

Historical Marker for WW1 War Horses to be Dedicated in East Alton

by Dalton Brown, News Reporter
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EAST ALTON - A historical marker honoring war horses from World War 1 that were stored in East Alton will be dedicated in front of the East Alton Public Library at 10 a. m. on Saturday, Nov. 5.

Kelli Fletcher, chairman of the East Alton History Museum, said representatives from the state of Illinois and the Mayor of East Alton will speak at the unveiling event.

These historical markers must be in the vicinity of where the historic event took place, so Fletcher said this marker's location will reflect the area where these war horses were housed.

“War horses were actually housed in East Alton and transferred out to and from the war back in World War 1,” she said. “They were housed somewhere in the area where Van Preter Park was and they went all the way past where the East Alton Library is, and it was a huge area where these horses were stored.”

The site for the marker is mostly ready, with just a few finishing touches needed before the marker is covered up until the official unveiling, Fletcher said.

“The post and all the landscaping and everything are done, and next week we will be putting the marker right in front of the East Alton Library,” she said.

Fletcher said the marker was funded by a combination of state grant money and a donation from another East Alton History Museum member.

“The State of Illinois has state historical markers that each city is eligible to purchase,” she said. “We got some grant money from the state of Illinois through a foundation, and we also have a History Museum member, Judy Richie, who also donated the other half of the marker money in memory of her family, the Richie family.”

She added that this is the village’s second historical marker through the state of Illinois; the first marker is located at the Police and Fire Department - where the East Alton History Museum is located upstairs - and commemorates the Wann Train Disaster of 1893.

The unveiling ceremony for the new historical marker for the WW1 war horses will be held at 10 a.m. on Saturday, Nov. 5, in front of the East Alton Public Library, located at 250 Washington Ave.