



elkhart county historical museum



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People of Elkhart: Col. C. G. Conn

Patrick McGuire, Curator of Education for the Elkhart County Historical Museum presented a program on the life and times of Col. C.G. Conn, most know for making Elkhart, Indiana into the Band Instrument Capital of the World. The famous story of how getting a split lip in a bar fight that prevented him from being able to play the coronet that caused him to develop a mouthpiece that was the beginning of his development of the largest manufacturing company in the world at that time. Two fires that completely destroyed his plants led to him building the final plant, part of which is still standing today. Col. Conn served in the Civil War, and later in the Indiana National Guard, which was how he got the title of Colonel. Conn also served for a time as the Mayor of Elkhart, Indiana, and in later years also became a member of the U.S. House of Representatives as well as owner of the Elkhart Truth and Washington Times newspapers. He also wrote two books that had nothing to do with the band instrument industry. He retired from the Company and moved to California in 1915. Although at times, he was extremely wealthy, he died broke, and friends returned his body to Elkhart for burial and built a monument. McGuire shared a number of slides showing views of both inside and outside the early factory. An overflow crowd of more than 50 people attended the event.

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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](#)