



elkhart county historical museum



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Places in Elkhart: Elkhart County Home

The Elkhart County Museum held one of their most popular events on Thursday, February 22, 2018. 107 people heard the history of the Elkhart County Home. Curator of Education, Patrick McGuire told of the 133 room building torn down before he was born. Built in 1886 on a 113 acre farm halfway between Elkhart and Goshen, it was intended to be self-supporting with the labor of 100 carefully chosen residents unable to afford to live on their own or care for themselves. Eventually the standards were lowered and less able persons were admitted. The Home was self-sustaining for as long as enough workers turned a profit on the farm. Later, as less able people were accepted, they even had 12 cells in the basement for disturbed residents. In early days, the cost to sustain the 100 residents was \$2.08 per week. At one time, there were even 167 residents - over capacity. But, eventually, as income dropped, only 15 cents a week was spent on residents. As the home grew older and in disrepair, new managers, the Thorntons, managed to make a number of improvements. But as Social Security and private nursing homes competed for the needy, only 75 residents remained. Attitudes toward government care made officials question keeping the Home. It was closed in 1977 and eventually demolished, after a long period of time of heated attempts to keep it open or erect a new home by Marjorie Madlem and some other groups, failed.

Just the Facts:

The Elkhart County Historical Museum is located in the Rush Memorial Center, 304 W.Vistula St., Bristol Indiana

For tours and info:

574-848-4322

Open all year

Hours:

Tues.-Sat. 9am-5pm

Closed Sunday except for special programs.

[Visit the Museum Website](#)