



# Grayslake Historical Society

164 HAWLEY STREET ♦ P.O. BOX 185 ♦ GRAYSLAKE, ILLINOIS 60030-0185 ♦ 847-223-7663

# UPDATE

## Museum Hours:

Thursdays: 9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.

Second Sunday of Each Month: 1:30 p.m. to 3:30 p.m.

By Appointment: Call 847-223-7663

Founded 1976

January 2009

Programs are held at the State Bank of the Lakes, 50 Commerce Drive, Grayslake, Illinois  
7:30 p.m. Refreshments

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## REVIEWING

The year 2008 is gone but the memories will linger on. This review will begin with the month of August. The Museum was open every Thursday and every Wednesday during downtown Grayslake's Farmers Market. It was open the Second Sunday of the Month during Grayslake's Summerdays and during the Center Street Car Show. Our 1954 fire truck was driven by the Yopps during the Summerday's parade. A group of Scouts came to the Museum and made rope as part of a badge requirement.

September started the fall season of programs for the Society. Program chair Joanne Lawrence introduced Bill McNeill and his family, who told the audience about their Centennial Farm. The farm located on Rollins Road is one of the few active farms still in operation in Lake County. Bill's grandfather, Francis McNeill, purchased the 1600 acre farm from the Hook Family in 1908. Presently the family farms 550 acres and sells its crops.

In September, the Museum began the fall hosting of school and scout groups. Third grade students at Woodview School were given a historical slide presentation about Grayslake. Later the same week the students walked to the Museum to have a tour. A Special Recreation group also toured the facility.

The October program of the Society featured Fred Schaefer speaking on the "Road to Compostello" This early pilgrimage route to Spain is featured on postage stamps. Fred also gave a short history lesson on stamps. The audience learned that the first adhesive stamp was issued by Great Britain in 1840, but the United States didn't have adhesive stamps until 1945.

In October the third grade students at Prairieview School in Hainesville were given a slide presentation and a tour of the Museum. Avon School in Round Lake Beach and Park School of Round Lake also toured the Museum. All of these school are part of Grayslake's School District 46. Members of Grayslake Community High School's Class of 1958 were honored guests at the Museum's annual Alumni Coffee during the high school's homecoming celebration. Rain tried to hinder the eleventh annual Grayslake Cemetery Living History Tour. Over one hundred people showed up with umbrellas to enjoy the performances. The Cemetery's deceased were introduced by Fred Wilbur. Wilbur is not buried in the cemetery but knew the residents. He introduced Jesse Baldwin Walsh whose baby is buried in the cemetery and who told about the Walsh family. Businessman

Alexander Riel has a young son in the cemetery and he told about Grayslake businesses in 1900. Others telling their stories were Civil War veteran Dighton Granger, and housewives Edna Little Cable and Clara Davis Lawson. Three Scout groups and one YMCA group visited the Museum during the month. As part of the Business District Trick or Treat event, the Society passed out candy at the Museum and had children make rope in the Kid's Zone. In addition to the monthly Sunday open house, Thursdays and Farmer's Market Saturdays, the Museum was open during the Lion's Club breakfast next door at the fire station. The Society was represented at the Lake-McHenry County Historical Alliance meeting hosted by the Highland Park Historical Society.

The Society's November program was a special treat. The group met at Charlie's Garden Club. Member Connie Dunbar detailed the building's early history. During most of its history, the 1889 building was a saloon, but Prohibition changed its role temporarily to that of a theater. John Brandstetter concluded the program with humorous stories about its recent history. Many in the audience remembered the establishment as Bill's Tavern. When Jerry Farwell purchased the business, the name was changed to Charlie's in honor of a pet dog. The Museum continued to be open on its scheduled days in November and December.

The Museum's annual Holiday Open House in December was somewhat marred by a windy day as Santa, aka Bob Wegge, sat in the vintage sleigh in the Annex to talk with children. Darlene Craig at the pump organ produced seasonal songs. Families worked together to add a paper chain link to the Museum's tree.

As 2008 came to a close, the Society and Museum reviewed its year. Over 2650 individuals came to view the Museum exhibits. One hundred thirty-four artifacts donated by twenty-five people were accessioned. The Society had a membership of 285. The Grayslake Historical Society website became active. Visit it at [www.grayslakehistory.org](http://www.grayslakehistory.org).

## PREVIEWING

Two thousand nine is bringing many changes to the Grayslake Historical Society and Grayslake Municipal Historical Museum. The Museum will continue to be open on Thursdays from 9:00 to 2:00 and the Second Sunday of the Month from 1:30 to 3:30 until renovation prevents this. The renovation will not affect the monthly programs of the Society. Your attendance is encouraged. Mark these dates on your calendar.

**Wednesday, February 11** - Grayslake resident Krista Holst, a lifetime Lincoln admirer, will present a Grayslake Historical Society program Feb. 11 in celebration of Abraham Lincoln's bicentennial birthday. The program, Abraham Lincoln - His Life and Legacy, will be held at 7:30 p.m. in the Community Room of the State Bank of the Lakes, 50 Commerce Drive, Grayslake. This family friendly program will focus on Lincoln's personal history and legacy. Lincoln-era songs will be part of the fun. Admission is \$5 which will be part of the society's fund-raising activities to help finance the new Grayslake Heritage Center. Refreshments will be served.

**Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, February 16,17,18** - Shop and Share Days at Jewel/Osco. Grayslake area residents have a coupon enclosed. This fund-raising activity helps the Society do routine activities. If you do not use the coupon, perhaps you have a friend or neighbor who will.

**Wednesday, March 11** - This is the annual meeting of the Society. Volunteers, who are present, will receive a certificate of appreciation. Plans for the new Grayslake Heritage Center will be presented. The audience will have an opportunity to learn what is planned for the permanent gallery and may ask questions about the project. Election of officers will be held. All officers are up for election plus two board positions. They are President Charlotte Renehan, Vice-president Lori Baumgartner, Secretary Kathi Starzec, Treasurer Connie Dunbar, Directors Terese Douglass and Bill Leider. There is no admission charge and refreshments will be served.

**Wednesday, April 8** - Diana Dretske of the Lake County Discovery Museum will present a program on "Place Names in Lake County". Diana used early maps, books and documents to research early names of places and published her findings. Since publishing, more names have surfaced. Grayslake historians know that the community was once called "Parkers Landing". Rhoderick Parker built the first house in the Subdivision of Grayslake and was the Village's first postmaster. Grayslake at that time was low land, just like Chicago. Learn more at 7:30 p.m. in the Community Room of the State Bank of the Lakes. There is no charge and refreshments will be served.

**Sunday, April 19** - Lion's Club Breakfast at the Hawley Street Fire Station from 7:30 to 1:00. Either visit the Museum or see the renovation in progress.

**Wednesday, May 13** - The Society will repeat one of its favorite programs, "Show and Tell". Five or six members of the community will be asked to bring a family heirloom and tell its story. The audience will learn not only about the artifact but some family history as well. Each participant has a time limit in which to share his/her story. In the past we have learned about and were shown a wedding dress, Coca Cola bottle, a plank from an early house, a gun and treasured family pictures. The program will be in the Community Room at 7:30 p.m. with refreshments being served and no admission charged.

### **VOLUNTEERS**

The Grayslake Historical Society and Museum have no paid staff. Without volunteers, it would not exist. Thank you to the following and to any we inadvertently omitted. Staff of Barb's Florist, Lori Baumgartner, John Brandstetter, Ryan Bowers, Chris Brenner, Darlene Craig, Sterling Douglass-Barnes, Connie Dunbar, Fran Dymtro-Smith, Linda Fassbinder, Lois Fenters, Harold and Carroll Flood, Marie Frandsen, Mary Friis, Students of Grayslake North High School, Members of Grayslake Fire Protection District, Members of Grayslake Central High School National Honor Society, Staff at Grayslake Village Hall, Charles and Dorothy Groth, Tim Holst, Mark Irvin, Daleen Jackson, Leslie Kaiser Jim and Margo Krause, Joanne and Dick Lawrence, Bill Leider, Megan Leonard, Mary Lillstrom, Rob McClasky, Iain McCowan, Evelyn Mensch, McNeill Family, Charlotte and Linda Renehan, Charlene Rockenbach, Ron Roselli, Fred Schaefer, Derek Smith, Kathi Starzec, Phyllis Stickels, Staff of Strang Funeral Chapel and Crematorium, Karen, Lou and Sean Thoms, Jane Tiffany-Hansen, Shawn Vogel, Bob Wegge, Kenny Weisheimer, Mark and Megan Willhite, Griff Winters, Ken and Pat Yopp,

### **DONATIONS**

Artifacts and documents received by the Museum between August 1, 2008 and December 31, 2008 include: Linda Fassbinder - 2 clothes hangers from former businesses; Joe Wisheart - 4 glass milk bottles; Agnes Pochler - 1909 Grayslake calendar plate; Joanne Lawrence - 2008 police station dedication program; James Jobes - Grayslake fairground circus poster; McNeill Family - Grayslake/McNeill feed sack; Village of Round Lake - 2008 Round Lake Centennial DVD, Centennial champaign glass, Centennial booklet; Anonymous - various receipts from former Grayslake businesses; Clarence Collins - 8 Grayslake postcards, 1 snapshot, Bette Best - various early Grayslake newspaper clippings, 2 advertising flyers for early Grayslake plays, 2 early Grayslake play programs, booklet with ads of Grayslake businesses, Grayslake Police Department - file of pictures, and clippings, 1 plaque; Estate of Evie Turner- 1930s greeting cards, scrapbook pages, Nicholas watercolor, military service documents, snapshots and pictures, pen holders, paper punch, Hopton's yardstick, Grayslake Gelatin tin, Old Dime Store receipts; Michael Stanczak - architect Carl Clausen's plans for former Goshgarian house; Darlene Dorfler - Prater's Silver Saddle thermometer, Carpet Gallery jar opener, 2 vintage undergarments, child's dress, apron; Fred Schaefer - Wilbur Lumber Company carpenter's pencil; Grayslake Feed Sales - grain moisture testing equipment; Sharon Wells - Pfaff's grocery store bag; Lori and John Baumgartner - R. W. Churchill's typed history of Grayslake; Grayslake Fire Protection District - copy of *Grayslake Times*, emergency

booklet; Deborah Nelson -book *The War Behind Me*, copy of Pulitzer Prize certificate and program, copy of *Seattle Times*, Newberry Library - book *A 100 Year Road Trip*.

Monetary donations, including memorials, during the past six months were received from; Lori and John Baumgartner, Chris Brenner, Beulah Druce Caldwell, Charlie's Garden Club, Karen Cloud, Terese Douglass, Connie Dunbar, Janice Geiske, Grayslake Rotary Club, Tim Holst, Allie, Aubrey, Beth and Ray Hook, Dick and Joanne Lawrence, Cynthia Lee, Bill Leider, Charlotte Renehan, Kathi Starzec, Estate of Evelyn Turner, Mark and Megan Willhite, Ken and Pat Yopp.

In-kind donations, which include various supplies and refreshments for the past six months, were given by: Lori Baumgartner, Barb's Florist, Marie Fandsen, Mary Friis, Grayslake Feed Sales, Dorothy Groth, Karen Hook, Helen Thielen, Charlotte Renehan, Dick and Joanne Lawrence, Tim Holst, Charlene Rockenbach, Strang Funeral Chapel and Crematorium, Pat and Ken Yopp.

### MEMORIALS

Memorials have been started for Grayslake Historical Society life member Eugene Alspeger and lifelong Grayslake resident Geraldine Beckey.

### MEMORY OF GRAYSLAKE

Californian Russell Ewing spends his retirement time remembering his youth in Grayslake. The following is one of his many memories. He titles it, "My First Car".

"Spring 1941, I was 15-years-old with a nearly new drivers license. But there was something missing- I didn't own a car. I had one in mind, though, a shiny, black 1929 Model A Ford convertible roadster with a rumble seat and red, wire-spoke wheels. I saw it every school day parked alongside Bud Behning's Garage at High's Corner, highways 120 and 21 (now 83).

Bud's garage was on my school bus route to Warren High School. The car had been there for several months with a "For Sale" sign hanging from its radiator cap.

In late May, I finally managed to talk my dad into going with me to look at the car. Dad tried to start the engine. Nothing happened. "Dead Battery," said my dad. Bud replaced the battery.

Dad turned the key again. The car roared into life. "Bad muffler," said my dad. His comment was unneeded. The muffler spoke for itself. Seconds later, the engine went silent. "Out of gas," said Bud. He poured some fuel into the gas tank.

After pumping the gas pedal, Dad brought the engine back to life. We went for a test drive. Dad drove and I sat alongside him. After a short ride, we returned to the garage.

The bargaining began. The price was \$35.00. "Too much," said my dad, "make it \$15.00," he added.

Minutes later the price agreed on was \$20.00. "As is," said Bud.

The bill of sale was made out to me. Not more than 10 or 15 words scribbled on a piece of note paper, but it was my Declaration of Independence.

I drove the car to our home. I turned into the driveway, my first problem occurred. I couldn't shift into second gear to go up the steep incline. The engine died about halfway up. The car rolled back down into the street.

Dad, behind me in his 1937 DeSoto, saw it happen. He couldn't move the shift lever either. He restarted the engine, then by slowly releasing the clutch got the car moving again. We went back to Bud Behning for an emergency

repair. Bud loosened the lever with a wrench and the shift worked again. We headed home. I was happy.

I owned my dream car for a year. It was a year of continuous breakdowns and heartbreaks. I never bothered to get license plates or insurance. I never drove it to school. The only times I gassed up was when my dad's car was available for me to siphon fuel from its tank. I repaid him the \$20.00 I borrowed to buy the car from money I earned setting pins at the Grayslake Bowling Alley.

World War II came along and old cars were in demand. I replaced the V8 wheels that came with the car with regular Model A wheels from a junkyard. I sold the V8 wheels (and tires) for \$20.00. I sold the car to Bob Hook, owner of Bob's Garage, on the northeast corner of Slusser and Center Streets, for \$12.50. I made \$12.50 profit on the entire deal. I was happy again.

A few months later, Bob sold the car for \$500.00, which made me very unhappy."

### A PAGE FROM THE PAST

Grayslake's Park Avenue has many beautiful houses. Our local history book, *Grayslake: A Historical Portrait*, tells that Dr. Rickey had two houses on the street. The first one was at 121 Park Avenue and was later owned by Mayor Ed Hook. In 1905 he moved to 111 Park Avenue, a house later owned by Mayor Ed Schroeder. This issue of the *Update* will use Dr. Rickey's obituary from the May 3, 1906 *Grayslake Times* to tell about this early Grayslake doctor and house owner.

"The news of the sudden death of Dr. Rickey which passed through our village early Tuesday morning was the cause of deep sorrow and regret on all sides. The doctor has been a successful practicing physician in this vicinity for the past thirty years, has doctored in the same families for generations and many almost feel him to be a member of their family. His death is therefore generally considered as a personal loss that can never be repaired.

The doctor recently retired from active practice owing to ill health. He having suffered a stroke of paralysis over a year ago and was also afflicted with asthma and rheumatism. His paralysis stroke effected his speech at times, and it was also noticed by his family and intimate friends that his mind was beginning to weaken. Although Mr. Rickey has a beautiful house, a dutiful and loving wife, and surrounded by all the comforts of life, the thought of approaching total insanity were more than his sensitive nature could stand.

The doctor went up town early Monday morning, viewed the wreck in the W. C. Ry. (Wisconsin Central Railway) yards for a short time, then returned to Schultz barber shop and got shaved, got the morning mail and returned home. He shortly afterward went to his room while his wife was busy in the back yard. About 10 a.m. Mrs. Rickey came in and went to the doctor's room, where she found him lying on the bed unconscious. Drs. Palmer and Clark were at once sent for and upon their arrival they went to work on the doctor and after an hour's vigorous treatment their patient was returned to consciousness. Mr. Rickey then admitted to the doctors that he had taken an overdose of morphine.

About 8 p.m. Drs. Palmer and Clark were again summoned, the doctor apparently having taken another dose. The doctors worked hard and faithfully

over their patient bringing him back to consciousness several times when he would again become unconscious, finally passing peacefully away shortly after 1 o'clock Tuesday morning, May 1st, 1906.

An inquest was held at the late home of deceased Tuesday afternoon at 4 o'clock under the supervision of Coroner Taylor of Libertyville. The jury was composed of E. B. Sherman (foreman), A. W. Harvey, G. M. Fitch, E. V. Harvey, W. A. Fritsch and S. Koph. The verdict of the jury was that death was due to a self-administered overdose of morphine, taken when the deceased was suffering from a severe attack of melancholy.

Robert Ninmons Rickey was born in Iowa County, Wis., June 25, 1845 and was thus nearly 61 years of age. He was a son of Robert N. and Nancy (Galloway) Rickey. He was educated in the public schools of Wisconsin and Illinois and at Rush Medical College, Chicago, graduating from the latter Feb. 3, 1869. He enlisted Feb. 10, 1865 in Co. K. 1st Illinois Light Artillery and served until June 18, 1865 with the Army of the Cumberland in East Tennessee. He practiced medicine in Libertyville 1865-72, in Chicago 1872-75, in Deerfield 1875-77, Hainesville 1877-1897 and in Grayslake from 1897 until about a year ago. He was a member of G. Bagan Post, G.A.R., Libertyville of which he has been surgeon, also a member of the Modern Woodmen and Royal Neighbors, and was at one time a member of the Mystic Workers. March 11, 1869 he was married to Delia Frances, daughter of John M. Price. They are the parents of one daughter, Eva, wife of Claude C. Crippen of Waukesha, Wis.

Besides a devoted wife and a loving daughter, two brothers Isaac of Tulsa, Ind. Ter., and Alex, of LaCrosse, Mo. are left to mourn the departure of a loving husband, a devoted father and a true and loyal brother. And in the death of Dr. Rickey this community loses a valued citizen and an able and conscientious physician and surgeon. The Times joins with our citizens in expending sympathy to the mourning relatives.

Mr. and Mrs. C. C. Crippen and little son of Waukesha Wis. arrived Tuesday and the two brothers are also expected to be in attendance at the funeral which will be held at the home of Dr. Rickey on Park avenue today (Thursday) at 1 p.m. Rev. J. A. Watson will conduct the services. Interment will take place at Libertyville Cemetery."

In 1983 the Lake County Genealogy Society read the tombstones in Libertyville's Lakeside Cemetery. Dr. Rickey's death was noted in records but a tombstone was not found. Mrs. Rickey died in 1916. The couple had a daughter Lillie who lived from 1872 to 1877.

### MEMBERSHIP

Starting in March, dues for membership in the Grayslake Historical Society will be raised. The dues schedule is in line with surrounding historical societies. First time members will receive a membership card. Continuing members will receive a card only if they pay in person or submit a SAS envelope. The dues year is presently from March 1 to February 28. The membership form with the new dues schedule is on the page with your address label on the reverse side. The address label tells the expiration date of your membership at the time of this newsletter.

## GRAYSLAKE HERITAGE CENTER

Construction of the new Grayslake Heritage Center is expected to begin in late February or early March with the demolition of the barber shop east of the museum. Bids for the Center were expected to go out to contractors this month. The project includes the two-story remodeling of the current museum and a museum addition to the east.

Village architect Dan Robison of Gurnee said his staff is fine tuning the bid proposal form and alternates. One alternate is for the bell tower, without a bell, on the west roof. Bids are due in February. The village will oversee the construction phase. Robison said construction will start on the new addition in late March or early April. Construction should be completed for final occupancy, he said, by the end of November, early December this year. Given the possibility of construction delays, a planned January 2010 opening is appropriate, he suggested.

Robison gave further details of the construction schedule. The one story, or back, portion of the main building will be the first step of the construction project. It will most likely happen in late March or early April. With that demolition work, the second floor will not have a second exit and will not be used for meetings.

Under this construction schedule, the Society will have to move out in early June. Robison said it is possible the new basement could be used for storage only in mid-August.

The village has received \$100,000 from the Esper Petersen Foundation for the Heritage Center project. An additional \$150,000 is pledged before July 31.

Because bids have not been received, it is not known how much more money will be needed for construction of the building. In addition, new up-dated exhibits will cost more than \$150,000, the Society board has learned. Board members are continuing their  
(continued on next page)

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### Membership Form GRAYSLAKE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Street \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

Individual Annual Membership	\$10.00	_____
Individual Annual Senior (65 years and over) Membership	\$5.00	_____
Student Annual Membership	\$3.00	_____
Individual Life Membership	\$250.00	_____
Couple Life Membership	\$400.00	_____
Annual Business Membership	\$50.00	_____
Please accept my additional donation		_____

Total amount enclosed \_\_\_\_\_

Make check payable to: **Grayslake Historical Society**

Mail to: Membership Chair  
Grayslake Historical Society  
P. O. Box 185  
Grayslake, Illinois 60030-0073

To receive a membership card, enclose a SAS envelope.  
The membership year is March 1 to February 28.

investigations and discussions with professional museum planners and designers to provide assistance in exhibit planning. Fund-raising efforts are being planned by the board, including the enclosed flyer that will be sent to all residents of Grayslake and other interested persons.

During the construction process, museum artifacts will be stored at Churchill, Quinn, Richtman & Hamilton Ltd. in downtown Grayslake and in the annex behind the museum. Additional space will be available in the annex because the fire truck will be moved to Rockenbach Chevrolet for storage.

Board members are collecting boxes and planning to pack the artifacts and move them out of the museum by the June closure deadline. During construction the Society will continue to meet and offer a variety of programs and services. Details are being worked out for a temporary Society office.

The project will be financed by a \$1.4 million grant to the Society from the village for a municipal building, the Esper Petersen Foundation donations, Society funds on hand and public donations and fundraisers in the future.

The remodeled and new buildings will be connected by an exhibit hall. The current Annex portion of the museum will remain. There will be improved parking. The new and remodeled Heritage Center will include an exhibit hall, a permanent gallery, an area for temporary exhibits that would change periodically, archives, a classroom, a community room, a museum retail shop and additional storage space. There will also be a small courtyard between the two wings of the museum.

*"Saving the past for the future"*

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