



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

September 2008

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

OUR DIARY

When this editor was growing up, happenings in one's life were recorded in a diary. Today people keep a journal. Diary. Journal. Whatever you choose to call it, here is what happened at the Grayslake Historical Society and Grayslake Municipal Historical Museum between January 1 and July 31, 2008.

The Museum was a busy place on February 9 when it participated in Grayslake's Winterfest. In the meeting room of the Museum, Fran Dmytro Smith displayed her outstanding quilt collection, all made by her. In the school room, children decorated a square of material to be fashioned into a quilt.

On the 13th of February, members of the Society Board gave a program in the State Bank of the Lakes Community Room. Their topic, "Off Center", told the history of several buildings on the south side of Center Street. Included in the presentation were the former Cunningham Dairy building on Seymour followed by the building in which Frazier built boats. The numerous fires at Wilbur Lumber Company were recalled. The first house in the Subdivision of Grayslake is presently on Whitney Street. The street also provided memories of the Collins Shoe Store and the National Bank. Concluding the program were the Peppermint Stick Preschool building, the former telephone company structure and the now vacant Lakeland Publishers frame building which was once Battershall's Department Store.

A pack of Cub Scouts toured the Museum on February 16th; Old Plank Road Questers held their meeting at the building on the 9th and Lakeland Home Educators viewed the artifacts on the 29th.

Activities slowed down in March. A Cub Scout group toured the Museum on the 8th. On the 12th, Sarah Surroz of the Liberty Prairie Conservancy spoke at the Society's monthly gathering. To learn more about this environmental group visit its website at www.libertyprairie.org.

Reverend Jane Clark of St. Andrew Episcopal Church told the 100 year history of the church at the Society's April 9th meeting. The first meeting of the church was held in a meeting hall in Grayslake in 1907 and its own building was

dedicated in 1928.

A group of Cub Scouts enjoyed a circus program at the Museum on the 16th of April. The Museum was a busy place on the 27th when people came to the Museum after having a pancake breakfast with the Lion's Club. Four hundred fifty students at the Grayslake Middle School heard the history of the area on the 29th. The following day the Society was represented at the quarterly meeting of the Lake-McHenry County Historical Alliance meeting in Union, Illinois.

A Park District preschool class came to the Museum for the circus program on May 6th. Members of the board with help from high school students did the annual spring cleanup at the Grayslake Cemetery on the 10th.

The Society had a special treat on May 14. The group gathered at the Blind Pig Saloon of Dr. Griff Winters. The Saloon is Winter's personal museum of historical artifacts, including a pre-prohibition bar, barber's chair, bowling machine, filling station pumps and more.

The Society was represented in Grayslake's annual Memorial Day Parade. Tours by St. Gilbert School first graders concluded the month of May.

Members of the Society Board took a field trip on June 13th. They toured the Haines House Museum in Waukegan and the Dr. Scholl's Foot Museum in North Chicago. The Society's annual Lego exhibit during Grayslake's Arts Festival brought a host of visitors to the Museum. On June 26th a class from Prairieview School in Hainesville came to the Museum, and the next day Peppermint preschoolers enjoyed a tour.

The Special Recreation Association class which meets at the Park District's Jones Island building visited the Museum on July 28. The activities for July ended on the 30th when the Society partnered with the Park District at Grayslake's Farmers Market. The Society had the children make a jump rope, and it also passed out literature about the Society and Museum.

The Museum was open on Saturday, August 16 during Grayslake's Summerdays. The following day the Museum's 1954 fire truck took part in the annual parade while a volunteer passed out Society information.

The Museum was open the second Sunday of each month and during the winter Farmers Market which was held once a month in Centennial Park on Center Street. It was open every Wednesday from 3:00 to 7:00 during the summer Farmers Market and every Thursday throughout the year from 9:00 to 2:00.

OUR AGENDA

In order to organize one's life, a person makes a list. A student has a schedule. A traveler has an itinerary. An organization has an agenda. Here are the Grayslake Historical Society's plans for the next several months. The Society hopes that you include its plans in your list of things to do.

Wednesday, September 10 - Local farms are disappearing, but the Grayslake area has a centennial farm. Bill McNeill will tell the history of his family farm located on Rollins Road and some family genealogy. The program will begin at 7:30 p.m. in the Community Room of the State Bank of the Lakes, 50 Commerce Drive.

Monday, September 15, Tuesday, September 16, Wednesday, September 16 - The Society's Shop and Share fundraiser will take place. Shop at any Jewel/Osco and the Society will receive 5% of your shopping total before taxes. A coupon(s) is enclosed for area residents. Last year the Society participated in

three Shop and Share events which gave the group more than \$250.

Saturday, October 4 - The Society will participate in the homecoming parade for Grayslake Central High School. Immediately following the parade the Society will host a coffee and chat time for alumni of G. C. H. S. at the Museum, 164 Hawley Street.

Sunday, October 5 - The eleventh annual Living History Tour of the Grayslake Cemetery will take place at 1:30 and again at 2:30. The cemetery is adjacent to the school at the northeast corner of Lake and Belvidere, where parking is available. Although he is not buried in the cemetery, Fred Wilbur of the Wilbur Lumber Company, who knew many of those entombed in the cemetery, will lead the group as they learn about early local residents, businesses and organizations. Fires and infant deaths will be included in the stories with the Walsh, Cable, Riel, Lawson, Granger and Slusser families being represented. In case of rain, the event will be at the State Bank of the Lakes. There is no admission charge although donations are always appreciated.

Wednesday, October 15 - At the State Bank of the Lakes at 7:30 p.m., Fred Schaefer will provide a short history of the U. S. Postal System. This will be followed by a program, "Road to Compostela". Images found on stamps show the scenes and architectural gems found along this early pilgrimage route in Spain.

Sunday, October 19 - The Museum will be open during the Grayslake Exchange Club Pancake Breakfast.

Saturday, October 25 - Volunteers will hand out candy at the Museum during Grayslake's Business District Trick or Treat event.

Wednesday, November 12 - The Society will learn the history of the early George Thayer building built in 1889, when it meets in Charlie's Place at 255 Center Street, Grayslake. Connie Dunbar will relate the structure's early history, which includes a theater as well as saloons, while John Brandstetter will conclude the presentation by telling stories of its later years. Refreshments will be available for purchase.

Sunday, December 14 - The Society will hold its annual Holiday Open House from 1:30 to 3:30 p.m. at the Museum. There will be music, food and an activity for children.

Second Sunday of each month - The Museum is open from 1:30 to 3:30 p.m.

Every Thursday - The Museum is open from 8:30 to 2:00 p.m.

During Downtown Grayslake's Farmers Market - The Museum is open the same days and time as Farmers Market.

First Wednesday of each month - The Grayslake Historical Society Board meets in the upper level of the Museum.

DONATIONS

The Museum received the following items for its collections between January 1, 2008 and July 31, 2008. Darrell Cruea - photo of Lillian Chard; Kent Rich - files on Pester building, Owners Subdivision, Central Park, Moore's Subdivision, Round Lake Golf Club and Lake Waukegan; Terry Shields - three World War II scrapbooks; Fran Dmytro Smith - fifteen items of baby clothing; Village of Grayslake - five aerial photos of area, 1950 Municipal Code book, 1947 Notice of Election, local ordinances 22166 to 25902, snapshots of 1986 flood; James Jobes - three circus posters; Grayslake Junior Woman's Club - five pewter ornaments;

Estate of Jeann Frank - eight school photos, three war photos, "Absent But Ever Present", 1970 Jubilee Dance ticket, 1976 Chamber Directory, 1930s school and PTA scrapbook, 1939 E. J. Sheldon calendar, Abstract of Title, photo copy of north shore of Grays Lake, Village of Grayslake special assessments card, five miscellaneous Grayslake snapshots, miscellaneous newspaper articles, two Grayslake Woman's Club scrapbooks; Doris Craig - Grayslake Building Ordinances; Wally Stang - photo of World War II veteran's basketball team; Helen Thielen - True Value carpenter's apron, hangar for local cleaners; Joanne and Dick Lawrence - copy of Sears postcard; four Grayslake Lions Club directories; Evie Turner - collection of vintage valentines; Grayslake American Legion (John Brandstetter) - two Grayslake Senior Citizen's 1968 to 1976 minute books, six American Legion 1950 to 1976 scrapbooks, American Legion 1939 to 1943, American Legion patches, Douglas Getchell Day information, photos and ribbons; Chris Trund - six Grays Lake 1926 to 1934 dog tax tags.

The operation of the Museum is dependent on monetary donations. The following people have donated financially between January 1 and July 31, 2008, Some were in memory of a loved one and all were in support of the many functions of the Society. Vincent and Suzanne Abate, Eugene Alspinger, Bob Barton, Dick and Bette Best, Robert and DelRaye Bonfanti, John Brandstetter, Chris Brenner, Pat Carey and Daryl Radebaugh, Russ and Shirley Christian, Maureen Cirincione, Jack Clooney, Karen Cloud, Chuck Clow, Clarence and Ann Collins, Susan Collins, The Crandalls, Carol Davis and John Elwood, Richard Derix, Frank and Darlene Dorfler, Jim Erker, Michael Franco, Lois Fenters, Philip and Susan Foster, Sharon Franklin, Grayslake Junior Woman's Club, Lori Guenther and Kevin Chick, Russ and Vivian Gwaltney, Lidwina and Irving Hertel, Claudia Herring, Larry Herzog, Hillside Restaurant, Anne and Lee Hollek, Karen and Mary Hook, Ursula Hildebrandt, Ron and Veralee Jones, Jim and Leslie Kaiser, Kasperek Family, Roy Kellogg, Alice Landrum, Sandra Lanham, Dick and Joanne Lawrence, C. D. LeGrande, LTD, Marcella Lenzen, Attorney James Magee, McGonagle Family, Bill McNeill, Karl and Marci Molek, Barbara Mueller, Jerry and Sharon Parola, Anthony and Anita Piwowarczyk, Charlotte Renehan, Kent and Karen Rich, Roger and Pat Richardson, Charlene Rockenbach, Doug and Bonnie Rockenbach, Edward Rohn, James and Marianne Russell, Terry and Teri Samuelson, Fred Schaefer, State Bank of the Lakes, Helen Thielen, Cheena Wade and Robert Anderson, Lawrence and Patricia Wirth, Sue Wendt and Stirling Haumont, Robert and Jeanette Wuebben, Dr. David Wurzbach, Ken and Patty Yopp.

In-kind donations also help the Society to fulfill its mission. In-kind donations were received between January 1 and July 31 from Lori Baumgartner, Connie Dunbar, Harold Flood, Marie Frandsen, Mary Friis, Charles and Dorothy Groth, Dick and Joanne Lawrence, Charlotte Renehan, Charlene Rockenbach, Kathi Starzec, Phyllis Stickels, Terese Douglass, Ken and Patty Yopp.

If your name has been left off any of the above lists, kindly contact the Museum office at 847-223-7663.

SPECIAL PROJECTS AND PROGRAMS

The Grayslake Museum is the temporary home of Harold Flood's circus memorabilia collection. Flood constructed a 12 foot by 5 foot diorama featuring

circus wagons, trains, people, animals, trucks and buildings. He added a challenge: Find Waldo. The display is located in the changing exhibit room of the Museum and has delighted many. Marjie Jobes has given special programs to groups. She used her talents to tell a story, explain circuses and have the children dress in circus attire and parade. The Museum is fortunate to have these people who help it educate and entertain the public.

After the Lego exhibit held during Grayslake's Arts Festival, many young Lego architects decided to leave their creations at the Museum for the summer. The Museum has many visitors who come to the Museum because we advertise that we have a Lego exhibit.

The Society and Museum are on the web. Two volunteers are working at creating a web site for us. Visit http://www.grayslakehistory.org/GL_Museum_info.html, It is a work in progress. At the present time, only a temporary page is available.

Each Thursday volunteers come to the Museum to work. One volunteer files newspaper clippings and obituaries. Another volunteer is indexing names from notebooks while another is reading microfilm to index births, marriages and deaths recorded in the *Grayslake Times*. These projects make it easier for the Museum to assist genealogists in their quest for family history.

Each month the Museum receives at least one request for a house history, a picture, an obituary or some piece of history. A fee is charged for document or photo reproductions and most people give a donation for the service provided.

All the accessioning records of the Museum are being put on a database. This is a huge task as there are over thirty years of records to catalogue. Each record tells the donor's name, the name of the item and a brief description of the item. At the present time, twenty-two years have been completed with over 2000 artifacts, documents, maps and photos recorded.

MEMORIALS

The first half of 2008 brought many sad moments. We lost five members, who we will miss seeing at meetings and on the streets of Grayslake. Memorials have been established for Marian Parker, Dan O'Shea, Keith Korell, Lenore Schaefer and Marion Clow. A memorial has also been started for Kay Vanderspool Hutchinson. Kay was raised in Grayslake but has lived in Arizona for many years. The *Update* expresses condolences to the members of the families. Donations to memorials should be sent to Memorial Chair, Grayslake Historical Society, P. O. Box 185, Grayslake, Illinois 60030. .

MEMBERSHIP

The membership year for the Grayslake Historical Society is from March 1 to February 28. Membership cards are sent only to those who submit a SAS envelope with their dues. At the present time the membership schedule is: Individual - \$5.00; Student - \$1.00; Business - \$25.00; Individual Life - \$100.00. The newsletter is published twice a year. With the cost of postage and paper, there is not much money left for the everyday expenses of the Museum. The cost of membership renewal reminders adds to the Society's expenses. The Society Board is exploring the option of raising dues. This is a good time to join the Society at the life time level before membership dues go up.

THE GIFT COUNTER

Don't wait until the last moment. Start your holiday shopping now. The Museum's gift counter can help you. Items and prices are as follows: Grayslake throw - \$50.00; *Grayslake: A Historical Portrait* - \$25.00; *Images of Grayslake and Avon Township* - \$20.00; Magnets - \$3.00; Pewter ornament - \$7.00; Postcards - \$1.00; Note cards - \$10.00; Place mats - \$10.00. Postage and handling fees vary.

CONTACT US

There are several ways to contact the Museum and Society. The Museum's phone number is 847-223-7663. The mailing address is P. O. Box 185, Grayslake, Illinois 60030. The Museum has no direct e-mail address. Electronic messages with questions or comments can be sent to ChaRenehan@aol.com.

PAGES FROM THE PAST

"School Days, School Days" If you know the words to this song, it can be assumed that you are over sixty-five years old. It is the time of year when schools are starting their fall term. This issue of *Update* will take readers back in time....back to the time when the Grayslake Grade School at the corner of Lake Street and Belvidere Road also included two or three years of high school.

The first article is from the September 14, 1911 issue of the *Grayslake Times*.

"The public school of Grayslake opened Monday morning with a good attendance. Prof. C. B. McClelland states that the enrollment in some of the rooms this year is somewhat lighter than last year. This is partly due to the fact that last term there were several students from Round Lake attending here that are attending the new school of that village this year. There are twenty-two scholars attending high school this year to twenty-five last year, there are two more that will enroll within the next two weeks. The school board held a meeting this week and decided to make some changes in the high school studies. The studies now are as follows: First year, English I, Algebra, Ancient History and Biology. Second year, English II, Geometry, History and Latin I. Third year, English III. Physical Geography and bookkeeping, Physics and Latin II.

"The County Superintendent is working out a system whereby the readers and language books were changed to correspond with the books in the other schools of the county. The Elson readers and the Metcalf & Rafter language books will be used in the future. These changes will affect those in the 5th grade and upwards.

"The principal stated that all the teachers have the work well in hand and prospects at the present time point to a successful year.

"The enrollment in the various rooms is as follows: High school 22; Grammar room 38; Intermediate 41; Primary 45; making a total of 146."

In November of the same year, this article caught of the eye of readers.

"Parents who have children attending school no doubt read the school notes as published in this paper each week. The teachers from the principal down are asking and begging for some kind of a walk along the cemetery where the board walk was torn up but no one has seen fit to see to it that there is something done toward putting down a walk, and the parents of some boy or girl will realize this before spring comes, take this as a warning. It is not absolutely necessary that a walk be completed there this fall, if a gravel bed was

placed there this fall. It would help wonderfully and the cement coating put in the spring. If it was decided to lay the walk where the old one was. It would have been a Halloween joke worthwhile if the youngsters that took up the walk on Whitney Street have placed it near the cemetery to be used for at least the winter."

The final article tells of major changes at the Grayslake Grade School and was published in the *Times* on September 8, 1921.

"The School Board of the Grayslake school have announced that the term will start on Monday, September 12th. The following instructors have been retained for the term:

Earl Darby - 7th and 8th grade.

Miss Bjerning- 5th and 6th grades.

Miss Stanton- 3rd and 4th grades.

Miss Harrison- primary.

"This is the same corps of teachers employed last year, with the exception of Nellie Stanton who is taking the place of Mrs. Darby.

"From this can be seen that it is purely a graded school, that no high school studies will be taught. This further indicates that many of our children will be going to Libertyville and other schools. Last year some thirty left on the early morning train going to Libertyville.

"The school board has made some very badly needed improvements at the school building. For instance lavatories have been installed, the outside toilets having been discarded for the more improved type within the building. Drinking fountains have also been installed. The fire escapes have been improved by cutting doors from the top floor, while in the past it would have been necessary for the children to go through windows to get into the escapes."

A MEMORY OF A GRAYSLAKER

The Grayslake Historical Society lost a life member with the death of ninety-nine year old Marion Parker in January of 2008. Marion was not only a life member of the Grayslake Historical Society but of the Grayslake community as well, having been born into the pioneer Doolittle family. For a college class assignment, Granddaughter Christy Parker interviewed Marion. This is what Christy wrote as Marion talked:

"We would go to backward parties a lot. They were bridge parties where we would wear our clothes backwards and serve dessert first!"

The spark that lit in my grandmother's eye as she described her experience during the 1930's was unexpected. After reading, *Grapes of Wrath*, I had predicted a story filled with sacrifice and hunger.

"You mean you enjoyed the Depression?" I asked incredulously.

"Well, I remember how tough it was for a lot of people to get by, but in my case I prefer to look back to all the good times I had. In 1931, I had just graduated from Beloit College and had received my degree in Biology and Physical Education," she proudly stated.

Already I was beginning to realize that my grandmother was a rather

extraordinary woman and that I should have asked her about her past long before I had entered college.

"I was 22 as I recall, and I received a job in Seton, which was a rural farming community in western Illinois. I taught high school biology, social studies, and English," she said with a giggle.

"Social studies and English?" I questioned.

"I really didn't know what I was doing, but it was the only way I could get by. I also did the bookkeeping since I was the only one at the school who had taken a course in it. That kept me busy during the nights. I also sold tickets at the basketball games, but didn't get paid."

"What was your salary?" I considered the fact that teachers still do not make a large salary, but figured she would have a decent income since she was doing the of four people.

"One thousand and eight dollars a year. I didn't have too much of a problem with money and was never without clothes or shoes. The banks froze for about six weeks, as I remember, but my mother had some money stashed away and she sent me some to keep me going."

"You weren't living with your parents?"

"Oh, no, I lived with a family in town who gave me room, board and laundry for eight dollars per week. They were a lot of fun and entertained a lot. Also, they only lived a mile from the school, so it wasn't too far of a walk."

"Wow," I said, "I can't believe that you enjoyed this period so much!"

"Oh, it was a lot of fun. There was a roller rink in town, and I was quite a good skater. I also loved all the bridge parties," she said smiling at my cringe at her mention of the infamous game of bridge.

"Unlike you, we didn't go to movies very much since the theaters were out of town and very few people had cars. Sometimes we would take trips to Galesburg and the Tri Cities. There was a little less poverty there, but I guess everything is relative."

"What was Seton's financial situation?"

"Well, it was a farming community so the families were never hungry, but there wasn't much money in the community. They were great kids though. In fact, I still get letters from one of my students, about twice a year, thanking me for all I did." The smile that overcame her face as she remembered that student made me feel very guilty that I hadn't even visited my former high school over Christmas break.

Trying to change the subject, I asked, "What role did religion play in your life at this time?"

Tears of laughter began to roll down my grandmother's face as she replied, "I can't believe I had almost forgotten that. Seton was an overwhelmingly Protestant town, but the family I lived with was Catholic. I had to go before the school board and swear that I did not attend the Catholic Church or I would have lost my job. I don't think I will ever forget how nervous I was as I stood in front of those ten people with my hand on the Bible!"

"Well, I'll have to admit, I really did not expect to hear such a fun-filled

account of the Great Depression," I said as my grandmother reached for a tissue.

"Although I had a great experience, the Depression did teach me a lot. We depended on each other so much that we learned to get along with everyone. I also have grown to appreciate everything I own and everything I am able to do now," she declared, her tone becoming more serious.

As I sat back and looked at the warmth and compassion etched in every wrinkle of her face, I tried to picture what kind of woman my grandmother would be if she had instead been an "Oakie" at that time. While giggles would probably not have filled our conversation, I sensed that the dancing twinkle that always filled her eyes would not be the characteristic that I will always take with me regarding my grandmother.

GRAYSLAKE HERITAGE CENTER

Grayslake Historical Society Board members and village officials have spent many hours this spring and summer preparing plans for the new Grayslake Heritage Center -- a project that includes the remodeling of the current museum and a museum addition to the east.

The planning is not finished. Plans are not complete, construction bids have not been sought and final cost figures have not been determined. The village will oversee the construction phase.

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

Village architect Dan Robison of Gurnee has prepared detailed plans for the two-story remodeling and addition project. The current barbershop building to the east of the museum will be razed to allow space for the addition. The remodeled and new buildings will be connected by an exhibit hall. The new addition will have a lower level. 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. The building is handicapped accessible. Restrooms are on both floors.

Society and village officials continue to meet to update and refine plans. Many of them have visited nearby museums to provide additional ideas for the project. Initial meetings have been held with professional museum planners and designers.

The board has been busy seeking outside space to store the artifacts during the construction. All artifacts will be removed and the museum will be closed during the construction process. No estimates have been made as to when construction will begin or how long it will take.

During construction the Society will continue to operate. A temporary home for society operations is being sought. The Society will continue to meet and offer a variety of programs and services.

The challenge to Society members is the removal and relocation of the artifacts to temporary facilities and continuing popular programs and services while the new future for the Society and the village becomes a reality.



THE FUTURE GRAYSLAKE HERITAGE CENTER

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 Grayslake Historical Society

