



Planning the Museum Addition (see p. 6)

Fall 2014

Newsletter of the Waukegan Historical Society

Calendar of Events

September

September 6

Guided Walking Tour

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Guided Walking Tour

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November 1

Guided Walking Tour

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Guided Walking Tour

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WHS Board

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Erica Burt

Matt Crabb

Gail Dever

Mary Goljenboom

Jim Maguire

Denyse Waters

Volunteer Awards were presented to Ellen Frew, Beverly Millard, Betsy Alleman, and Sara Griffin (not pictured) at the May WHS luncheon

President's Letter

Harry E. Came

As the new President of the Waukegan Historical Society I would like to thank all of the members, volunteers, and Waukegan Park District for all of their hard work in keeping the Society moving forward. Dennis Moisio, my predecessor, has done a wonderful job for the past few years and will be staying on the Board as Immediate Past President. I would also like to single out Ty Rohrer, our museum Supervisor, for all the wonderful things he accomplishes on our behalf. His outreach to the schools and the community really epitomizes the Society's mission statement to share our history with the community. The two Sheridan Road Tours that he has conducted recently have been real crowd pleasers.

Our WHS luncheon at Bonnie Brook in May was a huge success and was due, in no small part, to the hard work of Denyse Waters and Yvonne Sylvester. We were able to update our membership on what the Society has been accomplishing as well as introduce the membership to plans for an addition to the Museum for our library and future exhibition and storage needs.

The Annual Tour of Homes fundraiser was a huge success and again showcased our beautiful neighborhoods, lovely homes, and the Waukegan art's district. I would like to thank all of the volunteers and especially the tour committee headed by Yvonne Sylvester. This is an event that draws attendees from all over the region and has become a highlight of the summer.

There are two interesting exhibits currently being showcased at the Museum; a "History of the Lake County Courthouse" and "Waukegan, Then and Now". The later exhibit has drawn quite a lot of interest as it compares specific images of what was in a particular location in the past and what is there now. You might be surprised at what has changed and what has not. These exhibits are worth a trip to



the Museum. You might also enjoy seeing the cornerstone from the 1870's courthouse newly placed outside the Museum.

One important event that has taken place recently is that we have completed the sale of *Waukegan, A History*. The book was researched and written by Ed Link and there were many volunteer hours spent choosing images, editing, proofing, and making the many decisions that go into self publishing a book. The end result was a book of which we were all very proud. The decision was made to pay upfront for 3,000 copies and then go out and sell them. With the help of many people we have accomplished our goal and the books are sold. We especially want to thank all of the Walgreen's stores and Waukegan downtown Ace Hardware for their assistance in selling the books.

We are a volunteer organization and it is the volunteers that we need to thank. The Board members, who give of their time all year long, the Library volunteers and especially Bev Millard who works hard to provide information on Waukegan's history. The docents in the Museum, the room watchers for the Tour of Homes, and the Cemetery Walk actors all need to be thanked for their hard work.

Guided Walking Tours

Two new guided walking tours, *Historic Homes of Sheridan Road* and *Waukegan and the Movies*, were developed and introduced this summer.

Waukegan's Civil War Sites

Learn the history of Waukegan relating to the Civil War while walking the streets of downtown in this guided tour. The tour starts at the Veterans Memorial Plaza located on the southwest corner of Washington and West Streets in Washington Park.

Saturday, September 6 10:00 am
Register by 8/30, Park District Registration #4571

Ray Bradbury's Green Town

Walk the streets of author Ray Bradbury's "Green Town" on this guided tour of downtown Waukegan and surrounding area. The places, people, and events from Bradbury's fictional Green Town (Waukegan) books will be highlighted. The tour starts at Ray Bradbury Park at 41 North Park Avenue. A shuttle bus will return participants to Bradbury Park at the conclusion of the Tour.

Friday, October 31 5:00 pm
Register by 10/24, Park District Registration #4558

Saturday, November 1 10:00 am
Register by 10/25, Park District Registration #4572

Remembering our Veterans

Veterans dating back from the War of 1812 are laid to rest at Waukegan's Oakwood Cemetery. On this guided tour led by Museum Supervisor, Ty Rohrer, participants will visit the graves of numerous soldiers and hear their heroic stories. Participants will first gather at Lilac Cottage at 10am and will take a shuttle bus to Oakwood Cemetery.

Saturday, November 8 10:00 am
Register by 11/1, Park District Registration #4573

Congratulations Ann!

Ann Darrow was recognized by the Lake County Council for Seniors for her efforts over the last 20 years researching the history of Waukegan's Oakwood Cemetery as well as her participation and assisting with the annual Oakwood Cemetery Walk. Congratulation Ann!

Free Guided Walking Tours

Pre-registration is required for these free tours. Please stop by or call the Jack Benny Center at 847-360-4740 or register on the web at www.waukeganparks.org. These tours will be lead by Museum Supervisor, Ty Rohrer.

Tickets: \$3 in advance,
\$5 on the day of the Walk

Advance tickets can be purchased at the Jack Benny Center for the Arts (39 Jack Benny Drive in Bowen Park) and online registration at waukeganparks.org. For more information, call 847-360-4740.

Start at Lilac Cottage in Bowen Park (1911 N. Sheridan Road) with buses taking participants to and from Oakwood Cemetery.

Bus departure times and registration numbers:
12:00 pm (#4605)
12:30 pm (#4606)
1:30 pm (#4607)
2:00 pm (#4608)
3:15 pm (#4609)

Last bus returns to Lilac Cottage at approximately 5:00 pm.

Parking is not permitted at the cemetery.

The last tour starts at 3:30 pm.

The Cemetery Walk will include unpaved walkways and uneven ground.

Oakwood Cemetery Walk

Saturday, September 20, 2014

12:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.

The 2014 Oakwood Cemetery Walk is Saturday, September 20, 2014 from 12:00-5:00 pm. The Oakwood Cemetery Walk is an annual “living history” event that showcases the rich history of Waukegan through costumed actors portraying local historical figures with connections to the cemetery and Waukegan, Illinois.

This year’s theme is “Firsts in Waukegan.” Unique stories have been chosen for this year, and they include the first airplane ride, the Waukegan Fair, local inventions, the first Waukegan baseball team, the Academy Theater, and the first Glen Rock Pop. Participants will also hear other unique “Firsts in Waukegan” stories as well as the history of the City of Waukegan’s Oakwood Cemetery.

Museum Addition

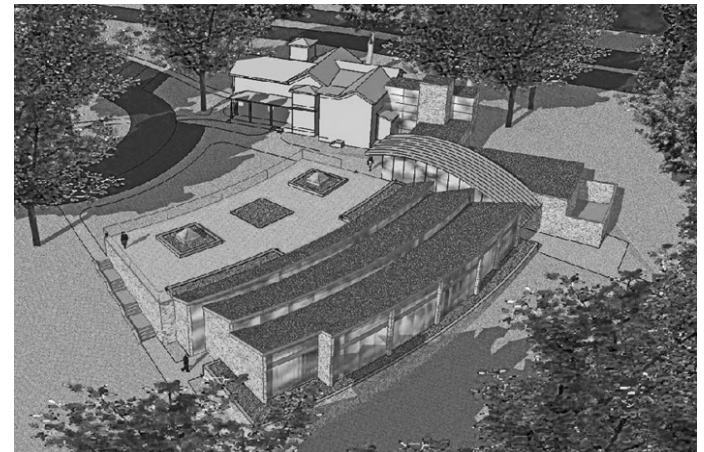
About eight years ago the Board of Directors of the Society began a process of strategic planning to identify our specific needs over the next decades. We are so proud of the History Museum and Library facilities but we are also very much aware of their shortcomings. The Museum lacks enough exhibit space, climate controlled storage, and especially disabled access to the second floor. The Library does not have enough space and our collections are vulnerable to fire as well as being on the second floor making access difficult for many.

Through much discussion within the Society, and working with the Park District, a plan was developed with architects who specialize in additions to historic buildings. These plans were brought before the Park Board and, with their approval, we began to

develop a timetable for an addition. Unfortunately, all of this occurred at exactly the wrong time; the great recession had just begun and the Park District, along with everyone else, had to reconsider all of their long range plans.

Several months ago the Society’s Museum Addition Committee met to decide what we could do as funds will probably be short for years to come. The Committee decided to look at our most pressing needs and talk to the architects and the Park District and see if the addition could possibly be built in stages rather than all at once. We identified our most important needs; moving the library into a new space, some proper storage space, access to the upper level of the Museum, and a new entrance to the Museum which will incorporate a holding area and new bathroom facilities and mechanical systems for the entire addition. By mapping this course we believe we will be able to bring down the cost of the addition to approximately half of what was projected in the original plan. We are now working on an exact plan of what we feel we can accomplish in the first phase and when these plans are agreed upon we will again go before the Park Board to get their support.

We will be developing a plan for fund raising to include the Historical Society, Park District, corporate sponsors, grants, and fund raising from our membership. You will be receiving information from the Society in the near future as to how you will be able help in this huge undertaking and we would ask you to begin thinking of how much you will be able to contribute.



Historically Speaking

Deaths in the 1870s

Ed Link

Published recently is a listing of early Peterson Funeral Home records. Much information is provided, but of particular interest is the cause of death. While the cause is not given for every record, enough exist to provide a look at life, and death, in early Waukegan. Arbitrarily selecting the decade of the 1870s, summaries of the cause of death were created.

It is unclear who designated the cause. Was it a doctor, a coroner, a funeral home employee or someone else. For example, an occasional listing is gravel (bowel or kidney stones). It would seem that only an autopsy or prior doctor's treatment would specifically identify such an internal malady.

Without attempting to create a medical treatise, we'll simply focus on the causes. The most common disease listed is consumption, currently called tuberculosis, accounting for 162 deaths. While not all of the deceased were from Waukegan, as a point of reference, the city's population for the decade was slightly over 4000. The next frequently noted is "Old Age" (84). Since that is variable depending on one's opinion, the ages listed are not unlike what would be shown today – upper 70s and 80s.

Many of the significant diseases are still with us now; cancer, spinal meningitis, pneumonia. Medical advances have reduced the scourge of diphtheria, cholera, scarlet fever, small pox and typhoid, all significantly problematic in the 1870s.

Griffin & Strows in Waukegan, like many undertakers, advertised ancillary businesses

GRIFFIN & STROWS,
SUCCESSORS TO MARR & REID,
Undertakers, dealers in **Furniture**
AND CABINET WARE.



All parts of the body were impacted. The various descriptions, congestion, inflammation, fever, etc., affected the lungs and heart most often, but brain, bowels, and liver were close behind.

43 died from some form of an accident. Drowning, falling and being scalded all contributed to the death toll. Various problems connected with child birth took the lives of 20 women and there were ten suicides.

Although a specific cause was listed, several deaths need further clarification to understand fully: crazy (2), foolish (1), scared to death (1), thunder (1) and whiskey too much (2).

Sometimes the cause of death came in bunches, inferring an epidemic. For example, ten died from scarlet fever in March and April, 1870. Spinal meningitis took 16 in 1872, with 13 of those being in March. Diphtheria took 43 lives in 1876-77, with 32 of those occurring between October and February.

A similar compilation of a current decade would be an interesting comparison.

Griffin & Strows sign with hi-whee bicycle on Genesee Street, circa 1880.

Tour of Homes 2014

Our annual Tour of Homes was held on June 22, 2014. The event was very successful this year as in past years with over 350 participants. The Tour was first held in 1969 and still serves as the main fund raiser for the Waukegan Historical Society. In recent years the tour has also become an important community event. The Society works with the City of Waukegan, the Waukegan Park District, and the News-Sun to showcase the fine architecture and neighborhoods of our city. More than half of the attendees come from outside of the community.

The event serves as an important opportunity to attract new residents who share our vision for a revitalized Waukegan that honors and respects our rich heritage. The 2014 Tour included the Waukegan History Museum, Lilac Cottage, 535 N Sheridan Road, 414 Julian Street, 331 Stewart, gardens at 609 Colville Place and Karcher Artspace at 405 Washington Street. The Tour was a wonderful mix of architecture, decorating styles and time periods.

Significant assistance with the Tour was provided by the News-Sun, the Waukegan Park District, the

generous home owners, and the many volunteers who staffed the homes on the Tour.

Special thanks to the tour committee: Gail Dever, Ty Rohrer, and Yvonne Sylvester. The committee works for many months to make this annual event possible.

We hope to see you on our Tour next year!

We are actively seeking homes for next year's Tour. If you are interested and would like your home to be considered for the Tour, please contact the Waukegan History Museum.



Chicago Metro History Fair

Abbott Laboratories' Race for the Test

In early January 2014, four young men, Jacob Greider, Salvador Gloria, Andrew Guifarro, and Neal Morrill, embarked on a project to investigate one of Abbott Laboratories many pioneering achievements: to become the first pharmaceutical company to develop a successful test to spot the HIV virus. After months of diligent research, a documentary was created and entered into the prestigious Chicago Metro History Fair, which is a local arm of the National History Day competition.

Over 20,000 students from across Illinois compete in this contest; the documentarians who captured the essence of what Abbott has meant to their community and country for over a century, bested most of these students advancing to the state exposition in Springfield, Illinois. Here, the young men fell just short of their dream to represent Illinois at National History Day by a matter of just two points.

Along the way, the video was recognized for its outstanding scholarship and telling of Abbott's storied history by numerous organizations and individuals. It won the Waukegan Historical Society prize for the most outstanding project on a Waukegan topic, the Make Chicago Proud prize, sponsored by the Chicago Metro History Education Center, and the documentary was screened at the Newberry Library as part of their Blue Ribbon Exposition during the summer of 2014.

Little Free Library

There is now a Little Free Library at the Jack Benny Center for the Arts in Bowen Park. Pick up a book (or two) and bring back another book to share with others. Read about it at littlefreelibrary.org.

Education Outreach

History programs for your organization, group, social event, or classroom are available. Topics include:

- Native American History of the Waukegan Area*
- Early settlers of Little Fort*
- Waukegan and the Underground Railroad
- Abraham Lincoln Goes to Waukegan
- The Civil War: The War Efforts in Waukegan
- Waukegan's Famous Civil War Drummer Boys*
- The Early Industry Worker*
- "Firsts" in Waukegan*
- Waukegan: A History of Immigration
- Lake Michigan History and the Lady Elgin Shipwreck
- Waukegan's African American History
- Influential Women of Waukegan's Past
- Prominent Events and Visitors of Waukegan
- Waukegan and the Motion Picture Industry
- Ray Bradbury: Waukegan's Influence on a Visionary
- Jack Benny: From Waukegan to Hollywood
- Haunted Waukegan*
- Titanic*: A Fateful Ticket of Waukegan
- Jane Addams: Remembering Bowen Country Club
- Play Ball: Baseball in Waukegan
- Day in the Life of a Student (corresponds to the year your school opened)
- "What-Cha-Ma-Call-It" History Trunk (hands on program)*

*for school groups only (all other programs are for both school and adult groups)

Program length is 45 minutes to 1 hour. Many programs are multimedia presentations with hands-on artifacts. Programs can be given for multiple classrooms on the same day. Programs able to be scheduled to be given on a weekly basis. Programs presented in the schools are based on Illinois Social

Sciences Performance Standards.

The Supervisor of the Waukegan History Museum will present each program.

For more information and to schedule a free program, contact the Waukegan Historical Society.

Museum Supervisor's Report

Fiscal Year Numbers

Ty Rohrer

We are excited to announce that the self-guided tours and most exhibits at the Waukegan History Museum are now available in Spanish! This lengthy task was completed by the Waukegan Park District's Culture & Arts Intern, Martiza Borjon. We are very happy to be able to share Waukegan's story with more visitors now and we also hope that this gesture will help open doors for collecting Waukegan's Latino history.

We had another great fiscal year at the Waukegan History Museum, Research Library and with Outreach Education programs. This past year we welcomed 1,323 visitors to the Museum and 765 at the library. 136 Outreach Programs were presented to over 5,000 students and adults. More information on this past year can be found in the annual report on the Waukegan Historical Society's website.

September 30th marks the closing of the exhibit *History of the Lake County Courthouse*. The exhibit *Waukegan: Then & Now* has been extended through the end of the year. The Museum will show the exhibit *Dr. Vincent C. Price* to commemorate the 100th anniversary of the his first company Steele & Price that manufactured cream baking powder. This exhibit will run from October 2, 2014 through February 21, 2015.

The Museum is also coordinating with the Lake County Historical Alliance in commemorating the end of the Civil War in 2015. More details to come!



Find Us on Facebook!

Like the "Waukegan History Museum" on Facebook!

For more information on local historical events and programs, like "Northeast Illinois Historical Happenings" on Facebook!

Culture & Arts Intern

Maritza Borjon of Waukegan was the Culture & Arts Intern this summer at the Waukegan History Museum and Jack Benny Center for the



Arts. Maritza was born and raised in Waukegan and graduated from Waukegan High School. She most recently completed her Bachelor of Arts in Studio Art from Cornell College in Mount Vernon, Iowa. Maritza's first project was translating the self-guided tours and exhibits in the museum to Spanish. We saw immediate positive results with many Hispanic visitors attending the museum during the Waukegan Park District's American Independence Day Parade & Festival. Maritza also developed and gave the first-ever guided history tour of Waukegan for Spanish speakers! We thank Maritza for hard work and dedication this summer!

Thank You!

New Members

Jeanneane Vecchio

New Life Members

Patrick J. Cosgrove
Christopher & Erika Burt
Don R. Schwab
Linda E. Butkus

Donations

Linda Russell

Join Us!

NAME(S) _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY _____

STATE _____ ZIP _____

PHONE _____

EMAIL _____

MEMBERSHIP

Senior (age 60+)	\$7.00
Student	\$7.00
Individual	\$15.00
Family	\$25.00
Patron, Organization	\$50.00
Life, Individual	\$100.00
Life, Couple	\$150.00
My additional gift	\$ _____

Make checks payable to
Waukegan Historical Society.

VOLUNTEER

Please contact me about volunteer opportunities.

Waukegan Historical Society

Founded in 1968, the Society collects, preserves, interprets, and exhibits significant materials about the history of the Waukegan area. The Society, in cooperation with the Waukegan Park District, operates the History Museum and Raymond Library and publishes this quarterly newsletter.

1917 N. Sheridan Road
Waukegan, IL 60087
847-336-1859
www.waukeganhistorical.org
info@waukeganhistorical.org

Visit our website for more information
about events, exhibits, and our
extensive library.

www.waukeganhistorical.org

Waukegan History Museum in Bowen Park

1917 N. Sheridan Road
Museum Supervisor: Ty Rohrer
847-336-1859
museum@waukeganhistorical.org
Tuesday, Thursday: 10am - 4pm
Saturday: 1pm-4pm

John L. Raymond Research Library

1911 N. Sheridan Road
Librarian: Beverly Millard
847-360-4772
library@waukeganhistorical.org
Wednesday, Thursday, Friday
10am - 2:30pm



Glen Flora third grade
students on a bus
and walking tour of
Waukegan