

Grayslake Historical Society



164 Hawley Street, P.O. Box 185, Grayslake, IL 60030

Museum Hours:
Thursdays 9:00 A.M. - 2:00 P.M.
Second Sunday of each month
1:30 P.M. - 3:30 P.M.
Group Tours call 847-223-7663

UPDATE

September 2000

Founded 1976

Meeting location is at the State Bank of the Lakes, 50 Commerce Drive, Grayslake, Illinois
Meet your friends of 7:30 P.M. Refreshments

THE PAST

The Twentieth Century ended and the Twenty-first Century began. The Grayslake Historical Society has helped this century to have an auspicious beginning.

On Saturday, March 4th the Grayslake Chamber of Commerce held a banquet to commemorate its fiftieth birthday. The Grayslake Historical Society helped to recognize this achievement by having a display of Chamber pictures and booklets at the banquet. This display was also used at the Museum and will continue to be there until the end of the year.

Ainsley Wonderling of the Lakes Region Historical Society in Antioch gave a delightful presentation about hats at the Society's regular meeting on February 9th. Ed Link of the Waukegan Historical Society informed the group about the Goelitz family and their Jelly Belly factories at the March 8th meeting of the Society. The Fontana Family recalled Fontana's Curve between Grayslake and Hainesville when the Society met in April. Former Grayslake High School teacher Esther Lusk inwood along with Betty Lusk Hughes told the Society about the Lusk Family at the May meeting.

The Museum had three special displays. The Museum volunteers organized a display of Grayslake Cook Books and kitchen gadgets. There were cook books from the area churches and community groups. This display was followed by a display of steins and mugs. Some were from Europe and some were local. Two toy collectors brought in their vintage toys for the exhibit starting in August. The Society had a display "Grayslake Through the Twentieth Century" at the Grayslake library.

Various groups continued to tour the Museum. Among them were the Round Lake Community Church Senior Group, Delta Kappa Gamma, Woodview and Lakeview Schools, Miss Mary's Peppermint Pre-School, Brownies and Cub Scouts.

Slide presentations were given to a DAR group, the Grayslake Garden Club, the Grayslake Kiwanis, St. Andrew's Church, the Grayslake Library Senior Coffee Group plus Avon, Meadowview, Woodview, and Grayslake Middle Schools. The

Confirmation Class of the United Protestant Church had a walking tour of their church history.

The Society was represented in the Memorial Day parade with its Model-T truck and the deceased war veterans sign. The Model-T again made an appearance in the Summerdays parade. This time it was decorated to represent the twenties and followed the parade theme of "Grayslake Counts Up to the Millennium - Decades of the Century". The Society also participated in Hainesville's millennium parade.

Twice the Society participated in the Grayslake Farmer's Market. Each time they helped children make their own jump rope. The Grayslake Chamber of Commerce graciously shared their booth with us at Summerdays. The Museum was open during Summerdays as well as during pancake breakfasts hosted by Grayslake organizations.

The Cemetery Committee of the Society scraped and primed the front fence of the Grayslake Cemetery. A stone company repaired tall stones and realigned numerous monuments in the cemetery. The cemetery looks the best it has in years.

The former Museum office is now the Grayslake Family Outdoor Theater exhibit. The fencing, car seat, car speakers, driveway light, refreshment stand bulletin board and pictures together add to the ambiance. Everyone is invited to stop, sit, watch a video and remember their experiences at the former theater.

The police department display area has been expanded with more items loaned by the local police. The large loom, which was donated by the DeGraff family several years ago is being repaired by the museum volunteers. When the work is completed, a professional weaver will teach us how to use it.

The Village of Grayslake had a chair lift installed in the Museum. The second floor of the Museum is now available to physically challenged people. The Village has also given us a previously owned computer. The Society and Museum are very appreciative of these gifts.

THE FUTURE

As we look forward to the last few months of the new century, the Grayslake Historical Society and Municipal Historical Museum looks forward to some terrific programs and exhibits. Be sure to mark your calendar.

Joy DeGraff and Carl Heiler have graciously loaned part of their toy collections to the Museum. Don't miss seeing the display from their collections at the monthly open house on **Sunday, September 10** at 164 Hawley Street from 1:30 to 3:30 P.M. The *Daily Herald* used this exhibit as a cover story on Monday, August 21.

The fall season will begin on **Wednesday, September 13** with "A Walk Through Twentieth Century Grayslake". Ten speakers will briefly inform the audience of events or thoughts about each of the ten decades of the past century. The speakers will be Joanne Lawrence, Bob Wegge, Ellen Anderson, Marion Parker, Connie Dunbar, Evie Turner, Richard Anderson, Mary Lillstrom-Irvin, Melinda Willen and Mayor Pat Carey. The evening will also include the recognition of those individuals in the audience whose families were in the present-day 60030 zip code or Avon Township in 1900. These people will receive a certificate, "Grayslake-Avon Centenarian Family". This program and all general meetings of the Society are held at 7:30 P. M. in the Community Room of the State Bank of the Lakes at 50 Commerce Drive, Grayslake.

The third annual Grayslake Cemetery Walk will take place on **Sunday, October 1** at 2:00 and 3:00 P. M. This living history event will tour six grave sites. Early settler Lawrence Forvor will introduce the audience to early farmer Albert Kapple; to Dr. Herbert Struthers, a veteran of World War I and village doctor; to pioneer woman Jerusha Potter; to Civil War veteran Henry Domski; to Catherine Murrie, the wife of a Grayslake business man and to Frank Contos, a youth who drowned in Grays Lake. The cemetery is located just north of Belvidere Road on Lake Street. In case of rain the event will be held in the State Bank of the Lakes Community Room, 50 Commerce Drive, Grayslake.

Watch for the Society's vehicle in the Grayslake Homecoming parade on ~~October 7.~~ **Sunday, October 8** will be the last time that the special display of toys will be featured during a monthly open house at the Museum.

Due to illness Melva Kerry had to cancel her program for us in March. This program about the Kerry Family has been rescheduled for **Wednesday, October 11**. Melva is prepared to tell us about the Kerry family and farm. We will learn what Charles Kerry taught and where. We will learn the location of the street named Kerry Way. Come and learn how the Kerry's contributed to Grayslake's history.

Sunday, November 5 will be the first day that a special display of vintage Christmas cards will be on shown at the Museum. The Museum volunteers will arrange the exhibit. Anyone wishing to add to the display should contact the Museum or a Board Member.

Jane Tiffany-Hansen will be the featured speaker at the general meeting of the Society on **Wednesday, November 8**. Jane is a life-time resident of Grayslake. Her grandfather was a sheriff of Lake County and her mother had a delicatessen in downtown Grayslake. Jane has a wealth of information and the ability to make it interesting.

The annual Historical Society Board and Volunteers Christmas party will be **Wednesday, December 6**.

Next year the Grayslake Historical Society will celebrate its Silver Anniversary. Plans are underway to have a celebration in March 2001.

DONATIONS

The Society has received monetary donations from Northway Bank, Anchor Bank, the Grayslake Garden Club, American Legion Post 659, the Grayslake Woman's Club, Nancy Wightman Pease and Fred and Lenore Schaefer. These donations help the Museum to accomplish its mission of displaying and preserving the mementos of Grayslake and its citizens. A donation was also received from Michael and Debbie Conn for the Cemetery Fund.

The Museum has received the following artifacts which were reviewed and accepted by the Collections and Accessioning Committee from January 1, 2000 to July 31, 2000.

Warren R. Wells - Hook's Store tie box; Joe Fontana - Swan School bell; Joyce Kleck - Edward's house picture; Shirley Christian - Mount & White Car Dealer Folder, Grayslake Community Guide; Kevin Mogg - old phone books, various books, abstracts of title, pictures, school programs, 4-H ribbon; Dennis Koletsos - police picture; Highwood Chamber of Commerce - Grayslake Gelatin Brochure; Anonymous - Centennial snapshots, confirmation dress, crocheted gloves; Village of Grayslake -

Diamond Jubilee coins, 1945 recreation petition; Irene Kronberg - old Grayslake postcards; James Davis - Pester blacksmith shop picture; Kent Rich - pictures of early residents, school pictures, negatives, Jubilee artifacts, American Legion medal, First State Bank of Grayslake bank book and checkbook; Grayslake Fire Department - uniform; Joe Haman - Coast Guard jacket and medals, picture; Miller Brothers Heating - picture; Leonard Burge - CB radio, Eastern Star Cook Book; Thrall Hershberger - school composition books, readers, school and church certificates, Murrie receipt; Jeann Frank - cemetery walk and homecoming parade pictures; Joanne Lawrence-Lions Club mug, Graylake business pens and pencil; Helen Thielen - pool pictures; Duane Frahm - early Grayslake postcards, old radio; Charlene Rockenbach - Tripp whet stone; Bill Geiske - early school postcard; Jerry Badgerow - Navy uniform.

SHOP AND SHARE

Enclosed with this newsletter is a Shop and Share coupon. Shop at any Jewel-Osco store on September 18, 19, or 20 and turn in this signed coupon when you pay for your purchases. The Grayslake Historical Society will receive five percent of your bill excluding taxes. While you are in the Grayslake Jewel look for the seven large pictures of early Grayslake which the store purchased from the Grayslake Historical Society.

MEMBERSHIP

Your membership is important. Kindly check your address label to see if your membership is current.

A PAGE FROM THE PAST

This past spring we had a lot of rain and areas of the county were flooded. The *UPDATE* would like to take you back in time to the Flood of 1938.

CLOUDBURST THURSDAY NIGHT WREAKS HAVOC IN TWO COUNTIES

The heaviest rainfall ever to be recorded in this section fell last Thursday night and early Friday morning, when most of Lake and McHenry counties was drenched in a cloudburst which inundated highways, washed out crops, flooded basements and tore up railroad tracks. Although no official record of the downfall is available, it is estimated that from 5 to 7 inches fell from 10 o'clock Thursday night until it stopped Friday morning.

The damage will run into thousands of dollars. Practically every basement in the business section of Grayslake was flooded to a depth of several feet, stocks being ruined and heating plants put out of commission. The sewage disposal plant was under water for several days.

A veritable torrent swept through Peg's arena at the intersection of routes 20 and 54 (routes 83 and 120), tearing down the walls and overturning seats. The entire area from a few feet north of High's corner (routes 83 and 120) to Center street was under water, covering the Soo Line tracks at one point. Route 54 was entirely submerged at this section, and traffic has been routed through Grayslake along Lake street.

The lake overflowed its banks, flooding P. W. Newhouse's Grayslake Park (Pik-Kwik Foods) under at least 4 feet of water. The overflow ran through the village, adding to the damage. Lake street at Brandstetter's garage (The Vintage Market) was

under about 12 inches of water, at Hawley street the water was also about a foot deep.

Two washouts occurred on the St. Paul railroad across from Jack and Helen's stand (Sass Tire and Service) at the intersection of routes 45 and 54, where about 50 feet of track was torn up. About 100 feet of roadbed on the Soo Line a mile south of Grayslake was also washed out.

The Legion lot on Seymour avenue was filled to overflowing, and the section north of Center street was entirely under water. Several families living here were rescued with boats and trucks. The north end of Moore's subdivision was flooded, the water reaching the back yards of residences on Park avenue. Water spouting up from flooded manholes formed miniature geysers in nearly every street.

The ground was so thoroughly saturated that water continued to ooze out of the surface and drain into already flooded areas. Added to this it continued dark and cloudy all day Friday and commenced to rain again Saturday. With no sunshine and additional rain, the water continued to rise and back up into sections which previously had suffered little damage. The village fire engines were being used continuously in an effort to pump out basements, but the water would run in almost as fast as it was being pumped out.

Members of the fire department deserve much credit for their untiring efforts, several of them working from about midnight Thursday through Sunday.

All of the surrounding villages suffered more or less in similar manner. The Nippersink at Fox Lake went over its banks, flooding the entire section and covering route 12 to a depth of 3 feet or more. The Skokie highway was under water in most of Lake County. The Desplaines river also overflowed with disastrous results.

Farmers' crops and gardens sustained loss that will run into thousands of dollars. Small grain crops were flattened or beaten into the ground, while many fields were flooded, killing the crop. Erosion also caused great damage, in many places practically all the fertile ground being washed away, leaving only gravel or clay exposed.

William H. Brandstetter, who is over 80 years of age and who has lived all his life in and around Grayslake, states that never had he seen as much rain fall at one time as did last Thursday night.

The rain started Thursday and continued intermittently throughout the day. About 10 p.m. it began to rain very hard, continuing until about midnight, when accompanied by violent thunderstorms, the cloudburst was loosed. Men who were fixing out oil burners and other equipment stated that at one time Center street was flooded to such a depth that it was impassable.

Business in Lake County was practically at a standstill Friday as a result of the deluge, and business men who had anticipated recuperating their finances somewhat through the three-day holiday not only were deprived of this, but in most cases suffered additional loss from water damage. However, Sunday and the Fourth, were bright and clear, and there were large crowds in Lake County.

There was no train service Friday north of Deerfield on all lines, due to washouts and tracks being under water.

Adding to the inconvenience and damage was the fact that the motors of the ice machines in practically every business house were located in the basement and were submerged, so that there was no refrigeration available.

Cottagers around the lakes whose homes were on low ground lost practically all of their furnishings on the ground floors. In many instances they were forced to leave in boats to save themselves.

Since the water has receded the damage to farm crops has become even more evident. Acres of corn and grain that were or still are under water have been destroyed. A great deal of hay that was cut was either washed away or is rotting in the fields.

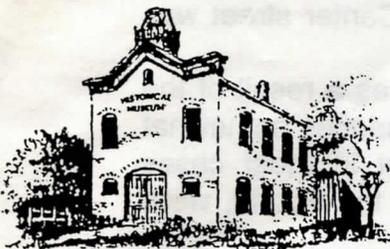
Some of the low spots in the village are still flooded to a depth of several feet, and from present indications will remain so for some time.

The dam at Richmond broke, loosing tons of water in the Nippersink and flooding the entire section below. The dam at Wonder Lake was also in a greatly weakened condition, several leaks having started in the structure. However, through heroic work of several hundred men, the dam was strengthened with sand bags and successfully withstood the pressure of the water.

Copied with permission from the *GRAYSLAKE TIMES*, Thursday, July 7, 1938.



Scenes of the 1938 flood from the archives of the Grayslake Municipal Historical Museum



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