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Cheers to 115 years: Everhart marks anniversary with gallery and event

BY BROOKE WILLIAMS STAFF WRITER

May 17, 2023

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A painted portrait of Dr. Isaiah Fawkes Everhart during his time as a surgeon in the Civil War.

ZAK ZAVADA / CONTRIBUTING PHOTOGRAPHER

Dr. Isaiah Fawkes Everhart had a gift for the city of Scranton and beyond.

Since the Everhart Museum opened its doors in 1908, it's been a gift that keeps on giving.

As the region's only natural history, science and art museum marks its 115th anniversary this month, it will honor its namesake with the "Founder's Gallery" opening Thursday, May 18.

Then on Saturday, May 20, the Everhart 115 Community Day will offer free museum admission with special activities to thank patrons for their continued support of its founder's vision to enlighten the region through natural history, science and art.

"Dr. Everhart gave a wonderful gift to the residents of Northeastern Pennsylvania," said Charles Barber, interim director of the Everhart Museum.

The "Founder's Gallery" traces the life of Everhart from his upbringing in Southeast Pennsylvania through his time as a Civil War medic to eventually settling in Scranton and establishing the museum at Nay Aug Park.

As a naturalist, Everhart devoted his time to studying natural history and the flora and fauna around him, particularly ornithology. Establishing the museum allowed Everhart to share his taxidermized birds, natural history specimens and more with the public, which formed the foundation of its original collection.

Everhart died of complications from a falling injury in 1911, though his legacy lives on, and a statue of his likeness donated by a friend and fellow naturalist sits on the museum's front lawn.

In the 1920s, the Everhart Museum underwent a long-awaited expansion, as per Everhart's wishes. Rather than following his plans to add two separate buildings for science and art, the museum's trustees decided on two wings to the original structure, as patrons see it today. Its collection also has grown far beyond Everhart's original donations.

A semi-permanent exhibit, the "Founder's Gallery" tells Everhart's story through journal entries, rarely seen photographs from the museum's archives and objects from its collection, including some of the taxidermized specimens he completed.

"We're going to have a lot of interesting materials in that gallery, including a Civil War surgeon's medical kit, his actual uniform from the Civil War, many of his personal items and descriptive materials about Dr. Everhart," Barber said.

Patrons can take advantage of free admission on Community Day from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. to see the "Founder's Gallery" and everything else the museum has to offer. From noon to 4 p.m., the Everhart also will have free arts and crafts, entertainment and demonstrations inside and outside of the museum.

Visitors can contribute to a community mural with assistance from artist Sam Kuchwara, take a guided hike around Nay Aug Park with Jane Frye, go on a local history scavenger hunt by Lackawanna Historical Society, watch rocks and minerals demonstrations by Steve Carter from Penn Minerals, and more. Registration in advance is required for the hike.

Barber said there's a lot more going on this summer at the Everhart.

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"Wild Bees," a traveling exhibition of colorful, high-resolution photographs of bees, opens Thursday, June 15, and remains on display through Sunday, Oct. 1. The Everhart also will display beekeeping tools and wares from its collection.

Themed monthly workshops for families continue in June and July for LGBTQ+ Pride Month and Parks and Recreation Month, respectively. Registration is open for the Saturday, June 17 workshop at noon with Kuchwara.

Patrons also can save the date for the 21-and-older Gaelic Gathering at the Everhart on Friday, July 14, from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m., with registration details to be announced soon.

For more information, visit everhart-museum.org or [the museum's Facebook page](#).

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If You Go

What: Founder's Gallery

When: Opens Thursday, May 18

Where: Everhart Museum, 1901 Mulberry St., Scranton

Details: The semi-permanent exhibit showcases the life of the museum's founder, Dr. Isaiah Fawkes Everhart. The museum is open Thursdays and Fridays from noon to 5 p.m.; Saturdays from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.; and Sundays from noon to 5 p.m. Visit everhart-museum.org or [the museum's Facebook page](#) for more information.

If You Go

What: Everhart 115 Community Day

When: Saturday, May 20

Where: Everhart Museum, 1901 Mulberry St., Scranton

Details: The Everhart will offer free admission from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., with special activities inside the museum and outside in Nay Aug Park from noon to 4 p.m. Visit everhart-museum.org or [the museum's Facebook page](#) for more information.

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