



ROGERS PARK HISTORICAL SOCIETY

"Preserving the Roots of Rogers Park/West Ridge"

NEWSLETTER

Vol. VI No. IV

Fall 1991

From the President

Another year has gone by and the Society has had a very fruitful 1991. Our membership has been increasing steadily and our annual activities, including the recent house tour, were very successful. We truly appreciate the wonderful people who opened their homes for this annual community event.

Hope to see many of you and your guests at our Holiday Party, Saturday, January 11th. See related article and application. We are also looking forward to April 1992 and the Centennial Kick-off.

Wishing you all a happy and blessed holiday and a Happy New Year.

Martin J. Schmidt



SEVENTH ANNUAL FALL HOUSE TOUR

Many people who attended the tour remarked that we had really outdone ourselves this year. The homes were especially interesting and, in many ways, very historic.

Mary Ann Barry put it this way, "I saw my house through other people's eyes and it brought me a whole new view."

Kevin and Barbara Shields expressed the thought that it was hard work, but thoroughly enjoyable.

"The highlight for us was the excitement of seeing the former owner, Mrs. Keeling, and also the way the enthusiastic crowds enjoyed our home", stated Michael Puisis and Coral Norris.

Bob Scales and Mary Keefe remarked, "We are newcomers to Rogers Park and it was wonderful to meet some of our new neighbors. They confirmed our belief that our house is something special."

Nate Jarvinen and Nancy Haag informed us that it was an exciting experience that they would not have missed.

Leonard and Lil Adler agree that they never knew there were so many wonderful places in Rogers Park and are glad to know that many people are interested in keeping the history of this area alive.

If you missed the tour this year, be sure to mark your calendar for next year and plan to attend this outstanding event during our Centennial celebration.

COME ONE, COME ALL ... CELEBRATE THE HOLIDAYS!

The annual holiday party of the Rogers Park Historical Society will be held on Saturday, January 11, from 7:00 until 11:00 pm. The location for this year's festive gala will be the Ballroom on the main floor at Sherwin-on-the-Lake. Our host members, Leonard and Lil Adler are looking forward to greeting all partygoers.

There will be plenty of food, fun, music, door prizes, a super raffle and mistletoe.

We hope that many of our members and their guests will join us for this special holiday occasion. This year a discount will be given to Senior Citizen members (65 and over) and student members. It is never too late to join the Society and qualify for this rate. Just use the application on page 9.



CONGRATULATIONS TO

Mary Jo Doyle, who was appointed the first Executive Director of the Society by the Board of Directors at the October board meeting.

Mary Mertens Thiry, life-long area resident, on her 98th birthday coming up on December 15th. We welcome her as our third and newest Life Member.



SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENTS

RPHS Board of Directors Election

At the Saturday, January 18th, business meeting board members serving a one-year term will be slated for re-election to a new two-year term. Nominations will also be accepted from the floor. All members in good standing are eligible to vote. Please try to attend this annual meeting.

Virginia Pharr, one of our new members, was recently elected to fill the vacancy of the office of Corresponding Secretary. She will complete the two-year term which expires in January 1993.

THE WAY IT WAS

THE EXCURSION STEAMERS

In an earlier article, I listed the many excursion steamers as a method of summertime activity for young people, in what seems to be too fast becoming 'the good old days' in reality, at least from my perspective.

If you look at the photo taken on July 23, 1915 of my father, my older brother (extreme right of the seated group) and myself aboard the S.S. Eastland, returning to Chicago from Saint Joseph, Michigan, you will see the wheelhouse and super-structure of the ship that, eighteen hours later, would be under the waters of the Chicago River, as she capsized to port.

You might wonder what a four year-old boy would know about nautical terms. He knew nothing. My familiarity with nautical terminology was acquired over the ensuing years on many more lake excursions and some rough experiences on Liberty Ships during World War II. On that day, about twenty miles out into Lake Michigan, the ship listed about twenty-two degrees to port very suddenly, causing consternation among some passengers, which prevailed for about two or three hundred feet as the ship held the list before righting herself to an even keel.

I sensed the fear, but soon was more occupied with the clamoring of a church group that was picnicing close to us and had just set up lunch on card tables, which had been rudely divested of their contents.

Stuffed olives, tiny sweet gherkins, and gobs of potato salad wound up on the deck all around us. The ship was stable for the rest of the journey as well as the trip home.

The following day the Eastland capsized at her dock on the River, just west of the Clark Street bridge while 'overloaded' as many contended, with passengers made up of Hawthorne Electric employees, ready to enjoy the annual company picnic. There were enough of them so that four other ships were chartered for the trip to Michigan City.

Never was a really set figure arrived at for total casualties. From 812 to 835 were reportedly verified. One would presume that such a catastrophe would forever doom the excursion steamer business in Chicago. Not so. After many legal inquiries, and unsuccessful attempts to capsize the remaining steamers in service, especially the "Christopher Columbus" a cigar-shaped 'whaleback' type of craft, the onus faded.

So entwined with Chicago's hot summers, were the inexpensive trips, bringing relief to the sweltering populace, that to abandon them would be unthinkable. There were no air-conditioned theatres then, and very few other methods of cooling off. Think of it - for a dollar or a dollar and a half per adult, and lower children's rates, one could take the entire family for a whole day's holiday! Once beyond the outer breakwaters you were in a world of wonderful breezes. Often, the sweater that Mom insisted be taken along, over Junior's loud protests, was gladly donned on the return trip.

Naturally, Mom had to spend the prior evening making enough lunch for two meals, often carried in a wicker basket. But with enhanced appetites from the fresh air, rarely was anything brought home except the basket and the napkins. Food was also obtainable on the ship.

How could a steamer return from Michigan and in the morning be headed East, you might ask. The answer was that most steamers, upon entering the harbor, would be met by a tugboat which would turn her around and tow her in backwards to its docking area.

There were several boat lines in operation out of Chicago. The largest was the Goodrich Line, followed by the Graham and Morton Line. Goodrich also operated the many tugboats which were in constant demand for the many facets of the trade. The North American and the South American were larger ships that were used in the manner of the present day cruise ships with longer trips, except that their travel was confined mainly to the Great Lakes areas.

Daily trips, from Decoration Day to Labor Day, were available to most Michigan ports, and to Milwaukee from Chicago. The business had a long, picturesque career in history and provided pleasure for many Chicagoans.

Norm Coughlin



Cornelius Coughlin and sons, Leonard and Norman, aboard the Eastland on July 23, 1915. Photo was taken 18 hours before the disastrous sinking of the ship on the Chicago River.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

- Sat. Dec. 7** RP Historical Society Program
11:15 am-1:00 pm meet at 6300 N. Ridge
Misericordia-Lunch, Tour & Shopping
- Sun. Dec. 15** NCL Centennial Open House
1:00-4:00 pm 2501 W. Lunt
For information, call 764-2401.
- Sat. Jan. 4** RP Historical Society Program
11:15 am-1:00 pm Viewing Sullivan High School
Reunion Video - early 1940s
- Sat. Jan. 11** RPHS Annual Holiday Party
7:00 - 11:00 pm Sherwin-on-the-Lake
(See application on page 9.)
- Sat. Feb. 7** RP Historical Society Program
11:30 am-1:00 pm Rogers Park Library
(To Be Announced)



LOCAL ANNIVERSARIES:

- Bethesda Lutheran Church - 40th
- Howard Bowl - 50th
- Rogers Park Baptist Church - 100th
- St. James Presbyterian Church - 65th

CHICAGO ANNIVERSARIES:

- Bozo's Circus - 20th
- Rose Records - 60th
- University of Chicago - 100th

NATIONAL ANNIVERSARIES:

- Bill of Rights - 200th
- Disney World - 20th
- National Hockey League - 75th
- Notre Dame University - 125th
- Pearl Harbor - 50th
- Rice Krispies - 50th
- Salvation Army
Red Kettle Drive - 100th
- Star Trek - 25th



IN MEMORIAM

Zelda Barnett, RPHS member and over 50-year Rogers Park resident, passed away October 5th. Condolences to her family and to her many friends.

Peggy Hogan, daughter of member, Alice Coughlin and niece of Newsletter Editor, Norm Coughlin, passed away September 10th. Condolences to her husband, her children, her family and her many friends.

What We've Been Doing

Rogers Park/West Ridge Centennial Update - See related articles on page 4.

Damen Avenue Neighbors Block Party - Sat. Aug. 17 - History Chair, Chris Kringle, set up a booth for local residents to view artifacts and, despite a sudden cloudburst, had a lot of people milling around his tables who were interested in the Society.

RP/WR Centennial Talk - Thu. Aug. 22 - Mary Jo spoke at the Rogers Park Kiwanis luncheon to inform their members of the plan for our Centennial kickoff and events. We thank them for their Centennial co-sponsorship.

50 Fest - Mon. Sept. 2 - Several RPHS members, including Mary Jo. Marty, John Arcand, Tony Eberhart, Mervyn Ruskow, and Bob and Lois Winters manned our tables at this annual event. They greeted many on-lookers who viewed our photographs and inquired about the Society and upcoming events throughout the day.

RPHS Program - Sat. Sept. 7 - Program Chairman, Larry Calhoun, took a small group of our members on a tour of the Frank Lloyd Wright homes in Oak Park. Everyone was very impressed and we are hoping to make another trip there in the future.

RPHS 7th Annual Fall House Tour - Sun. Sept. 22 - See follow-up articles on pages 1 and 8.

100th Birthday of the Paradise House - Sat. Sept. 28 - Many Society members attended a wonderful party given by David and Jamie to celebrate this special occasion. The food was scrumptious and everyone, especially the kids, enjoyed themselves.

The S.P.A.C.E. Opening - Sat. Sept. 28 - Seventy plus people attended a gala event to celebrate the opening of this exciting new community center. It was a successful evening and we are looking forward to this second site to become acquainted with neighborhood groups and residents. See related article on page 4.

Rogers Park Woman's Club 100th Anniversary Luncheon - Tue. Oct. 15 - This beautiful event was held at the Orrington Hotel in Evanston to commemorate this important event in our community. It was outstanding! See additional article on page 7.

N.E.I.L Workshop - Sat. Oct. 26 - Mary Jo represented the RPHS at this informative day-long seminar co-sponsored by the Illinois Heritage Association & N.E.I.L and hosted by the Niles HS. She learned about the storage and care of artifacts pertaining to our collection and what our Society needs to do regarding this matter.

Rogers Park/West Ridge Centennial Update

Plans are continuing for the celebration of the 100th Anniversary of the areas of Rogers Park and West Ridge being annexed to Chicago. Kickoff Day is Sunday April 5, 1992 and events will take place throughout the following months.

Many individuals and community groups have joined as co-sponsors and the fund raising committee is still hard at work.

The logo contest is underway -- the deadline is December 16th. If you want to enter, call one of the numbers listed below for information. The banner contest in the high schools and the poster contest in the elementary schools will begin in early December.

The Commission is staffing a desk at S.P.A.C.E. We invite everyone to stop by and visit us. See article below. If you would like to participate as a member of the Centennial Commission or volunteer a couple of hours a month, please call.

Also watch your weekly Lerner News for continuing coverage of Centennial activities.

Bumper Stickers

An attractive centennial bumper sticker was designed by Jeff Roseman and we hope to see many cars in our community proudly displaying the stickers to commemorate our upcoming celebration. These vinyl stickers are easy to remove, will not mar your car and make an ideal gift or stocking stuffer. They can also be displayed on snow blowers, lawn mowers, strollers, doors and windows or any other creative location. Let us know if you think of a unique spot for one of the stickers. They will be on sale in mid-December for one dollar and can be purchased through our Society, the Centennial Commission and many local groups. Funds will benefit the Commission and the groups who sell the stickers.

Special thanks to Carr's Honda for their sponsorship, including two valuable coupons on the peel-off back portion.



ADDITIONAL OFFICE SPACE

The Rogers Park Historical Society and the Rogers Park/West Ridge Centennial Commission are now occupying office space at The S.P.A.C.E., 6424 N. Western. As of October 1st, we moved into this new location and are open Monday, Wednesday and Friday from 10:00 am to 4:00 pm. The RPHS phone number is 764-4078 and the Centennial Commission is 764-4079. Volunteers would certainly be appreciated; if interested, please call 764-2401 for details.



EARLY HISTORY OF ROGERS PARK

A write-up on the Early History of Rogers Park is available for \$1.00 per copy. You can pick one up at a RPHS meeting on the first or third Saturday or call 764-2401, 764-4078 or 262-0218.

LETTERS ... COMMENTS

Dear Mary Jo:

The enclosed \$50.00 check is being given to the Rogers Park Historical Society Building Fund as an expression of my appreciation of the many, many acts of friendship and helpfulness extended to me by my fellow members in my recent trouble.

Since I think best in verse, please let me say:

"Friends are special,
a most unique invention;
and I, the luckiest of women,
would simply like to mention
how glad I am,
and grateful, too,
to be blessed
with friends like you!"

With deepest thanks,
Loretta Bamman

Dear Mary Jo,

Greetings from California. I want to mention that I was truly touched about the lovely note in the last RPHS newsletter. Thank you so much. I appreciate the kind thoughts. Take care - miss you.

Love,
Denise (Orlando)

Dear, dear Friends:

How can I ever thank you enough for the honor of your gift to me on my 80th birthday - Life Membership in the Rogers Park Historical Society. It is something I never would dream of.

It has been 16 years since I joined the Society, thus becoming a Charter Member. It is those years that have so expanded my horizon - 16 years of love towards the friends I have made plus the constant learning about Rogers Park life, both past and future.

All this has added to making my 80th birthday one of the happiest of my life. Thank you again.

With love,
Jeanette Statland

Editor's Note: Jeanette has been one of our most loyal supporters - as an active member, then an officer and currently a board member.

Address comments to: Norm Coughlin, Editor
RPHS NEWSLETTER
6555 N. Bosworth Ave.
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Dan Raven - RPHS Member



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RECENT DONATIONS

- Leonard & Lillian Adler - new RPHS members
Photos and a brochure of Sherwin-on-the-Lake - dated 1930s and 40s
- Children of Zelda Barnett, recently deceased member
Zelda's scrapbook of her involvement with the Rogers Park community and a wonderful 1990 photo of her
- Bindy Bitterman - RPHS member
Copy of The Rogers Park News special Century of Progress edition - date June 8, 1933
- Daniel Cohn - former RP resident
Video tape shown at the Sullivan High School reunion - classes of 1942-45 - dated September 1991
- Gaynes Family - RPHS members and family members
Framed certificate honoring Mr. & Mrs. Albert Gaynes on their 50th wedding anniversary
- Robert Goldsmith - RPHS member
Several old glass medicine bottles and a glass plate with a design of a pharmaceutical container from the former Ridge Howard Pharmacy - dated 1940s
- Joan Teuscher Guenther - former Rogers Park resident
Memorabilia from Kilmer grade school and Sullivan High School - dated 1940s
- Leslie Keeling - former Rogers Park resident
Abstract of Title for the Pollard home at 1928 Lunt - dated 1915 with information back to the 1830s
- Long-Kogen Realtors - West Ridge Business
Scrapbook of ground breaking and construction of their building at 7070 N. Western - dated 1956-57
- Benita Schreiber Myles - new RPHS member
Memorabilia from Rogers grade school and Sullivan High School - dated 1940s
- Wanda O'Rourke - RPHS member
Copy of City of Chicago Department of Planning newsletter containing an article on Rogers Park - dated January 1989
- Rene Sutor - former den mother at Angel Guardian
Photos of activities at Angel Guardian Orphanage - dated 1950s
- Karen Vanourek - RPHS member
A lovely Victorian dress from the 1890s
- Rosemarie Young - West Ridge resident
Copy of Mundelein College 60th Anniversary booklet
- John Zender - RPHS member
Photos of his relatives, Peter Smith and Elizabeth Phillip, who were married in 1849- dated early 1880s and copies of certificates relating to his family

SPECIAL THANKS TO:

Mitiz Golden for her donation of one month rental for the Society at our office at S.P.A.C.E.

Chris Kringle, with assistance from Tony Eberhart, for the extremely interesting display in the main lobby of the Rogers Park Library. Entitled "Toys and Books of the Past", it offers a collection of wonderful memories. Please stop in to see the display; it will be up until mid January. Comments are welcome.

Lerner Newspapers for offering a special discount and a donation for new subscribers through our Society. The paper is being offered at a special rate of \$12.50, a two dollar savings. The Society will also receive a \$5 donation for each new order. A great idea for a holiday gift! For an application form or information, call 764-2401.



ROGERS PARK WOMAN'S CLUB 100TH

At a luncheon for members and guests at the Orrington Hotel in Evanston, the Rogers Park Woman's Club celebrated its 100th Anniversary on October 15.

Approximately 100 people attended this lovely function. Mrs. Wilbur Colburn, president, presided, and the Rev. Daniel Banner of St. Paul by the Lake Church gave the invocation. The 10th District of the General Federation of Woman's Clubs was represented by Mrs. Alfred Pederson, who presented a certificate honoring the club on its 100th birthday.

A small group of women in Rogers Park founded the club in the fall of 1891, primarily to study literature. Instead it became one of the early forces to work for improved living conditions, as well as the upgrading of schools and helping with war efforts. Its members worked to establish kindergartens, encouraged the study of domestic science, and started and maintained a school lunchroom at Senn High School which continued for 27 years. It served as a warehouse for all Red Cross work in Rogers Park. Immigrants were helped through English classes. Budding artists often displayed their work at the facility. The Club also inaugurated work towards highway safety.

A scholarship fund was created to help Indian girls continue their college work. During World War II, the Club gave complete cooperation to the Civilian Defense Program and to bond and stamp sales. The U.S.O. on Howard Street was created and maintained by this and other civic groups in the community.

The Clubhouse, at the corner of Ashland and Estes, was built in 1917 and used until 1983, at which time it was considered no longer practical to maintain a large building.

The Rogers Park Woman's Club continues to help various community organizations, including the Rogers Park Historical Society. Our Society congratulates you on 100 years and thanks you for support for the past 16 years.

Irma Hogan

HOUSE TOUR WRAP-UP

Co-chair, Mary Jo Doyle, reports that this year's house tour was by far the most successful, raising over \$3,500 for the building fund.

The Society deeply appreciates our wonderful hosts who opened their homes and all of the people who attended this year and in the past. Thanks to all of our volunteers, especially Pat Daly, Michael Egan, Pat O'Neal and Marty Schmidt. A special thank you to S & C Electric for their assistance with our booklet.

Congratulations to the raffle and silent auction winners. Thanks also to our generous sponsors:

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North Shore Madrigal Singers	Odyssey Cruise Lines
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Petersen Merchandise	Friday & Magik Carpet
Pinewood Inn	Plaza On the Lake
Public Storage	Raven Decorating, Inc.
Raven Theatre	Reshoft Remodeling
Ridge-Howard Pharmacy	Roberts Cycle
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BUILDING FUND UPDATE

Nancy Kelly has been working on grants for our Society and she and Larry Calhoun are meeting to decide which ones will be sent out in the near future. We hope to obtain additional funds during 1992-93 to be used when a location for a historical center becomes available.

BUILDING FUND DONORS:

Builders:

Loretta Bamman Paul Glassco

Others:

Norm Coughlin Chester & Naomi Gaynes
Chuck Fletter Jeanette Statland
Barbara Young

Builder:

Eve Adelman - in honor of her mother,
Jeanette Statland, on her 80th birthday

MEMBERSHIP ANNOUNCEMENTS

Any viable organization thrives on a continuing and growing membership. Your dues assist greatly in copying and preserving our photos, creating this newsletter and supporting special programs. Since the renewal membership period begins each year on January 1st, we would appreciate receiving your dues as early as possible. If you are not yet a member and are interested in joining the Society, we would certainly welcome you as a new member.

An optional 3-year membership is now available for Family and Individual categories. Beginning with 1992, you can save money and time and benefit the Society if you select the tri-annual dues. We encourage you to consider this money-saving option.

Discounts will also be available for Senior Citizen (65 and over) and Student members for some of our events during the year.

Life Member	—	\$500.00
Donor	Annual	100.00
Sustaining	Annual	50.00
Sponsor	Annual	30.00
Family	Annual	15.00
Individual	Annual	10.00
Family	Tri-annual	40.00
Individual	Tri-annual	27.00

(See application on page 9.)

Rogers Park Historical Society

ANNUAL HOLIDAY PARTY

(Members and Guests only)

Saturday, January 11, 1992

from 7:00 - 11:00 pm

Sherwin-on-the-Lake

1205 W. Sherwin

Chicago, IL 60626

Hosted by Leonard & Lillian Adler and the Condo Association

*** Holiday Party Reservations must be received by January 6th. ***

For additional information, call one of the following people:

For additional information, call one of the following people:

Mary Jo Doyle	312-764-2401	Ruth Shatzel	312-761-6076
Marty Schmidt	312-262-2913	Jeanette Statland	708-869-9317

Thanks for helping to preserve the rich heritage of our wonderful neighborhood

Society Membership includes quarterly newsletter, discounts and mini tours.

APPLICATION FOR MEMBERSHIP AND/OR HOLIDAY PARTY

1992 annual dues are \$10.00 per person and the membership period is from January 1st thru December 31st. (See additional categories on page 8.)

Membership: New Renewal Holiday Party No. Tickets _____ Building Fund

Tickets are \$10.00 for members \$12.00 for non-members
Senior Citizens and Student members only \$ 8.50
(includes snacks, buffet, beverage, dessert and door prizes)

Enclosed is a check for \$_____ made payable to Rogers Park Historical Society.

Name _____		Telephone _____		
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Mail to:	Rogers Park Historical Society 2555 W. Farwell Chicago, IL 60645			
		<input type="checkbox"/> I would like to help the Society when I am available		

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

Individual:

Michael P. Cleary (West Ridge)	Katherine F. McSpadden (West Ridge)
John Coleman	Benita S. Myles (Lake Bluff)
Al Garfield (West Ridge)	Virginia J. Pharr (West Ridge)
Kathleen Krokhar (West Ridge)	T. C. Risolo
J. Latman (West Ridge)	Elizabeth Schonbrun (West Ridge)
Gil Lawson	Diana Stonis

Family:

Patricia Daly & John Kimmes (West Ridge)	Dr. John & Genise Singer (Lincolnwood)
Ken Johnson Family (West Ridge)	Tom & Margie Skora (West Ridge)
John & Anita Kowalisyn	Michael & Linda Voitik (West Ridge)
Kevin O'Neil & Susan Wise	Leo Wiegman & Julie Evans and Baby Adrian
Ernie & Alice Segal (West Ridge)	

Sponsor:

Stuart Alpern (West Ridge)

Contributors: John Arcand, Loretta Bamman, Norm Coughlin, Mary Jo Doyle, Irma Hogan and Marty Schmidt.

WE WELCOME GUEST COLUMNISTS AT ANY TIME.



Rogers Park Historical Society
2555 W. Farwell
Chicago, IL 60645

MEETINGS

1st and 3rd Saturdays
11:15 am - 1:00 pm

Rogers Park Library
6911 North Clark
Chicago, IL 60626
764-0156

THANKS FOR RENEWING

Individual:

Eleanor Bell	Patricia Meegan
Leanne Sohol Bezanis	Stuart Perelman
Evelyn Elisius	Elinor Reed
Judy Eyring	Renee Sullivan
Paul Glassco	Steve Tres
Helen Hammerman	Eva Weber
Marion Hyle	

Family:

George & Sally Bartimes	Loren & Christine
Chester & Naomi Gaynes	Karrick
Bill & Jeanette Gerrish	Bruno & Marie Roti

Sustaining:

Charles & Linda Tannen

Donor:

Tom & Kathleen Conrardy

NEWSLETTER NOTICES

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