could be found in every theater of the war: New Guinea, South Africa, Italy, Normandy... Harold Hunt survived the attack at Pearl Harbor as he was blasted into the fiery sea while his ship sank. He dove under the fire, swam out, and lived to tell his story. Richland County was also the only county in the state (outside of Cook County) that had the honor of having FOUR top generals in WWII (General Frank Schilt, General Wm. Frank Campbell, General Edmund Sebree, and General Reginald C. Harmon).

Sergeant Roy Oscar Grubb was captured during the Cold War and spent more than two years in a

Chinese POW camp, and was able to return home to a large celebration.

These stories just scrape the surface.

The Cummins Municipal Band has also been an important Olney feature. During WWII, the band had to skip some performances because many of the members had gone off to serve in the Armed Forces.

The band originated under the name of the Olney Silver Cornet Band in 1870. The name then changed to the Olney Cornet Band in the early 1880s, and was the official band at the State Fair held in Olney in 1887 and 1888.

Because of new State laws, in 1898, the band was re-organized as the Cummins Band, and eventually the Cummins Municipal Band in 1932.

The Cummins Municipal Band is believed to be the oldest continuously operating municipal band in Illinois. The Band still plays today and includes members from all walks of life, and members range in age from teenagers to older adults. The Band plays at the Bandshell in the Olney City Park on eight Wednesday evenings in June and July. The concerts are free for the public to enjoy.





“COCA-COLA, AN AMERICAN ICON”

303 S. Fair Street

Project Leader: Joy Kjer, Lincoln, NE

Design: Ash Bishop, Buckinghamshire, England

This mural showcases images related to Coca-Cola and its bottling industry in Olney. The design is of what a vintage ad would have looked like from Olney during the bottling years.

Perhaps the only thing more American than apple pie would be Coca-Cola, and it may be safe to say that it has the most recognizable logo in the world. The 130+ year company originated as a soda fountain beverage that sold for \$0.05 per glass. As it turned out, the initiation of a strong bottling system was developed that made Coca-Cola the world-famous brand it is today.

In 1905, A.J. Dant owned and operated the first Olney Coca-Cola Bottling Plant on S. Fair Street. A barrel of carbonated water, one syrup jar, one spout filler, and one crowner made up the early production equipment. A horse-drawn wagon was used to deliver the Coca-Cola around this territory.

In 1910, the company was sold to Charles Huag, and the business began to really take off under his management. In 1916, the design of the bottle changed from that of straight sides to the contour bottle. This bottle became one of the few packages ever granted trademark status by the U.S. Patent Office. The change proved successful in sales and still today is one of the most recognized icons in the world.

By 1918, the company had been sold again to Frank Bryan and Walter Shultz. It was after this transfer that the company was able to purchase new production equipment and 3 delivery wagons. Three wagons for this territory was quite a big deal!



The new equipment helped with the change in times. In 1923, 6-bottle cartons became a hit. By the end of the 1920s, bottle sales exceeded fountain sales.

Future buy outs led to consolidation of the Gassmann Ice Cream and Butter Company and the Coca-Cola Bottling Company. The new name was the Midwest Coca-Cola Bottling Company where it was operated by Mr. Zean and Mr. Gassmann for several years before any other transfer of management took place.

In 1940, the company moved to its new location at 906 W. Main Street (near the current CVS) where it supplied the masses for several more years.

As more time passed, advances in technology led to a prosperous global economy with high demand. Many bottlers, similar in size to that of Olney's, found the need to consolidate in order to better serve these huge international customers. As such, in the 1980s, the distribution was downsized to a small warehousing facility, and the bottling plant eventually vacated.



CHOWDER TOWN CHOWDOWN

THE CHOWDER
OLNEY
CAPITAL OF ILLINOIS

“CHOWDER TOWN CHOWDOWN”

303 S. Fair Street

Project Leader & Design: Scott “Cornbread” Lindley,
Mt. Pulaski, IL

Richland County has been described as the Chowder Capital of Illinois, and possibly the world. Olney is the County Seat of Richland County, and we are happy to have you here with us.

But what makes Richland County chowder taste so much different than others? We can’t be sure. Other than using fresh ingredients, the real difference is the people and the care put into each batch.

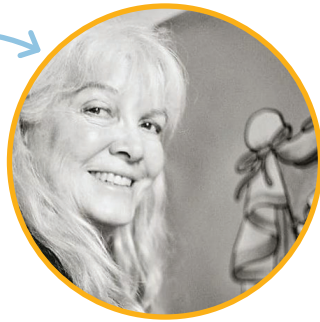
Many people only know about clam chowder. Not here! Our chowders are completely different! Chowder is believed to have originated in the early 1900s and was most likely related to a southern dish known as “Burgois” (pronounced bur-goo). Chowder includes varying types of meat, vegetables, butter, salt & pepper, along with some other various ingredients. The chowder is then cooked in large iron kettles over heat; preferably by an open fire. Chowders are then stirred constantly, for several hours, to keep from getting too thick.



In Richland County, there are church chowders, village chowders, club chowders, and several private family chowders. You will find such affairs from Noble to Claremont and from Dundas to Parkersburg with Calhoun, Passport, Wynoose, Berryville, Olney... and others in between. A chowder is more than just food, it is a true social event!

The Olney/Richland County Sesquicentennial History Book reports that the first “chowder” was created in the early 1900s in Dundas when the villagers, led by Dr. G.S. Trotter, took the railroad tracks to “Phillips Woods” and made up a batch of soup and called it chowder. Popularity continued and in 1921, the Farm Bureau picnic turned in to a full-on chowder event with more than 500 gallons of chowder served to the 3,000 people in attendance. The chowder craving has never stopped.

317 S. Whittle Avenue



Railroads opened up a whole new world of opportunity for commercial and passenger business, and they were a catalyst for growth. Agricultural and manufactured products saw new markets, leading attractions performed at Hyatt's Opera House, political figures visited; new jobs were created, etc.

The first train between Cincinnati and St. Louis, on the O&M line, passed through Olney on July 4, 1855, with much celebration. A few years later, a competing railroad was placed. Over time, the new railroad saw much legal turmoil, disrepair, and name changes. The railroad was planned to run from Danville to the Ohio River, but it never saw either. At its farthest, the railroad made it about 15 miles away from Danville at Sidell. It eventually became known as the Sidell and Olney Railroad and was abandoned during World War I.

The O&M line, however, continued to see much success. In the 1890s, the O&M line became the B&O. The original O&M depot was destroyed by fire. After that, in 1901, B&O built a Bedford stone and brick depot. Staffing at this bustling location typically consisted of one agent and four railway clerks.

The last passenger train arrived at this station on April 30, 1971. Over time, the railroad still employed its order operator, agent, and other railroad operations until it completely closed on February 4, 1974. In the 1980s, the building was demolished. Today, the railroad is owned by CSX, and special moves are made to transport grain to Consolidated Grain & Barge.

Different lines popped up from time to time, but these are the most notable as documented in the Olney/Richland County History Book published in 1991.

In 2016, the City of Olney Tree Board made the recommendation to designate an official City Tree and City Flower as part of the 175th anniversary

celebration of Olney & Richland County. The City Council then formally accepted the recommendations by ordinance.

The official City Tree is the Hickory (*Carya*). It was chosen because Hickories produce fine nuts that serve as a food source for our prized squirrels. Additionally, the squirrels help to maintain the tree by knocking off loose tissue and eating some of the galls that can form. The official City Flower is the Garden Phlox (*Phlox paniculata*). It was chosen because it is a wildflower native to Illinois, is easy to maintain, and has beautiful blooms that stay during its long flowering season.





“THE ART OF THE OPERA”

329 S. Whittle Avenue

Project Leader: Scott “Cornbread” Lindley,
Mt. Pulaski, IL

Design: Val Did, Bologna, Italia

“The stage is not merely the meeting place of all the arts, but is also the return of art to life.” ~Oscar Wilde

Imagine being in a beautiful space surrounded by plush seating, thick, velvet drape, beautiful frescoes, and the rich smell of well-cared-for wood. The performers on the palatial stage are a leading attraction that wow the audience without the need for microphones. Now imagine that space being here in Olney. Believe it or not, in the late 1800s and early 1900s, that reality could be found right here.

The place being described was Hyatt’s Opera House, and it used to sit on the northwest corner of the intersection of Main and Boone Streets (where the Culligan Water Service building currently sits). It was built by John Schmid in 1896, and J.H. Hyatt purchased the building in 1901.

During this time period, opera houses in the Midwest were typically built in conjunction with government offices or commercial stores. Hyatt’s Opera House had a general store on the first floor with the



manager’s residence in the rear. Above, the opera house itself could seat 900 with lower level and balcony seating.

Hyatt’s Opera House was known as the finest opera house in southern Illinois. Because of this and the fact that Olney was located along a major rail route, Hyatt’s Opera House brought in many leading attractions of the day. In addition to beautiful opera performances, large meetings and other acts of the time (such as vaudeville) also made an appearance here. Unfortunately, detailed listings of performers and/or programs were all lost in the fire that destroyed this beauty on October 19, 1910.

Today, Olney has a strong theater culture supported by the Olney Arts Council and Olney Central College. The Arcadia has also been resurrected as a performance center.

“LIFE IS BETTER AT THE LAKES”

409 S. Whittle Avenue

Full Wall Sponsored By: City of Olney Tourism Fund

Project Leader & Design: Adam Scholljegerdes, Faribault, MN



Here in Olney, we are very lucky to have not one... not two...but three beautiful lakes to enjoy. For a community of our size, that's really something special!

Having these lakes available is not only a perk for residents, but they bring in visitors to us from all over, helping our local economy. Regardless, all enjoy the ample fishing, boating, and recreational opportunities provided by Olney waters.

Vernor Lake was the first to be built in the early 1900s as Olney's original water source. Currently, the 45-acre lake is used for recreational purposes only, and is the most quiet and serene of the 3.

Borah Lake was constructed and finished by 1956 and replaced Vernor as Olney's water source. This lake covers 136 acres and includes a small, public swimming area near the boat launch, as well as a playground and picnic area.

East Fork Lake acts as the belle of the ball, and attracts the most visitors. This lake was built in 1970 to replace Borah Lake as the primary water source, and was also a recreational beacon. This lake covers 935 acres with its tree-lined banks and attractive residential areas. Three City-owned parks are also located off of the water that offer



picnic areas, walking trails, spectacular views, and other amenities. Much of the shoreline is undeveloped which makes East Fork ideal for enjoying birds and other wildlife.

In addition to their beauty, all 3 lakes have one thing in common: GREAT FISHING! Olney's lakes are well known for their variety of fish. Sport fishermen find bluegill, channel catfish, bullhead catfish, crappie, bass, walleye, and red ear. Vernor and Borah Lakes are annually stocked with channel catfish. East Fork Lake is annually stocked with walleye, and is periodically stocked with channel catfish. In 2021 alone, a total of 105 fishing tournaments were scheduled in Olney!





“OLNEY’S BRIGHT IDEA”

120 W. Cherry Street

Project Leader & Design: Phil Schultz, Chicago, IL

Ok. So what is solar power? Solar power is power that is obtained by harnessing the energy of the sun’s rays. It can be captured and used in several ways, most notably as a renewable energy source. Essentially, the sun acts as a gigantic nuclear reactor that radiates an incredible amount of energy in the form of light and heat. Today, people all over the world are recognizing the “power” of solar and are harnessing this smart form of energy. But how did it all start?

In 1902, the first experimental solar power plant was built in Olney by American engineers H.E. Willis and John Boyle, Jr. Their solar power plant was based on an 1885 design that was developed by the French engineer, Tellier.



Between 1892 and 1908, Willis and Boyle experimented with their low temperature solar plants that utilized “hot boxes” to heat water. Their “hot box” solar power plant was patented in 1903. The results were published on May 13, 1909, in an issue of Engineering News.

Now that’s a bright idea!

A historical marker recognizing this can be found on the west side of the Olney City Park.





“PROUD OLNEANS IN TIGER COUNTRY”

400 S. Kitchell Avenue

Project Leader: Scott “Cornbread” Lindley,
Mt. Pulaski, IL

Design: SMOK, Antwerp, Belgium

Olney has much to be proud of in the community. Citizens bring home several State, Regional, and District championships. We have Richland County Fair Queens that go on to win the Illinois County Fair Queen titles. Several agriculture recognitions... the list can just go on. Olney has also been lucky enough to have had Olney Central College named by USA Today as the Top Community College in Illinois, with Olney coming in other rankings such as the 50 Best Places to Live in Illinois (www.rentapplication.com), and the Top 10 Best cities to Retire in Illinois (www.onlyinourstate.com). And let’s not forget the notoriety our white squirrels have given us in several areas!

And how about this school spirit?! The Tiger Pride Alumni Association and the Tiger Alumni Center do great work to keep that school spirit alive in



our graduates, they also possess a spirit of giving back. Additionally, the creation of #OneTigerNation understands Olney’s tradition of excellence, and works to celebrate and show support for all of our Tigers. “We will stand together as One. We will support each other as One. We will achieve more as One. We are #OneTigerNation...are you?”

If you grew up here, can you recall the Tiger Fight Song? We can recall the hype that the song gave as the marching band played. Dare anyone try for victory in TIGER COUNTRY?

The Olney Tiger with colors of orange and black is one of the best representations of our community pride. Time and again, this community is called to action, and time and again, we show up.

We are proud Olneans.

“RIDGWAY: NATURAL SCIENTIST, AUTHOR, & ARTIST”

305 W. Main Street

Project Leader & Design: Mike Meyer, Chester, IA

Dr. Robert Ridgway was one of Olney's most notable citizens. Dr. Ridgway was a leader in the field of ornithology (study of birds) research. He was also an author and artist in all of the natural sciences he loved.

Ridgway's published works include over 500 books and papers related to ornithology. He also received great fame from his ground-breaking work on colors. Ridgway's books on colors provided a chart of 1,115 colors and shades of colors. The Color Standards became the world authority on colors and was used not only in scientific work, but also in commercial work, art, and by paint manufacturers, chemists, florists and artists.

Dr. Ridgway was associated with the Smithsonian Institute for 62 years as a curator of the ornithological collections and was also one of the founders of the American Ornithological Union. He was a founding committee member of the International Ornithological Congress at Vienna in 1885, and at Budapest in 1891. He was also a member of the advisory council of World Congresses at the World's Columbian Exposition. These are only a few of Dr. Ridgway's important association memberships.

Upon his retirement, Dr. Ridgway settled in Olney as he considered Olney to be “the ideal place for retirement.” Dr. & Mrs. Ridgway's retirement home was named “Larchmound” because of the larch trees, though over 500 plantings were made on this



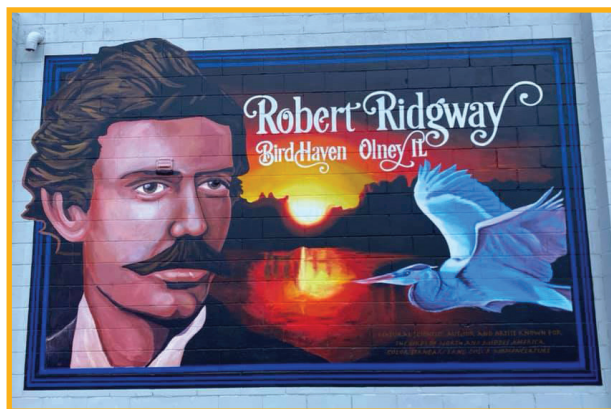
property. This property was the most beautifully landscaped home in this section of the country. Larchmound still stands today at 1000 S. Morgan Street.

Dr. Ridgway also purchased acreage that was made into the Bird Haven arboretum. At one point, this tract of land was said to have been second only to a larger tract in Japan in the number of species of plants it contained. Bird Haven served as Dr. Ridgway's own base for scientific research on the cultivation of non-native trees and plants.

Over time, 200 additional species were transferred to Bird Haven from Dr. Ridgway's nursery at Larchmound. The plantings offered excellent cover, food, and nesting sites for all kinds of birds.

Over the years, several transactions of Bird Haven ownership were made, but the City of Olney purchased the land in 1970 where much of the acreage was used in the creation of East Fork Lake.

A smaller Bird Haven still exists near Miller's Grove by East Fork Lake, and it is open to the public. A larger and inaccessible tract also lies on the north shore.



Dr. Ridgway's grave is located at Bird Haven, marked by a granite boulder. A bronze plaque, with sculpture of birds, and reading “Robert Ridgway, 1850-1929” was stolen in the 1980s. The restoration of the remaining acreage of Bird Haven was the work of the Illinois and Richland County Bicentennial Commission, and is presently under the care of the City of Olney. The Ridgway Chapter of the Illinois Audubon Society sponsors a cleanup of Bird Haven every Fall.

“THE FELLA WAS A TRIPP”

305 W. Main Street

Project Leader: Michael Clark, Aledo, IL

Design: Alicia Rheel, Madison, WI

Courage, talent, perseverance, inspiration, activist. These are just a few words that could be used to describe Charles B. Tripp (Charlie).

During his lifetime, Charlie was most notably a remembered performer in the Barnum & Bailey Circus. In addition to his time spent with the circus, he became well known for his elegant penmanship, woodcarving, paper crafts, painting and photography.

But what made all of this so notable? In 1855, Charlie was born...without any arms...not even shoulder blades!

Charlie had every excuse in the book to let his birth defect negatively impact his life and lead to a life of lesser quality. But he refused. One of Charlie's most famous quotes was, “I found that I had to look after myself as much as possible, and I decided that I would NEVER say ‘I can’t.’” As a result, Charlie was able to train his feet to do tasks most people took for granted, and was able to do all of the same things that his friends and family could.

After persistent urging by his friends, Charlie decided to travel to New York in March of 1873 to have a meeting with P.T. Barnum of the Barnum & Bailey Circus. The meeting proved to be successful, and Charlie began his career traveling and performing with the Circus all over the world. While he visited some other smaller circuses over a few years, Charlie's career with Barnum & Bailey lasted until 1904. He became known worldwide as “The Armless Wonder.”

Charlie's circus act consisted of him showing the audiences how he could perform normal, everyday tasks by the use of only his feet. The crowd favorite was his shaving with a straight razor.

Also as a part of Charlie's performances, he would give motivational speeches about his life and did his best to stress the importance of self-worth while empowering all to reach their goals by giving nothing but their best. Charlie was viewed as a hero to many, but certainly to those that faced more difficult circumstances.



Charlie also advocated for himself and his peers. In 1903, he participated as secretary in a conference with other performers that worked for Barnum & Bailey. They named themselves The Protective Order of Prodigies, and demanded that Mr. Bailey stop using the term “freaks” and use “prodigies” instead. Charlie was quoted in the April 13, 1903, New York Times as saying, “We can’t endure this... We are ladies and gentlemen, and we act so. None of us are frights. We are greeted courteously when go out into the streets.”

Charlie married later in life and traveled with his wife in some of the smaller circuses. The two would spend their winters in Salisbury, North Carolina. After a particularly rough winter, Charlie became ill and eventually died of pneumonia on January 27, 1930. His body was then transported to Olney by train for burial in the Haven Hill Cemetery where he still rests in the N1/2 of the S1/2 of Lot 270.



“LINCOLN RALLIES FOR CHANGE”

305 W. Main Street

Project Leader: Michael Clark, Aledo, IL

Design: Lili Payne, Minneapolis, MN

Many of us know Abraham Lincoln as an American statesman and lawyer that categorically imprinted the history books after winning the 16th presidential election where he most notably led the nation through the Civil War and administered the famous Gettysburg Address. President Lincoln met an unfortunate fate as he was assassinated in April of 1865. Undoubtedly, President Lincoln was one of the most influential presidents of all time.

Much was at stake during this 16th presidential election. Lincoln was set on preserving the Union and ending the practice of slavery.



Without this change, it was believed that the separation would cause the death of the republic and ultimately betray the generation that established the Union, as well as future Americans.

Lincoln's opponent was Stephen Douglas. Lincoln and Douglas never debated in Olney, but both candidates found it important to rally in Olney. As it turned out, both candidates rallied in Olney on the same day, September 20, 1856. Lincoln's rally took place during the afternoon. A historical marker stands on the lawn of the Richland County Courthouse commemorating this event.

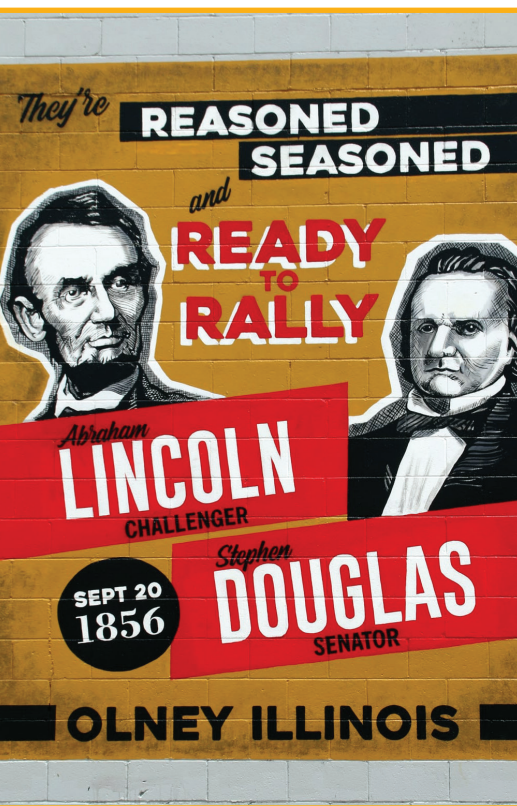
An incident of great historical significance took place on November 12, 1858, when the Olney Times newspaper was the very first newspaper to openly endorse the election of Lincoln. The following article accompanied Lincoln's name:

"This week we place at the head of our columns the name of ABRAHAM LINCOLN of Illinois as our choice for President in 1860. In doing so, it is in full confidence of his honesty, integrity and ability to administer the Government with due regard to the welfare of this great nation, and that under his administration the Government will be brought back to that purity which characterized it in the days of Jefferson, Madison and Adams."

As such, Lincoln acknowledged that the Times was the "first paper to advocate his nomination for the Presidency."

On November 6, 1860, Lincoln won the election in an electoral college landslide (including victory in Illinois) with 180 electoral votes.

In 1955, Illinois designated "Land of Lincoln" as the official state slogan.



“SWING FOR THE FENCES”

305 W. Main Street

Project Leader & Design: Michael Clark, Aledo, IL

Did you know that four Olneys made their way into playing Major League Baseball (MLB)? It's true! In addition to these four, other local players have gone on to play at the collegiate and minor league levels. Today, Olneys find joy in America's Favorite Pastime through Little League, RCHS sports, OCC sports, travel ball, and other independent leagues. You'll also find the Musgrove Park Ball Complex stays quite busy bringing in players from all over to enjoy our facility. Let's introduce you to our past MLB players:

Oliver “Ollie” D. Pickering: Ollie was a center fielder that played for the Louisville Colonels, Cleveland Spiders, Cleveland Blues/Bronchos, Philadelphia Athletics, St. Louis Browns, and Washington Senators. He started his MLB career in August of 1896, and made his last MLB appearance in October of 1908. It should also be pointed out that Ollie was the first ever batter in the newly-formed American League, playing against the Chicago White Sox as member of the Cleveland ball club. AND, the term “Texas Leaguer” came from this guy's first seven plate appearances that all resulted in bloop singles (during his minor league career). His teammates decided to name the play after him, and it stuck ever since. Ollie died in 1952 at the age of 81.

Herbert “Dummy” Murphy: Dummy was a deaf shortstop that played in the MLB for the Philadelphia



Phillies in 1914. After this, he spent a handful of years in the Pacific Coast League and in 1920, he acted as player-manager for the South Atlantic League's Charlotte Hornets. He retired not long after. Dummy died in 1962 at the age of 75.

Glenn E. Brummer: Glenn was a catcher during his time in the MLB. He was an amateur free agent in 1974 when he was signed by the St. Louis Cardinals, however his first game with them was not until May of 1981. While with the Cardinals, he was part of the team that defeated the Milwaukee Brewers in the 1982 World Series. He ended his MLB career in 1985 with the Texas Rangers. Glenn is still alive today.

Stanley “Stan” Dean Royer: Stan was a third and first baseman in the MLB. He played for the St. Louis Cardinals from 1991-1994 and then also the Boston Red Sox for a portion of 1994. Royer is still alive today and is the President of Claris Advisors in St. Louis, MO.



“HOLLYWOOD GLAM”

305 W. Main Street

Project Leader:

Scott “Cornbread” Lindley, Mt. Pulaski, IL

Design:

Scott Telfer, Glasgow, Scotland

Those that knew Elaine Shepard could most likely describe her as “dynamic” as she had the ability to do just about anything she set her mind to, and never did fit into the buttoned-down way of her time. Born on April 2, 1913, Elaine spent her childhood in Olney on the 200 block of E. Chestnut Street, but it was by no means a smooth ride. For her, life needed to have more meaning. She saw her parents become high ranking players in local civic organizations, and this led her to set her sights on leaving a real footprint in this world.

After graduating from college, Elaine’s mother began suffering from serious respiratory problems and needed to relocate to a better breathing climate. This sparked Elaine’s decision to head to California to make a life there. Elaine and her mother left the Midwest with no more than \$0.86 in their pockets to start this endeavor. Today, that would equal about \$11.00!

Determined as ever, Elaine remained very active. Because of this, she was noticed by the wife of a noted movie producer who was taken by Elaine’s beauty, charm, and grace. Elaine’s career began to snowball after this chance encounter.



Elaine’s first appearance on the silver screen was in 1936’s *Darkest Africa* as the heroine of the film. Her acting career includes other roles in films such as *Topper*, *Seven Days Ashore*, *Thirty Seconds Over Tokyo*, and *Law of the Ranger*. Elaine even befriended Lucille Ball as they acted alongside each other in *You Can’t Fool Your Wife*.

In the 1950s, Elaine decided it was time for something very different and began her journey into journalism, where she also ended up finding great success. A vintage photo exists of Elaine on-set of the 1963 film *Cleopatra* covering the beat.

As the Vietnam War reared its head, Elaine set her sights into exploring what this meant to America’s Armed Forces. Elaine flew along in four Vietnam combat missions and viewed firsthand what was called “The Doom Pussy.” This term was given to the mythical jaws of a terrible cat that would crouch in wait for American pilots as they would fly their missions over North Vietnam. This path led her

to publish three books titled: *Forgive Us Our Press Passes*, *The Doom Pussy*, and *The Doom Pussy II*.

Elaine never forgot her Olnean roots and was happy to visit a hometown that welcomed her back with open arms each time. As part of Olney’s 125th anniversary celebration in 1966, July 7th was deemed Elaine Shepard Day in the City of Olney.

Elaine Shepard passed away on September 6, 1998, at the age of 84.





"LAND OF RICHES"

117 S. Kitchell Avenue

Project Leader: Nancy Bennett, Centerville, IA

Design: Deri Russell, Ontario, Canada



Richland County was given its name after emigrants from Richland County, Ohio, arrived upon our land to also discover fertile soil. The eventual development of railways opened up several new markets for agriculture. In 1870, the O&M line provided prosperous shipping of wheat, corn, oats, flour, bran, stock, pork, lard, walnut lumber, wool, and game. Future experimentation with clover proved extremely successful, and continued success kept being found. Over time, Olney became the center of the great agriculture region with a variety of products, but became the Red Top Market of the World in the mid to late 1800s. Future technological developments and soil improvements from chemicals and conservation practices really began to transform rural life. Today, work still continues on the improvement and importance of agriculture by the Richland County Soil and Water Conservation District, Illinois Farm Business Farm Management, Richland County Farm Bureau, Richland County Farm & Fair Association, FFA and 4-H programs...just to name a few! The importance of agriculture to this community simply cannot be downsized into few enough words to fit here, but its importance cannot be missed!

A notable event did take place in September of 1954 when the National & Illinois Soil Conservation Days and Plow Matches were held at "Onion Hill" in Richland County. During these events, the State Police estimated attendance on the first day at about 25,000, and increased to near 80,000 by the last day. Guest speakers included Ezra Taft

Benson (U.S. Secretary of Agriculture) and William G. Stratton (Illinois Governor). Several events took place during this celebration, and it has not been forgotten to this day!

Located in the Illinois Basin, many people were skeptical about the possibility of oil. However, news of continued nearby oil strikes began to spread, and farmers were able to lease their ground for great prices or sell their royalties for thousands of dollars.

Nearly 600 wells were drilled in Richland County. The benefits of the oil boom extended to more than just those with direct interest. For example, several thousand people came into the County within a few months. This directly impacted the local economy for the better, and better paying jobs soon became available.

In 1936, Pure Oil Company located their headquarters in Olney, and other district offices for National Supply Company, Oil Well Supply Company, General Oil Well Supply Company, Baker Tool Company, Halliburton Oil Well Cementing Company, International Derrick and Equipment Company, Olson Drilling Company, Illinois Title Curative Department, etc., all located to Olney.

After several years, an oil derrick was constructed on property owned by Olney Central College in 1989. The derrick commemorates the impact of the oil industry on the people of Richland County and still stands today across the highway from the fairgrounds. Rich land, indeed.



“SWIMMING IN MEMORIES”

**Musgrove Aquatic Center,
406 E. Florence Avenue**

Project Leader & Design: Toni Satterfield,
Mattoon, IL

This mural was completed by children, with guidance from Walldog artists, during the Olney Arts Council Fall Festival on September 25, 2021.

For many of us, we have fond memories of growing up in our home towns. In Olney, many children spent countless hours at the City pool making memories that would last a lifetime. Originally, the City pool was located in the Olney City Park off of the circle drive. This mural depicts children of present-day preserving memories of the past as they paint an image of the old City pool.

One of the most beloved features of the old City pool were the lion-head fountain spouts that were on the pool deck. One of those lion heads is in the

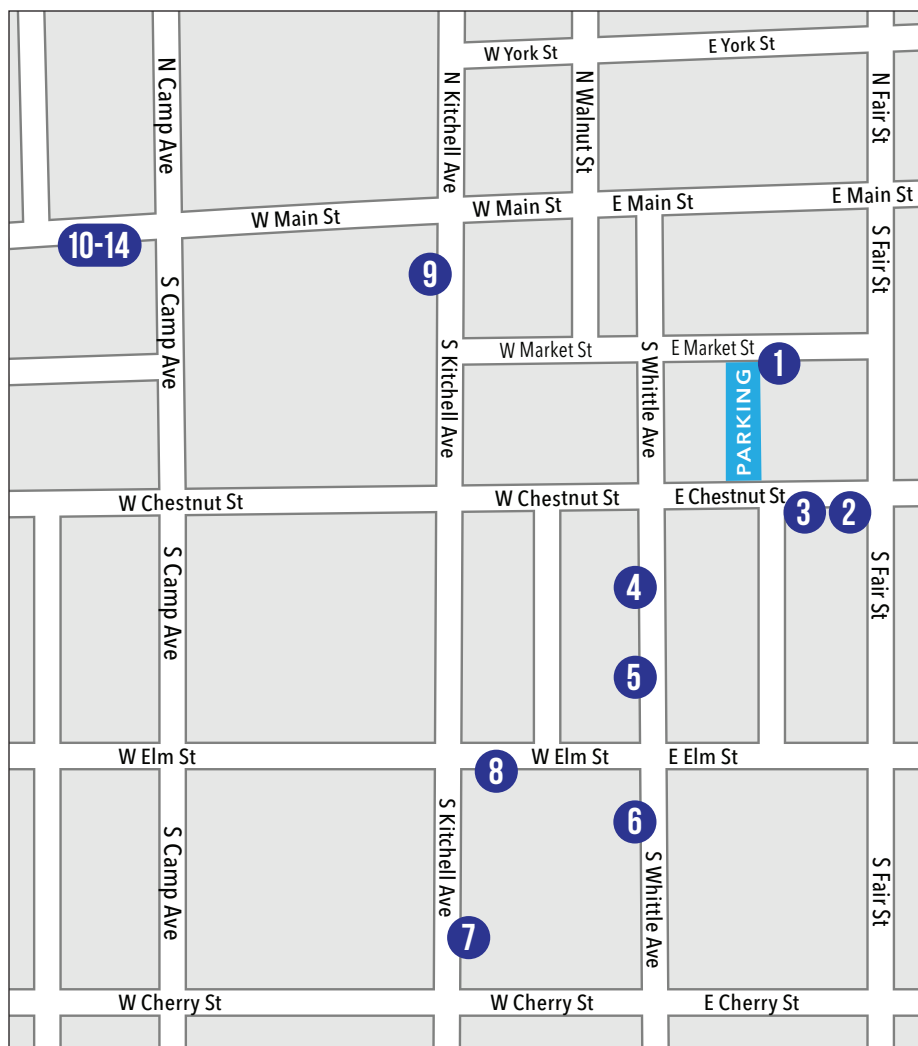


center of the mural as a way to pay homage to that memory, as well.

The old pool house still stands today and is used for storage.

In 1997, the Dr. Monte Musgrove Aquatic Center was opened in Musgrove Park. The new pool features a 395,000-gallon swimming pool with bathhouse, water slide, water umbrella, diving boards, zero depth entry, and large shade structure. Children continue to make memories here each Summer.





Map of Murals

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*Not pictured: "Swimming in Memories," p. 16
(Located at Musgrove Aquatic Center)

THANK YOU FOR VISITING.

We hope you've enjoyed learning a bit more about our history. We have a lot to explore and enjoy in this community, and we welcome you to come and spend a few days with us so you can enjoy this special place to the very fullest. You can find ways to explore at www.cityofolney.com and/or www.olneychamber.net.

