

From the President

What a beautiful day we had on April 5th for our Centennial kickoff! To a photographer it was a Kodachrome day; not a cloud in the sky, just completely blue. It was the best Sunday we had in April.

The Centennial Commission has published the Rogers Park/West Ridge Centennial Commemorative Calendar. Proceeds benefit future Centennial activities and eventually the Historical Society building fund. One of the calendar photos dates back to 1875. Order a copy today; they are beautiful. More about the calendar in the Centennial Update article.

The Program Committee has scheduled some interesting programs over the next few months. We hope to see some new faces so please try to attend. (See Calendar of Events on page 3.)

Our upcoming Eighth Annual Fall House Tour is always the highlight of the year. Mark your calendar for Sunday, September 27th.

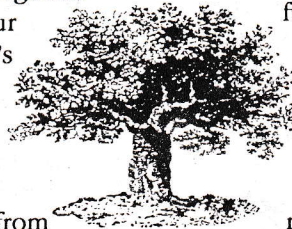
Martin J. Schmidt



Come one, come all... to our Summer Picnic!

We hope that many of our members and guests will join us for our 17th anniversary Founder's Day Picnic.

This annual summer picnic of the Rogers Park Historical Society will be held on Sunday, July 26, from 3:00 until 8:00 pm. The location for this year's event will be on the beautiful grounds of Unity Church, 1925 W. Thome, Chicago, IL 60660.



There is ample parking.

There will be plenty of food, fun, door prizes, raffle and surprises.

Proceeds will benefit the Society's building fund.

This year a discount will be given to Senior Citizen members (65 and over). It is never too late to join the Society and qualify for this rate. For additional information and prices, see application on page 9.

Centennial Commemorative Calendar

CRAZE

The Centennial Commission calendar committee worked long and hard to create our first publication. We are proud to announce that the limited edition (2500) commemorative calendar is now available! Stop by our office at 6424 N. Western or call 764-4079, 4078 to order yours. It is also being sold through various community groups and at selected locations in the area. After being published for only six weeks, we have already sold nearly 900 copies! Reserve yours today — while they last!

The calendar contains a map of Rogers Park and West Ridge and a short history of the two areas. It showcases 31 historical black and

white photographs from the Society archives, as well as over 125 researched facts of the area. The calendar spans 21 months, ending in December 1993. A history of the Society itself is also included.

There is a Centennial Calendar of Events showing the planned activities for our celebration which runs through the end of 1993. Please try to attend one or more of the wide variety of events.

We urge all of our members to purchase one or more as a keepsake or as a gift for someone special. It would make a great gift, or a special remembrance for a relative or friend who may have moved away from this area.

The Way It Was

Lake Steamers II

If I can believe my fellow Society members, I guess last issue's treatise of the excursion steamers was pretty interesting. So, I guess I will continue in the same vein, using a few incidents that I did not have room to include last time.

In addition to the larger ships in service, there was a class of smaller vessels that mainly left Municipal Pier for short round-trip hauls to Lincoln Park and Jackson Park. Their rates were much less for the shorter trips, of course, and they generally had a Dixieland style band to enhance the festive mood that always prevailed.

One tragic incident that I recall was the capsizing of the *Favorite* with a loss of twenty-eight lives during a sudden squall that blew up off Lincoln Park about 1930. It was a hot summer day in late August and business was quite brisk with the small boats. There is a nautical term for the type of small storm that hits without warning, preceded by a sharp drop in temperature, and an incredible shift in the winds, but it escapes me. The *Favorite* fell victim to such conditions and was blown off course towards the shore and suddenly capsized. I guess the Coast Guard and Harbor Patrol responded very quickly and efficiently to prevent greater loss of life. Inquiries and postmortems resolved very little, except to tighten future safety procedures. One newspaper's article, I am told, stated that the *Favorite* was a large, oversize launch to which a second deck had been added.

To mention some of the attractions that were featured at destinations on the longer trips; at Benton Harbor was the House of David, a quasi-religious group, that had extensive grounds, including vineyards, and miniature train rides.

They sold all types of grape jellies. They also had a well-known bearded semi-pro baseball team that often played in Chicago as well as other surrounding areas.

St. Joseph and Saugatuck, Michigan and Michigan City, Indiana had amusement parks of some stature. In addition, any cruise to Milwaukee usually had a three-hour layover in the downtown area before heading back to Chicago.

As a middle class family, we enjoyed some super vacations each year. My father was in management with the Beltline Railways, so we enjoyed 'freebie' trips on any railroad. In early June, we headed for the Buffalo, New York area and stayed on relatives' farms until August, at which time we went to

Black Lake, Michigan in the Holland-Grand Rapids area. My uncle had a huge summer home there. (If you don't believe that the area has become extremely toney, consider that Black Lake is now Lake Macatawa).

It is now unrecognizable as we knew it, with practically all of the old wooden cottages and resorts giving way to posh brick and stucco dwellings and boathouses with hoists, and hard roads and streets prevail where dirt roads once did.

The area had its Jenison Park, near us, with its games of chance, rides, and a noisy merry-go-round where I spent many an evening, totally intrigued by it all. Macatawa itself was practically on Lake Michigan, built mostly along the channel that provided access and ingress to Black Lake, which had been widely dredged to accommodate the steamers and freighters that served the area commercially.

A Coast Guard Station, which had a very busy and hazardous location, was right on the channel and often proved its worth.

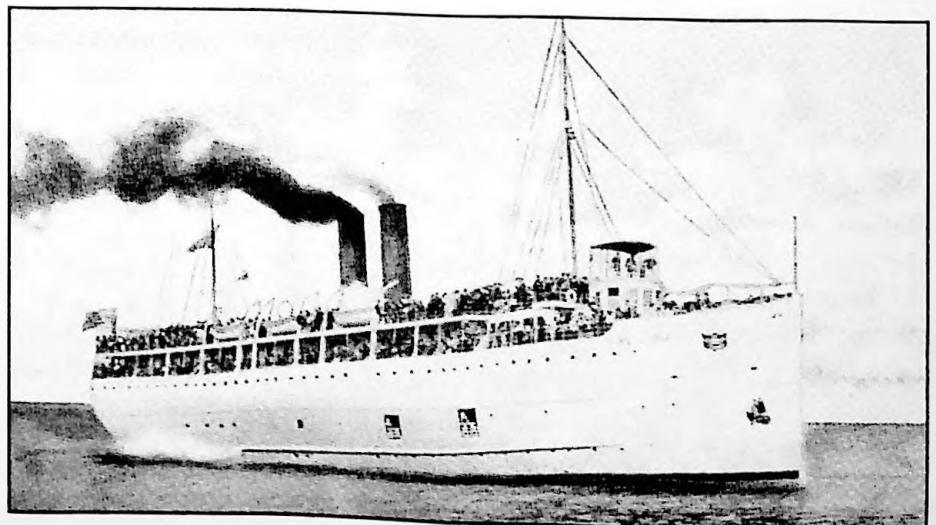
Each summer, the SS Wilmette (formerly the

Eastland) now rebuilt as a Naval training vessel for the Reserves, would drop anchor in the middle of Black Lake and stay for a week, running its launches to and from the land to accommodate anyone who might wish to visit the ship. They had one very steady customer who made the trip as often as possible. Guess who?

Just to the north of the channel, on Lake Michigan, lay miles of vast storybook white sand beaches. They were mainly populated with the skeletons of ancient sailing ships with the hull braces still protruding from the huge keel's remnants and partially buried in the shifting sands. They bore mute testimony to the hazards encountered in the early shipping trade on the Great Lakes.

My brothers and I would often

(Continued on page 4)



Calendar of Events

Sun. June 28
12:00 - 5:00 pm
Nortown Civic
League 4th Annual
West Rogers Park Open
Hollywood Theme

12:30 - 4:00 pm
RP/WR Centennial
Commission
Double-decker
Bus Tours

Sun. July 26
12:30 - 4:00 pm
RP/WR Centennial
Commission
Double-decker
Bus Tours

Sun. July 26
3:00 - 8:00 pm
RPHS Annual Founders
Day Picnic
(see article on page 1)

Sat. Aug. 1
11:45 am - 12:30 pm
RP Historical
Society Program
Herb Fagen's
Baseball Fever
Catch It!

Sun. Aug. 9
10:00 am - 4:00 pm
1st Annual Ethnic Fest
Indo-American Center
Warren Park

Sun. Aug. 9
12:30 - 4:00 pm
RP/WR Centennial
Commission
Double-decker
Bus Tours

Sun. Sept. 27
12:00 pm - 5:00 pm
RPHS 8th Annual
Fall House Tour
Please mark your calendar
(more info in next
Newsletter)

Sat. Oct. 3
11:45 am - 12:30 pm
RP Historical Society
Program
Camp Douglas Civil War
Retired Capt. Ernest
Griffin

Sat. Oct. 17
8:00 - 10:30 pm
RP/WR Barbershop
Harmonizer Show
Please mark your calendar
(more info in next
Newsletter)

Eastland Disaster U.P.D.A.T.E

I would like to add a happy postscript to my prior article regarding the Eastland. For many, many years Chicago was in shock regarding this incident and it took a long time for the memory of this disaster to fade. But did anyone do anything to preserve the recollection of those who died at the scene? No, not for seventy-five years. What a shame! Up until 1990, not one conscious effort was put forth by the city of Chicago to commemorate the greatest disaster in Great Lakes history, as far as casualties were concerned.

Finally, a group of students from Aurora Academy in Aurora, Illinois got the wheels moving and took steps to have a bronze plaque erected at the Clark Street Bridge as a memorial to those who perished.

Norm C.

What We've Been Doing

RP/WR Centennial Talk – Tue. Jan. 14 — Mary Jo spoke at the St. Margaret Mary Men's Club to tell their members about her reminiscences of SMM, the history of the area, our Society and, of course, the plans for the Centennial kickoff and related events.

N.E.I.L. Workshop – Sat. March 21st — John Arcand, Mary Jo Doyle, Mitzi Golden, Kathy Krokhar and Marty Schmidt listened to the keynote session on long-range planning, presented by the head curator of the Chicago Historical Society. Our group then split up to attend separate workshops on fund raising, community outreach, exhibit development and collections use. We gathered ideas and compared notes with other local societies, hopefully to help the RPHS to expand in the best possible way.

RP/WR Centennial Kickoff – (see Centennial Update)

Native American Pottawattomie Lecture – Wed. April 29th — Professor R. David Edmunds of Indiana University at Bloomington

presented a unique story of an Indian woman in order to illustrate the lifestyle of the Pottawattomie, the Native American group who largely inhabited this area prior to white settlement. Over 50 people attended this wonderful program and reception. Thanks to Loyola University and ARA Food Services for providing space and refreshments. Special appreciation to RPHS member Jim Krokhar and DePaul University for bringing Dr. Edmunds to Chicago. He thoroughly enjoyed the discussion and the entire Rogers Park/West Ridge cultural experience!

North Town Garden Society/Indian Boundary Park Garden Dedication – Sun. May 3rd — A primrose garden was dedicated in honor of Mary Thiry. Mary Jo, Kathy and Marty shared this special day with her and her family. This was certainly a day to stop and smell the roses!

Nortown Civic League Plant Sale – Sat. May 9th — Mary Jo, John, Glenna Eaves and Kathy were on hand to promote the

Society and sell Centennial Calendars, especially as Mother's Day gifts. We gained one new family membership, a Centennial co-sponsor and sold many calendars. Thanks to NCL for this opportunity.

Field Museum Community Organization Fair – Sat. May 16 — John, Glenna, and Kathy represented our Society at this special event. They met many people from similar historical and cultural groups, and distributed Society and Centennial materials.

RP Community Council Spirit of Rogers Park Awards Brunch – Sun. May 17 — Many of our members attended this annual event to help Norm Coughlin celebrate his award! His dedication and efforts on behalf of the Society are deeply appreciated. Other members of RPHS also received awards for their work with other groups including Art Berman, Lisa Talcott Schatz and Ruth Shatzel. Hats off to all of the winners!



Rogers Park/ West Ridge Centennial Update

Plans are proceeding for the celebration of the 100th Anniversary of the areas of Rogers Park and West Ridge. Both villages were annexed to the City of Chicago on April 4, 1893.

During April and May our gallery exhibit was on the Centennial and many wonderful posters created by the students in our area elementary schools were on display.

POSTER CONTEST

The judging of the poster contest will take place in the near future and all entries will be displayed at the local libraries over the summer months. Our thanks to the schools and to all the students who participated in this Centennial contest.

NEWS COVERAGE

The weekly Lerner News offers continuing coverage on all Centennial activities. Pick one up at your newsstand or better yet, subscribe through our special promotional flyer available at our office. Watch for posters at the libraries, parks and other selected locations. Also be on the lookout for Wanted Posters announcing the Great Facial Experiment.

BUMPER STICKERS

More and more centennial bumper stickers are popping up on cars around the neighborhood. Honk if you see one or call or drop in if you want one.

DOUBLE-DECKER BUS TOURS

Remember the good old days getting around town in a double-decker bus? Well, it is happening again on Sunday July 26 starting at 12:30, 2:00 and 4:30 pm. On this day you will board an open-air bus for a one-hour guided tour of the Rogers Park and West Ridge communities. It will be a relaxing ride featuring our landmark structures, other historical locations and some interesting facts that you may not even know.

The starting point will be in the Warren Park Western Avenue parking lot with rides beginning at 12:30, 2:00 and 3:30 pm. Advance reservations are recommended. Prices are \$8.00 for adults, \$6.00 for seniors (65 and over) and students and \$4.00 for children under 12 years. All ticket holders will receive a souvenir tour booklet with valuable coupons and a chance in a \$100 raffle. An August tour date is also scheduled.

QUOTABLE QUOTE

"The sun rises
in Rogers Park
and sets in
West Ridge"

John E. Arcand while discussing Centennial concepts

CONGRATULATIONS TO:

Norm Coughlin, who was elected as the fourth Life Member of the Society at a recent board meeting.

Karen Orduz, who recently competed in the finals of the Chicago Metro History Fair in Springfield, where she was awarded a Certificate of Excellence. The topic of her display was the "Rogers Park Historical Society", now on display at our office on Western Avenue. Stop by and see it.

Mary Mertens Thiry, on the dedication of a primrose garden in her honor at Indian Boundary Park.

All of our graduates in the Rogers Park and West Ridge schools. We wish all of you a bright future based on your hopes, dreams and hard work.

Lake Steamers

(Continued from page 2)

row across Black Lake to the northern side and explore the great beaches and the dunes. The real highlight of the day was when we would be sent up to bed to our second floor front bedroom overlooking the lake.

A little after ten o'clock each night, we would vie for favorable positions at the windows. Patiently we waited for the thump, thump, thump of the sidewheel steamer that was leaving Grand Rapids for Chicago. Thump, thump, thump — it slowly but surely was getting louder and closer. Thump, thump, thump, as we waited and watched for the beam of the powerful headlight that kept sweeping the lake waters from one side to the other. If there was a low throaty blast from the ship's whistle, we knew that some smaller craft was being tersely warned to be on guard.

By now the steamer would majestically hove into sight, ablaze with lights, churning up the waters on both sides and slowly fading towards Lake Michigan. Thump, thump, thump. We were now ready to sleep, convinced that we had just seen a miracle.

Norm Coughlin

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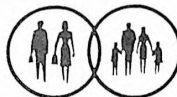
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Two Stories and a P. S. Showing How Rogers Park "Wrote The Book" On Diversity A Long Time Ago

1936 - From Jackie McNicol
"You are fortunate," said the never-to-be-forgotten Mrs. Corcoran to our sixth grade class at Kilmer, "to be living in a very cosmopolitan area." She had assigned a project. We were to ask our parents where their families had come from, to draw a map and write a description of that country as it was when family members had left and as it was at our moment, then, finally, to begin a family tree. She'd rolled history, geography, sociology and genealogy into one grand package. We learned a lot about ourselves, and also about all the other places and people, by sharing the results. Mrs. Corcoran had been right. Rogers Park was, indeed, very cosmopolitan.

Later, at Sullivan, Mrs. Corcoran's project came up—and those from Field and Armstrong and Gale and St. Jerome and St. Ignatius and other schools were fascinated. We went around the room, naming the country our families had once left. Again, it was a "world tour".

Something similar happened at my Sunday School, on the theme of "... no East nor West ..."

We took it for granted. People came from everywhere, found Rogers Park, lived in it and loved it as their American neighborhood. Every one of those families could have found a part of Chicago where practically everybody would have come from the same place. But they chose Rogers Park. Represented were all branches of Christendom, all branches of Judaism, and now, other religions as well.

Some had, themselves, been born across the ocean. Others were from families who had crossed the ocean centuries before. A few were richer than others, more than a few were poorer than others. But we were friends. Sometimes friends for life.

May I introduce some of them,

after all these years? Lorraine Jones, Wales; Lois Ward, Scotland; Claire McGuinness, Ireland; Pat Haarsch, Holland; Mary Jane Sinnaeve, Belgium; Doris Wenisch, Germany; Doris Gosswiller, Luxembourg; Carol Soter, Greece; Julia Abdisho, Assyria; Bea Zamudio, Spain; Rita Hayman, Russia; Barbara Bartlett and Rosemary Smith, England. The boys added other countries. Joe Conforti, Italy; Rudy Steinberger, Austria; Bob Nelson, Sweden; Adolph Podolsky, Poland. Two last names defeat my memory: Jimmy, Yugoslavia, and Leu, China. The Rileys and the Pollards were going to Evanston, so nobody'll ever know what they'd have said.

Some names I can't remember at all. One was the daughter of a visiting journalist from Latvia. Another was a boy from one of the Guianas who wasn't here very long but on the day he said good-bye, he assured us that someday he'd come back here to live. I hope he did.

Heaven knows these circles of kids couldn't possibly include every group. This is far from a complete gazetteer of an earlier Rogers Park.

But it does begin to explain why, when people talk about our diversity, I just smile and squelch the impulse to say "So what else is new?" as I think back to Mrs. Corcoran's words. We have always been fortunate to live in such a cosmopolitan area!

1971 - from Jeanie McNicol

I led my mother by the hand at age three to my friends in the neighborhood to invite them to my third birthday party.

Since Mother could not understand me due to a speech impairment, I showed her where to go. I had lots of friends. Many of them, maybe even most of them, did not speak English. There were friends from Greece, Haiti, Mexico,

Turkey, India, Pakistan,

France, Cuba, Ecuador, Japan. Since that was many years ago not all the countries come to me off the top of my head.

My point is that six years later (with my speech cleared up) I found myself speaking to the Rogers Park Historical Society at the Rogers Park Library telling everyone about all the wonderful, different people I knew in Rogers Park.

And the best part was that no matter how we could not understand one another due to the language barriers, we were friends.

1978 - FROM BOTH OF US

The Gale School Council wrote a note to all those wonderful people who had helped achieve that "impossible" new lunch room addition after years of effort. It said Thank You in eighteen languages.

Welcome New Members

Individual:

Sheila Clerkin	* Dorothy Lockhart
Judith K. Cody (West Ridge)	Charles A. Pinto (West Ridge)
* Gail Cronin (West Ridge)	Carole Reed
* Marie Galoney (Edgewater)	* Rence Repkin (West Ridge)
Selina Garber (West Ridge)	Mae Scheeff (Edgewater)
Sam Grayson	Michael Stanley
Chrysanthe Hoegh	Anne S. Stewart
* Mary Krause	Margaret Wallyn (North Center)
Deborah S. Lambert	

Family:

Marc & Lynne Aronson (West Ridge)	Terry, Megan & Geoffrey Murphy (West Ridge)
* R. Dietmeier & D. Johnson	* Gerard & Bernice Nieft (West Ridge)
Steve Heller & Georgeanne Marsh (West Ridge)	Frank, Ann, and Michael, Ryan & Kate O'Hara (West Ridge)
* James & Sally Kirkpatrick	Ron & Winnie Paul (Snoqualmie, WA)
Heather, Scott & Brian	Iakovos & Dena Platis
Carl & Marge Matthews (West Ridge)	Jerry, Mindy & Nina Tiberi (West Ridge)
* Patricia Mooney- Melvin, Eric & Grace Melvin	
*3-YEAR MEMBERS	

SPECIAL THANKS TO:

John Arcand, Gail Cronin, Ed Ehmman, Al Garfield, Greg Price, Marty Schmidt, Betty Schonbrun, Jeanette Statland, Phyllis Van Leer, Sara Wagner, the volunteers who have come on a regular basis to assist us in our day-to-day operations. They have been a tremendous help!

Andrea Reed and all the volunteers from Trilogy who have made a significant contribution to our Society by their hard work and dedication.

Volunteer Corner

Thanks to the outstanding efforts of our excellent team of volunteers, we've sustained the ongoing activities of our Society while successfully launching our Centennial celebration. We still have a lot of work that needs to be done and you can help and have fun at the same time.

Here are some opportunities for your pleasure and participation.

Clerical/Data Input:

We can use your help at S.P.A.C.E. anytime on Monday, Wednesday and/or Friday between 10:00 am and 4:00 pm for as few or as many hours that fit your busy schedule.

Mailings:

Letters to potential members (ongoing)

Newsletter:

Of course, we encourage our members to contribute articles at any time. Spruce up your pens/pencils. We need a project leader to coordinate the mailing and distribution on a quarterly basis.

Historical Research:

This is ongoing and on a wide variety of topics.

House Research:

Glenda Hyde will train one or two persons to assist her in developing historical material on residences for our annual tour. The work can be completed over a 3 - 4 week period during June-August.

Fund Raising:

Always necessary and imperative!!!!

Special Events:

We need committee members to plan our annual RPHS activities.

Summer Picnic - Sunday, July 26th

House Tour - Sunday, September 27th

Holiday Party - Saturday, January 9th, 1993

We also need help for the upcoming special Centennial events:

Double-decker Bus Tours

Sunday, July 26th Sunday, August 9th

Barbershop Harmonizer Show -

Saturday, Oct. 17th and many more

throughout 1993

Okay, students, summer is here. This is the perfect time to share your skills, gain work experience, meet new people and contribute to your community. Come alone or line up a few of your friends and give us a couple of hours a week.

Office Location and Hours

The Rogers Park Historical Society and the Rogers Park/West Ridge Centennial Commission maintain offices at 6424 N. Western. We are open Monday, Wednesday and Friday from 10:00 am to 4:00 pm, later by appointment. The RPHS phone number is 764-4078 and the Centennial Commission's is 764-4079.

Volunteers are certainly appreciated at any time. (See article on page 8.)

We have decided to open our office on the 2nd and 4th Thursday evening of every month, from 7 - 9 pm. This would make it convenient for people to drop by and see the gallery exhibit, pick up calendar orders, do research and view our historical photographs.

Special Board of Directors Election

A 30-day notice is hereby given for the election of additional members to the RPHS Board of Directors. The election will take place on Saturday, August 15th at the regular business meeting.

Membership Memos

The new information on the top line of your mailing label indicates your member number(s), your member category (see below), N for New or R for Renewal and the month and year that your membership expires.

This data is important, especially to those who have not yet renewed their 1992 membership (shows as 12-91). We ask that you consider a 3-year membership available in the Family and Individual categories (see rates below). We encourage you to consider this money-saving option which will save the Society precious time.

Make a note that reduced prices are available for Senior Citizen (65 and over), Student and children members for some of our events during the year.

The final date for 1992 renewal dues is July 31st. After this, costs prohibit the mailing of our Newsletter to anyone except paid members. We appreciate your past support and encourage your continuing membership! June is Join Up month! If you know anyone (relative, neighbor or friend) who would like to become a member, please pass this on.

MEMBER CATEGORY	PERIOD	MEMBERSHIP DUES
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Family (F)	Annual	15.00
Individual (I)	Annual	10.00
Family (F)	Tri-annual	40.00
Individual (I)	Tri-annual	27.00

(See application on page 9.)

Rogers Park Historical Society

announces its

17th Annual Founders Day

P ♡ **I** ♡ **C** ♡ **N** ♡ **I** ♡ **C**

Sunday, July 26, 1992

from 3:00 – 8:00 p.m.

on the grounds of

Unity Church, 1925 W. Thome Chicago, IL 60660

• *Reservations are limited and should be received by July 21st.* •

(see article on page 1)

For additional information, call one of the following people:

Marty Schmidt 312-262-2913 / Mary Jo Doyle 312-764-2401 / Glenna Eaves 312-973-7994

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

Membership includes quarterly newsletter, discounts and mini tours.

✂ **Application for Membership and/or Summer Picnic and/or Centennial Calendar**

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

Membership: New Renewal **Picnic** No. of Persons [] **Cent. Calendar** (\$12.00 each)

Picnic – \$6.00 for adult members – \$7.00 for adult nonmembers

Children 6-12 \$4.00 for members – \$5.00 for nonmembers

(Price includes appetizers, entree, desserts, beverages and door prizes.)

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[] I would like to help the Society when I am available.

Thanks for Renewing

INDIVIDUAL:

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 • Loretta Bamman
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 Elizabeth Borden
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 Larry Calhoun
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 Dolores Collins
 • Peter Colovos
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 Nick Davlantes
 Anne Dering
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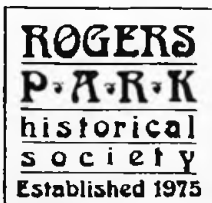
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Rogers Park
 Historical Society
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 Chicago, IL 60645

MEETINGS

1st and 3rd Saturdays
 11:15 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.
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*Summer Picnic
 HAVE FUN... Join us!*