



Grayslake Historical Society

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

UPDATE

September 2014

Village Municipal History Museum
164 Hawley Street
Grayslake, Illinois
Hours: Wednesday - Saturday 12:00 to 4:00
Tours by appointment

Grayslake Historical Society
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SPRING BACK

During the first half of the 2014 year, the Grayslake Historical Society had interesting programs. On Wednesday, February 12 a video was pulled from the archives of the Society. Attendees thoroughly enjoyed watching "Grayslake Through The Years Featuring Florence Carlson, Kathryn Hook and Hazel White".

Florence told about the Grayslake Matrimonial Agency. The Agency began in 1899 and was still going strong in 1936-37 when Florence worked there. The Agency's newspaper was the middle man where prospective clients could meet by letter. That correspondence was forwarded by Florence at the newspaper office to the party which interested the letter sender. Addresses were not exchanged unless the writers felt it could be a positive match.

Kathryn was only fifteen years old when three young men asked her mother if Kate could join their dance band. Kate was very proficient on the piano. Her mother said yes only if the boys promised to look out for her. She said they protected her so well that she never met any one at the jobs. They each received eight dollars a night for their performance. They were a regular dance band and played at the Opera House in Grayslake, Antioch ball games, fireman dances and opened a lot of barns for horses. As the years progressed, they all went on to different walks in life but had reunions.

Hazel came to Grayslake as a bride in 1918. When her child went to first grade in 1927, she got a job for twenty-five cents an hour at the telephone exchange and took a beautician's course. She began her beauty career in 1928 at her home on Railroad Avenue. In 1929 she moved to a duplex on George Street and had a real hair dryer to sit under. She went back to school to learn spiral weaving, the marcel finger waves and manicures. Hazel had the first beauty shop in Grayslake in 1932. She continued to expand her business into bigger shops while watching her family grow. By her retirement Hazel had been in business for sixty-four years.

The Wednesday, March 12 program of the Society featured John Potter telling about the Potter family. John told about growing up on the Potter farm which was south of Grayslake at the south terminus of Curran Road. He discussed Potter's Pool - built to

help aid a sibling who had contracted polio and needed exercise to strengthen muscles. The pool expanded to become a place where people could do physical therapy exercises in the water for numerous ailments. John had many humorous stories about being a part of a large family. He recalled how his father began to have the famous Porsche parties on the farm.

The audience at the Wednesday, April 9 program of the Society learned a lot of postal history from the daughters of former Grayslake postmaster Ernie Plotz - Lisa Plotz Andours and Nancy Plotz Reed. Lisa, who has retired from the Postal Service after thirty-two years, gave some general information about the Post Office. One of the earliest references to courier service can be found in the Histories of Herodotus. Even though the phrase, "Neither snow nor rain, nor heat, nor gloom of night stays these couriers from the swift completion of their appointed rounds," is associated with the Post Office, the United States Postal Service has no actual motto. However, that phrase can be found on the James Farley Post Office Building in New York City. That building has the distinction of being considered the biggest Post Office in the United States.

On July 25, 1775 Ben Franklin became the first Postmaster General of the United States at a salary of \$1000. He invented the pigeon hole case to sort mail. Another unique part of American Postal Service history was the Pony Express - which ran (galloped) between St. Louis, Missouri and Sacramento, California. The journey took ten days to complete and helped connect the Eastern part of the United States with settlers in the West more quickly than the longer journey by ship. The Pony Express lasted only eighteen months, after which the newly completed trans-continental railroad carried the mail.

In 1775, 1,790 pieces of mail were handled. By 1860 the amount had grown to 28,498. Mail was delivered post office to post office up to 1863. Then on March 3, 1863 street addresses were put on the mail. By 1890, forty-one million pieces of mail were delivered - 65% of it RFD, rural delivery. Curbside boxes became popular in the 1930s.

The five digit ZIP code (Zone Improvement Code) was introduced on July 1, 1963 and celebrated its 50th Anniversary in 2013. The lower numbers are in the East while the West has the higher numbers. Some famous post postmaster generals include Abraham Lincoln, Charles Lindbergh and Rock Hudson.

The first post office in Grayslake was established in December 1886 at a site on Whitney Street. At the time, our post office was officially called Gray's Lake. The post office moved to a second site on Whitney Street. The postal service did not want names to have a possessive sound so in February 1895, the name was changed to Grayslake.

The first house delivery in Grayslake was in April 1949. Lisa's and Nancy's father, Ernie Plotz, became a postal carrier in August of 1949. He rose to a clerk position in 1951. Ernie became an Assistant Postmaster in July 1965. Acting Postmaster in November 1965 and on March 2, 1966 he became the last politically appointed Postmaster.

After being at 250 Center Street for a number of years, ground was broken for a new post office at 449 E. Center Street on October 9, 1969. By the time Ernie retired in 1986, the Post Office had been a part of Grayslake for 100 years.

Three long time residents of Grayslake gave the Wednesday, May 14 program of the Historical Society. Terry Norton began with a synopsis of his family's history. Terry's grandfather grew up in Ingleside and worked on the railroad which came to the area in the late 1800s. He also was a hunting and fishing guide to visitors on the Chain-o'-Lakes. Terry's dad worked on the Sears farm in Grayslake where he met the future Mrs. Norton (a Harris). His Dad was always a truck driver - first for Dan Lodesky, then Graham Bros. Fuel Oil and eventually for Herman Behm's Milk Trucking Company. Around 1940 Mr. Behm contracted with the Pure Milk Association (a farmer's co-op.) At that time Lake County had primarily family owned dairy farms. The truck picked up milk in cans and took it to Chicago. Two local dealers were Spinney Run and Hawthorn Melody.

At one time Behm's Trucking had as many as seventeen trucks kept where present day Miller Heating and the Vine are located. Each truck could haul seventy-five eight gallon milk cans, each can roughly weighing sixty to seventy pounds.

Terry ended his talk with anecdotes about the good relationship Herman Behm had with his drivers, and how Smitty's Tavern (the Last Chance site) would have extra money on Thursday so the drivers could cash their paycheck on the spot.

Next, Connie Sheldon Dunbar talked about her father known as Buck even to his own family. The family began as farmers on Rollins Road. Buck didn't care for farming which was a seven day a week, 365 days a year job. In 1917 he left the farm for WW I. he saw a lot of the United States on the train from Chicago to Texas. He discovered a liking for mechanics during the war. When he came back to the farm after the war, Buck wanted to change things - and began by building a machine shed.

Then in 1922 he began selling tractors. Buck rented the east side of the building where the present-day Vine is located and started selling both cars and tractors. He rented the building for the next twenty years. Buck married in 1929 and lived in the building for a time.

He had the Dodge dealership in Grayslake, besides selling tractors. Often when farmers were planting crops and their tractors broke down, Buck would get the part from another farmer's tractor so that everyone could get their crops planted in time.

By the end of WW I, Buck wanted his own building. The finished building on Seymour Avenue, now the site of the Grayslake Police Building, had a glazed tile exterior with a showroom in front. Buck and his family lived upstairs. Buck officially became an Allis-Chalmers Dealer in 1945. Tractors were in high demand because the small farmers needed them. He quit selling tractors in 1955 but continued to repair them. Buck died in 1963.

Charlotte Kuebker Renehan spoke about the Grayslake Dairy. In 1925 her father, Charles Kuebker, Jr. used part of his farm for a dairy operation after purchasing the dairy business from H. E. Darby. Charles advertised in a local paper that he was "now prepared to deliver butter, milk, cream and also fresh eggs." Besides twenty-seven Guernsey milking cows, he acquired a processing and a milk bottling machine.

By 1928 electricity came to the farm and with it the pasteurization of milk. Then the Canning Factory bunk house, which would contain two processing rooms, two storage area and an office, was moved to the Kuebker Farm in 1931. Charles operated Grayslake Dairy until the spring of 1939. There are still some souvenirs left from the

Dairy, such as bottles, bottle caps, hats and order forms. The Kuebker farm is now Grayslake's Central Park.

FALL FORWARD

Wednesday, September 3 - Historical Society, Search & Share genealogy discussion group. Archives. 2:00 PM.

Wednesday, September 10 - Historical Society program, Community Room, 7:30 PM. Using letters, pictures and documents, Charlotte Renehan will trace her father's experiences "From farm to France" during World War I.

Thursday, September 11 - Lake County Civil War Roundtable. Community Room. 7:00 PM.

Saturday, September 13 - Historical Society reception for Grayslake High School Alumni. Community Room. Penny candy will be sold from the Old Dime Store Candy Case in the Museum lobby.

Sunday, September 14 - Museum - Opening of Annex and Wilbur, the fire truck's sixtieth birthday party. Cake will be served. Monetary gifts to restore Wilbur's rear fender are suggested.

Wednesday, September 17 - Heritage Center program. Community Room. 7:30 PM. Historian Mark Herman will present *Don't Know Much About World War I?*

Wednesday, September 24 - Heritage Center & Historical Society booth, Grayslake Farmers Market. 3:00 to 7:00. Students will craft an early airplane.

Thursday, September 25 - Multi-museum bus tour tracing the route of the Wisconsin Central Railroad from Antioch to Buffalo Grove with stops at local museums, including Grayslake's. Register with Grayslake Park District.

Wednesday, October 1 - Historical Society Search & Share genealogy discussion group. Archives. 2:00 PM.

Sunday, October 5 - Historical Society's annual Living History Tour of the Grayslake Cemetery. 1:30 & 2:30 PM. Seven World War I veterans or a relative will be featured:

Wednesday, October 8 - Historical Society program, Community Room. 7:30 PM. "Grayslake Through The Decades". A visual program created by students of Grayslake Central High School.

Thursday, October 9 - Lake County Civil War Roundtable. Community Room. 7:00 PM.

Saturday, October 11 - Museum - Gallery opening of Over There: Grayslake in World War I, an exhibit which will feature a trench, doughboys speaking, stories, authentic artifacts from World War I. Era appropriate refreshments will be served.-

Wednesday, October 15 - Heritage Center program. Community Room. 7:00 PM. Author and historian Terry Dyer will discuss Camp Grant during World War I.

Saturday, October 25 - Historical Society Trick or Treat. Heritage Center during downtown Grayslake's Tickt or Treat.

Wednesday, November 5 - Historical Society Search & Share genealogy discussion group. Archives. 2:00 PM.

Wednesday, November 5 - Historical Society program. Community Room, 7:30 PM. Letters from World War I soldiers will be read. Their life stories will be told.

Saturday, November 8 - Heritage Center program. Community Room. 2:00 PM. Actor R. J. Lindsay will portray general, Nobel Prize winner, vice-president Charles Dawes.

Thursday, November 13 - Lake County Civil War Roundtable. Community Room. 7:00 PM.

Saturday, November 15 - Historical Society Reminisce Session. Community Room. 10:00 AM. Past and present residents of Seymour Avenue and Harding Street and their friends are invited to tell their stories about living along those streets.

Friday, November 28 - Museum - Giving Tree exhibit. Upper Gallery. 6:00 PM.

Wednesday, December 3 - Historical Society Search & Share genealogy discussion group. Archives. 2:00 PM.

Sunday, December 14 - Historical Society. Holiday Open House. Noon to 4:00 PM. Refreshments, Santa, Family crafts. Music.

For details for an event check www.graysalkehistory.org or www.grayslakeheritagecenter.com. or call 847-223-7663 or 847-543-1745.

DONATIONS

The Grayslake Historical Society wishes to thank the following people for their generous monetary donations between January 1, 2014 and July 31, 2014. The contributions were made with membership payment or as a memorial. Robert Barton, Bette Best, Brian Beversdorf, Dick & Maureen Blasius, DelRaye Bonfanti, Bernieta Bourguin, Barbara Brand, Geoffrey & Marilyn Bant, Burge Family, Lucille Carlyle, Marion Clark, Jack & Sharon Clooney, Clarence Collins, Laura Cravang, John Michael Davis Trust, Frank & Darlene Dorfler, Connie Dunbar, Kitty Flary, Marilyn Fraser, Donna Freiberger, Michael & Patricia Grantham, Marion Grinnell, Bill & Katy Hall, Betsy Hamil, Monica Hammerschmidt, Ken & Jane Tiffany Hansen, Mr. & Mrs. Kermit Harden, Kathleen Head, Evelyn Hesper, Larry Herzog, Mary Helen Hoffmeyer, Tim, Krista & Codi Holst, Karen & Mary Hook, Ed & Julie Horvorka, Dick & Nancy Johannsen, Roy & Sue Kellogg, Eddie Krumery, Vivian Kuzelka, Joanne Lawrence, Cynthia Lee, Tom & Vanessa Lewin, John & Elizabeth McDonald, Judith McNamara, Karl, Marci & Michail Molek, Michael & Mary Ann Moley, Ted & Barbara Mueller, Ken Parrish & Carol Cunningham, Dan & Cindy Powers, Evelyn Prase, Roscoe & Marjorie Randell, Charlotte K. Renehan, Katherine Reuter, Nancy Rinker, Doug & Bonnie Rockenbach, Ronald & Linda Roaks, Douglas Rosens, Marcia & Orrell Ruth, Chris & Jane Scherer, Rev. Ray Scherer, John Smiskol, Susan Smith, Edna Smythe, Helen Thielen, Janet Landrum Trieschmann, Betty Varies, Jack Wightman, Linda Willhite, Adina Wilson, Margaret Wolf, Dave Wurzbach, Ken & Pat Yopp.

In-kind donations were graciously accepted from Jim Crofton, Linda Fassbinder, Harold Flood, Marie Frandsen, Mary Friis, Jane Tiffany-Hansen, Joanne Lawrence, Terry & Joyce Norton, Nancy Reed, Charlotte Renehan, Linda Wilhite, Patty Yopp, Dave Zachary. These individuals furnished office supplies, refreshments and other useful items.

The Grayslake Historical Society wishes to thank the following people for adding to its collections between January 1, 2014 and July 31, 2014. Grayslake Chamber of Commerce & Industry - 5 display case bases; Joseph Welter - World War II book; Dave Wurzbach - DVD, Blush photo, band bio; Grayslake Farmers Market - farmers market model, Chandra Paddock Solberg - Grayslake postcard; Robert Churchill - Lake County monopoly game; Cynthia Lee - 5 sets of beverage labels; Charles Micucci - author's book; Kimberly Pauley - author's book; Diana Soto - author's book; Erica O'Rourke - 3 author's books; Marion Grinnell - Lake County Fair booklet, 12 Lake County Fair pins; 2 sets advertising playing cards; Douglas Rockenbach - 7 Rockenbach photos, 2 checks with passbook; copy of school newspaper, copy of phone book pages, John

Potter - set of toy farm animals, Charlotte Renehan - Last Chance menu & coffee mug, Glunz glog mug, Connie Dunbar - 2 Sheldon building photos; Gerald Winters - Fire department home radio; Ron Brown - Nicholas water color, 2 ledgers, 2 business souvenirs, Grayslake school report cards, 5 early Grayslake postcards; Peter DeHaan Jr.- opera house chair; William Swanson & Carol Cook - Wesley Sears Farm sign, Tom Mogg - cornet in case with music, 2 Sears photographs; Herbert Ehnert - Trowbridge Christmas card; Lake Villa Historical Society - Grayslake postcard; Lisa Rusch - Grayslake Centennial proclamation. A few items are waiting to be accessioned.

A PAGE FROM THE PAST

The Society used microfilm of the Grayslake Times to collect over fifty letters written by Grayslake men serving in World War I. This one was published on May 30, 1918.

April 21, 1918
Somewhere in France

Dear Brothers and Sister:

I will take a little time to write you today to let you know how I am getting along. All is well with me just at present. Am getting plenty to eat now. We can buy eggs, milk, and cheese from the farmers. Eggs are three Francs a dozen (a franc equals about 18 cents in our money). Milk is about 8 cents a quart.

It rains here most of the time, it is certainly a blessing to have the sun shine. Today its cloudy and drizzling but the sun has tried to shine but don't think it will make out. There is one good thing about the soil the mud does not stick very bad to one's shoes. I suppose it is much worse in the trench.

I just came from church a short time ago, several of the boys were there. It is a very pretty church and is built entirely of stone, even the floor and roof. Large stone columns inside and old style pews. The altar is very pretty. I could not understand the sermon because the priest spoke in French.

In one church I was in they had old chairs instead of pews, they made lots of noise on the stone floor. I saw some of the prettiest beadwork in one of the cemeteries, flowers and other decorations made out of different colored beads. Some of the graves were beautiful kept up in the best of shape.

There are springs in several places in France where the people have built watering tanks and troughs to wash clothes in. The sides are sloping so as to lay the clothes on that are to be washed. The French women use paddles to beat the dirt out, they also rub them between their hands. The tanks are large enough for several to wash in at the same time. That is where I do all my washing. The French always do their washing at these tanks or in streams. I don't believe they would know how to use a tub and wash board. I get my soap from the company so don't buy it. The water is almost ice cold and certainly is fine drinking water.

I have my helmet and gas mask now and will soon know how to put them on in a hurry. Expect to get wrapped leggings soon as that is what the soldiers wear over here. The canvas ones will soon be done away with

How does the old motorcycle run now? Wish I was there to take a spin now. What kind of work is going on at the Naval Station. I suppose there are just as many Jackies as ever.

I heard that David Thompson was made mess Sergeant at Camp Grant. I believe he will make a good one.

I saw in the paper that George Druce was in the hospital. I think he must have gotten in there soon after he went to the camp. I received a letter and two copies of the Grayslake Times, also a letter each from Dr. Palmer and Ethel Reynolds. Say but there is nothing like getting letters and papers from home. I have not received a letter for a week now so ought to be getting some soon. Keep sending the papers also the Sunday Visitor. I always read them from one end to the other. Please sent me a box of Hershey's Gum, it is hard to get over here. Also send old magazines such as Popular Mechanics and Wide World that you might have gotten since January 1st.

Sylvia, I am sorry that cake spoiled coming over, it would have tasted so very good I am sure.

Was glad to hear that grandma is getting along so well, hope the time will come when I can see her and all of you again.

I see by the papers that the British and Germans are having a hot time. I hope the British drive them to Berlin.

Will close for the time, hoping to hear from you soon, lovingly your brother,
Carl Hutchinson Co. C 127 Inf., A.E.F. France

A MEMORY

Many veterans do not share stories about their military service. Connie Sheldon Dunbar remembers this snippet that her father did share. "When Buck (her father) was released from Camp Grant the main gate was north of where he was standing. Avon Centre (where he lived) was east. Instead of walking north to the main gate Buck went east and exited over the fence. He was going home."

COURTYARD BRICKS

Honor a loved one. Support Grayslake's History. You can do both by purchasing a brick in the Heritage Center Courtyard. The engraving is limited to three lines with no line having more than thirteen characters including spaces. The cost is \$150.00 payable to the Grayslake Historical Society, P. O. Box 185, Grayslake, Illinois 60030. Ordering deadline is September 15. Call 847-223-7663 or 847-543-1745 for more information.

SYMPATHY

Earlier this year we lost our oldest Society member, Erlene Barron Buford who died in Urbana. She was 101 years old. Our sympathy goes out to her family as well as a grateful thank you for their generous monetary contributions. The family will long be remembered as Route 83 is known as Barron Boulevard.

EXHIBITS

The Museum continues to attract visitors with its engaging exhibits. The Upper Gallery was recently changed to *The Gathering Storm: Our Community on the Eve of World War I*. Grandmas's Attic was transformed into Grandms's Parlor and Grandma's Wash Room. The Society's pump organ is the center of attraction in the parlor. Along the wall text and images compare and contrast the country and our community on the

eve of entering World War I. Children may play games of the era in the center of the gallery.

The temporary gallery will open on Saturday, October 11 with the exhibit *Over There: Grayslake in World War I*. This exhibit promises to be an audience attractor. There will be a trench. Pictures of former Grayslake doughboys will be featured with some speaking. Authentic artifacts will be on display.

The revamped Annex will open on Sunday, September 14. Part of the Farm exhibit, which was in the temporary gallery, has been installed in the Annex. Large artifacts are on display in a new loft area. Again the fire truck, hearse, kerosene wagon and hand pumper will have center stage. This year is Wilbur's sixtieth birthday and we will celebrate with a birthday cake. Those wishing to do so may give Wilbur a monetary present to have a fender repair.

There are three, sometimes four, lobby display cases. At least one of them gets changed each month. The Old Dime Store candy counter shows off new acquisitions. Two of the cases feature collections from residents or from the Society's collection. The third case is used for timely and various displays. If you have a private collection you wish to share, let the museum staff know.

"Saving the past for the future"

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