



Edwardsville's Jon Parkin named superintendent of Madison County Historical Museum

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EDWARDSVILLE -The Madison County Historical Museum and Archival Library has a new superintendent.

An award-winning educator, Jon L. Parkin, of Edwardsville, has been hired as superintendent of the museum in Edwardsville.

Parkin began working in the position part-time on June 5. After fulfilling a commitment to teach a summer class for Edwardsville School District 7, he moved to full-time employment in July.

Parkin, 60, grew up in Evanston, Illinois, but has spent more than half his life in Madison County. As a social studies teacher at Edwardsville High School, he has a reputation as a creative and innovative educator. He hopes his new position will give him a fresh venue for creating educational opportunities for students in Madison County by providing the tools teachers need to make history relevant and exciting.

Parkin holds a bachelor of arts degree in geography from Roosevelt University, Chicago, and a master of science degree in geography from SIUE. He has taught high school students the lessons of history, civics, sociology and geography since 1992. Along the way he has mentored 12 student teachers.

He looks forward to the opportunity to learn even more about Madison County's history and share that knowledge with area residents, especially students. An avid historian, Parkin belongs to numerous historical organizations, regularly participates in re-enactments depicting life during the War of 1812 and/or the Civil War, and served on the Edwardsville Historic Preservation Commission and on the Goshen Preservation Alliance board.

When asked what most appealed to him regarding his new position, Parkin said, "I love to teach, but I am always looking for opportunities to learn."

In 2003 he became one of only two District 7 teachers to obtain National Board Certification. In 2008, he was one of nine candidates nation-wide to participate in the Library of Congress Ambassador Network of Teachers, a program that promotes the use of primary sources in research. He was also one of two local teachers to receive the Emerson Excellence in Teaching Award in 2012.

Parkin takes on his new position at a time when the museum is closed for renovations. His most pressing task is to create a timeline of what needs to be done and work with Madison County and the Madison County Historical Society Board to re-open the Madison County Historical Museum as soon as possible.

Parkin is married to the former Vera Jones, a native of Edwardsville, whom he met while she attended Northwestern University in Evanston. They have two adult children.

The museum has not had a permanent director since the Nov. 30 retirement of long-time Superintendent Suzanne Dietrich. Since then, Mary Westerhold, archival library research manager, has been serving as Interim Superintendent in addition to her other duties.

Until the museum renovations are completed, Parkin can be found in his temporary office at the Madison County Archival Library at 801 N. Main St.