



From the Waukegan Daily Gazette, December 27, 1916

New Interactive Exhibit: Pieces of the Past (see page 8)

Summer 2017

Newsletter of the Waukegan Historical Society

Calendar of Events

June

June 10, 2017

Guided History Walk
Waukegan's Diversity (see page 4)

June 24, 2017

Guided History Walk
Roosevelt Park (see page 4)

July

July 2, 2017

Waukegan Park District's American Independence Day
Parade & Festival

July 15, 2017

Guided History Walk
Statues, Sculpture & Art (see page 4)

July 29, 2017

Guided History Walk
Belvidere Park (see page 5)

August

August 19, 2017

Guided History Walk
Ray Bradbury's Green Town (see page 5)

August 26 2017

Guided History Walk
Historic Homes of Sheridan Road (see page 5)

September

September 9, 2017

Oakwood Cemetery Walk

October

October 1, 2017

Tour of Homes

President's Letter

Harry E. Came

This time next year the Society will be celebrating our 50th Anniversary and special events are already being planned to mark this milestone. When histori-

cal societies and small museums are closing all over the country, the Waukegan Historical Society is going strong. This is a testament to the people that started the Society and all of those who have worked so hard over the past 50 years. It is also due to our 44-year partnership with the Waukegan Park District—a mutually beneficial relationship which has provided so many educational benefits to our community.

On April 29th we hosted the opening of our new exhibit which was formally opened by members of the American Legion. I hope you have or will be able to stop by the Museum for the fascinating new exhibit *Sweetheart Mine—World War I Love Letters* arranged in the second floor exhibit space. This exhibit follows the story of two couples before, during, and after the War. Homer Dahringer and Ruth Besley started their courtship at Waukegan High School and Elizabeth Tarver, from a prominent African American family, corresponded with Westley Dyer, a corporal in the Army. There is an exhibit as well as copies of their letters available in a library-like setting so you can sit and read about their lives 100 years ago. Scanning and transcribing all of these many letters took the work of many volunteers and the hard work of Ty Rohrer and especially Brian Escobar who is responsible for this fascinating exhibit.

The Museum will be open during the Independence Day activities on Sunday, July 2 after the end of the parade.

As was noted before, the Annual Tour of Homes is being held on Sunday, October 1st this year to see if it is more convenient for attendees than the late June date we usually schedule. We are trying increase attendance by changing the date and adding more excitement to this popular event. Make your plans now to attend and bring your friends.



Bryan Escobar at opening of the exhibit *Sweetheart Mine*

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Upcoming Guided History Walks

Pre-register for walking tours at waukeganparks.org, call the Jack Benny Center for the Arts at 847-360-4740 or visit the Jack Benny Center at 39 Jack Benny Drive in Bowen Park. All tours are FREE and family appropriate.

Walking tours are facilitated by Waukegan History Museum staff. For all walking tours, please dress accordingly with comfortable walking shoes and also bring something to drink. Tours may be cancelled in case of rain or inclement weather.

Waukegan's Diversity (Oakwood Cemetery Tour)

Saturday, June 10 at 10:00am

People have come from all over the world to make Waukegan their home. Hear the stories of our early citizens on this tour while visiting their graves in Oakwood Cemetery. Participants will first gather at Lilac Cottage in Bowen Park to board a shuttle bus to Oakwood Cemetery. Shuttle leaves promptly at 10am.

Roosevelt Park

Saturday, June 24 at 10:00am

Learn the history of one of the Waukegan Park District's oldest parks on this guided tour. Featured stories to include the Quintette Springs, the forming of the Park District, and the surrounding area. This tour includes stairs and hills. Tour will start at the playground on S. McAlister Avenue.

Statues, Sculpture & Art

Saturday, July 15 at 5:00pm

Learn the history of the various works of art in the downtown area. Tour starts at the Veterans Memorial Plaza in Washington Park at the corner of Washington & West Streets.

Belvidere Park

Saturday, July 29 at 10:00am

While walking the grounds of Belvidere Park on this guided tour, you will learn the history of the park as well as the changes that have occurred over the years to the surrounding neighborhood. Tour will start outside of the Belvidere Recreation Center.

Ray Bradbury's Green Town

Saturday, August 19 at 10:00am

Walk the streets of Ray Bradbury's "Green Town" on this guided tour of downtown. 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 back to Bradbury Park at the conclusion of the tour.

Historic Homes of Sheridan Road

Saturday, August 26 at 10:00am

Discover the history of some of the homes located up and down Waukegan's beautiful and historic Sheridan Road. Tour starts outside of the Douglas House in Upton Park-732 N. Genesee Street.

Building Addition Update

Preserving the past—Preparing for the future

Recent contributions have brought the total raised by the Society to just under \$89,000.00. Your continuing support here is deeply appreciated.

Up to \$100.00

Gregory Alloian
Jerry Wiatrowski

Over \$1,000.00

Waukegan Township High School - Class of 1956

Historical Happenings

Parks—Local & National

Ed Link

The National Park Service was established in 1916, just months before the Waukegan Park District. While massively different in scale, the two services are comparable in several ways. The primary function of each is to provide open space for the people amid growing urbanization and development.

Waukegan's parks are often named for individuals who contributed to the community. Bevier Butts, Dr. Eugene King and Ray Bradbury are some examples. Roosevelt Park was named for President Theodore Roosevelt who was instrumental in nurturing the mindset toward conservation which allowed for the National Park Service. Nationally the parks are typically named for the physical features of the area in which the park is located.

The need for parks and the necessity of setting aside the property was recognized early. That was a valuable acknowledgement since attempts to organize formally met resistance. A 1900 referendum was defeated with 83% of the votes against it. In 1909 a fair tried to purchase today's Bowen Park, but it failed. Finally the 1916 referendum was successful and the Waukegan Park District was created.

Kirk and Powell were city parks prior to joining the

park district, so the public had recreational opportunities while all the votes took place.

Similarly some parks were established before the founding of a national service. Yellowstone

became a park in 1872 and Yosemite began as a state park. Each park was managed individually, but problematically. The United States Army took over Yellowstone in 1886. Irregularities in management proved the need for a single agency. Thus the National Park Service was created.

Waukegan offers golf, playgrounds, BMX racing, swimming and a sports complex. National offers hiking, camping and lessons in geological splendor. Both provide history and educational opportunities.

Again, the size of the national parks dwarf whatever Waukegan can offer, but the local community is afforded much easier access to its features than the difficulty of reaching any of the national parks from this area. That is not to demean the majesty of our national parks but to put into focus the opportunity to use them.

Today the Waukegan Park District has 48 sites and there are 58 national parks.

Waukegan High School Students Wrap Up Another Successful Year of Researching Waukegan History

Josh Bill

Even if the thermometer suggests otherwise, we are heading for summer, and students will soon be enjoying their coveted time away from the classroom. But prior to their summer vacation, many students at Waukegan High School were able to engage in the process of being a historian of their city as they participated in the Chicago Metro History Competition. This contest challenges students to study a topic of local significance, where they compete with students across Illinois to see who can create the best project.

Beginning in winter, students trekked to the Raymond Research Library, where the outstanding volunteers assisted students with their projects. The students investigated the history of several industries, prominent figures, and immigrant stories. Two

Postcard of Roosevelt Park



Waukegan High School projects advanced to the state contest: one was a project telling the history of the Johns Manville Corporation, while the other was about Latin American immigrants who took a stand against the controversial 287g program in 2007. The later project was awarded the Historical Society's 10th Annual Award for Outstanding Scholarship at our annual meeting in May. The project on 287g also was awarded the Studs Terkel Award for Outstanding Oral History Research from the Chicago Metro History Education Center.

The students and I want to thank all the volunteers for helping to make this year's history fair experience a success, and I want to extend a special thanks to the Board for continuing to sponsor this generous award for our students.

Pieces of the Past Interactive Exhibit

The Waukegan Park District has been a wonderful partner to the Waukegan Historical Society over the years. As a way to show our thanks and to celebrate the Park District's 100th anniversary we are trying something bold and fun. *Pieces of the Past* is an interactive historical exhibit that will be showcased throughout all of the Waukegan Park District parks. In the exhibit, you play the game by finding and piecing together the puzzle of the history of our parks. The exhibit will be unveiled July 2, 2017 and will close October 15, 2017.



Here is how you play!

50 large puzzle pieces have been scattered throughout our parks.

Each puzzle piece tells a story about our parks as well as a secret code number.

Record the secret code on your official brochure. Pick up the brochure at participating Waukegan Park District facilities or download online at www.waukeganhsitorical.org.

Take your brochure with the secret codes that you have found to the Waukegan History Museum in Bowen Park to redeem for prizes.

Play the game from July 2, 2017 through October 15, 2017.

Prizes

Every 5 secret codes found gets you a raffle ticket. You can collect all of the following prizes. Raffle will include multiple prizes as well as a \$100 grand prize!

Find your first 5 to get a "Pieces of the Past" button.

Find 10 to get a ticket for a free popcorn & soda at Movies in the Park.

Find 35 to get 2 free tickets to the annual Tour of Homes on October 1, 2017 (redeem before or on event date).

Find all 50 and you get:

- A historic photograph of one of our parks
- Special recognition at the Waukegan Historical Society's Fall Program
- The cipher to find out the message from the secret code numbers!

Museum Supervisor's Report

Ty Rohrer

By the time you are reading this newsletter, the 2016-17 school year has come to an end. It was a record year for us with our school outreach! Bryan Escobar and I presented 167 programs in the schools to over 4,600 students. We also took many classes out on our guided history walks. This year we gave 27 walks to over 750 students. It was another great school year and we are already planning ahead for even more offerings in 2017-18.



If you have not stopped in at the museum yet to see the new exhibit *Sweetheart Mine: World War I Love Letters*, there is still time. In this exhibit you can immerse yourself in the love letters written by Homer Dahringer to Ruth Besley and Westley Dyer to Elizabeth Tarver. You can even sit and read every letter from our archives in the exhibit if you choose.

Duane Peacy & John W. Davis Jr. of the American Legion unveiling the new exhibit



This summer, we have a few new guided history walks that we are presenting. Two of these walks will showcase Roosevelt and Belvidere Parks to help celebrate 100 years of the Waukegan Park District. The walk "Statues, Sculpture & Art" takes you up close to the many pieces of public art found throughout Waukegan's downtown. Some of the pieces you may have driven by and seen, but now you will find out the story behind them.



Find Us on Facebook!

Like the "Waukegan History Museum" on Facebook!

Thank You!

New Members

Larry Heitman

New Life members

Dorothy Evenhouse
Lida G. Dever
Bessie Tsausis

Join Us!

NAME(S) _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY _____

STATE _____ ZIP _____

PHONE _____

EMAIL _____

MEMBERSHIP

Senior (age 60+)	\$10.00
Student	\$10.00
Individual	\$15.00
Family	\$30.00
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
Arts & History Specialist: Bryan Escobar
847-360-4745
bescobar@waukeganparks.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



WAUKEGAN
HISTORICAL SOCIETY

1917 N. Sheridan Rd, Waukegan, IL 60087

