



Volume 25, No.1
January 2010

Upcoming Events

Annual Meeting
Wednesday, February 10,
2010, 7:00 p.m at
Devon Bank
6445 N. Western

**Board of Directors
Monthly Meetings**

All meetings are held on
the fourth Monday of
each month at 7 p.m.

Monday, January 25
Monday, February 22
Monday, March 22
Monday, April 26

Board Meetings are open
to all members and are
held at the Society
offices, 7344 N. Western
Ave. (additional meetings
may be called as needed).

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The Historian

Preserving And Promoting Neighborhood History

35th Annual Meeting Scheduled for February 10, 2010

by Hank Morris

The 35th Annual Meeting of the Rogers Park/West Ridge Historical Society will be held on Wednesday, February 10, 2010, at 7:00 pm at the Devon Bank, 6445 N. Western Avenue. The meeting is only a few weeks away, so be sure to pencil in the date on your 2010 calendar so you don't miss it.

After the exceptional 2009 Annual Meeting, we're going to stay with that format for the 2010 meeting. The meeting will include elections of Board of Directors, some limited business, an educational presentation, and fellowship. If you liked last year's meeting, you'll love this year's meeting.

We expect to be able to provide additional details regarding the Sunday, May 2, 2010, House Tour (see below).

Mark Your Calendars for the Annual House Tour

On Sunday, May 2, 2010, participants in the Society's annual House Walk will visit Indian Boundary Park and local residences. The Park is one of our community's treasures, with its duck-filled lagoon, children's play area, elegant landscaping, and Tudor Revival fieldhouse built in 1929 and in 2005 designated a Historic Landmark by the City of Chicago. The tour will also feature houses and buildings, including the famous "castle" apartments surrounding the park. The April issue of *The Historian* will provide details about the 2010 House Tour.



Last year's tour of Germania and Eastlake Terrace was a big success, with over 100 participants.

As usual, there will be annual reports on the Society's financials and operations. We've done a lot this year and these reports should be quite interesting.

Volunteers who have made exceptional contributions to the Society will be honored, and we're planning to have a presentation about our community's history, similar to the one Glenna Eaves gave at the 2009 meeting.



The Indian Boundary Park Field House is one of the treasures in the area we'll be visiting in May 2010.

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Historical Society**

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2009-2010**

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The Historian

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Society Receives Former Indian Boundary Park Weathervane

by Hank Morris

On Friday, November 20, 2009, artisan Frank Glapa brought the 80-year-old weathervane from Indian Boundary Park (IBP) to the Society offices, as expected according to the report in the November 2009 issue of *The Historian*. This was part of the original plan when Frank fabricated the new replacement weathervane.

Without any announcement, the new weathervane was installed on the peak of the roof just above the front door of the IBP field house on Thursday, November 19. Had Ann Glapa, Frank's wife, not been there that day, we might never have learned about the new weathervane's installation.

We have to thank Frank and Ann Glapa for considering the Society a fitting home for



the old weathervane, a precious piece of West Ridge history.

We now need to preserve this fragile relic. It won't take much more handling without falling into a greater state of disrepair. And, once we find our new home, we'll want to display it.

Celebrating Nancy Emilie Strand's Life

(Sept. 24, 1942 - Oct. 17, 2009)

On Saturday, October 31, 2009, family and friends gathered to celebrate Nancy Strand's life.

At that time, those in attendance honored her memory by saying farewell to her remains in the tradition of her Viking forefathers, with a small lakeside ceremony. Attendees had an opportunity to share their memories about their mother, sister, aunt,


wife, friend, traveler, mentor, confidant, and former Board member and Museum Director of the Rogers Park / West Ridge Historical Society.

Immediately following, they celebrated her amazing life by throwing a big bonfire beach party!

The participants gathered at Jarvis Beach at 3:00 p.m. and began the memorial ceremony at 4:30 p.m.

There was a tent with space heaters and glogg. As it's cooler by the lake, participants were cautioned to dress warmly.

Food and drink was provided in grand Nancy style.

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From the President's Desk

by Jonathan Dixon

In the year 2010, the Rogers Park/West Ridge Historical Society will be marking its 35th anniversary! Founded on July 26, 1975, the Society's mission over the years has been to gather, chronicle, and share the history of our communities.

In the process of gathering, we have amassed a rich archive of photos and other records detailing the people and businesses and everyday life of West Ridge and Rogers Park since the early years of settlement in the 19th century through the present. We have chronicled the history of the neighborhoods through written records and oral histories. We have shared the history of our communities through our two impressive historical books, many issues of our newsletter *The Historian*, and countless presentations at schools, community meetings, and special events at, and hosted by, the Society.

As a member of the Society, you have played an instrumental role in this undertaking. Just through your membership dues alone, you help support our mission. Our first 35 years have been possible through your membership and the support of the whole community.

There are so many details in the day-to-day operation of the Society that the Board of Directors and our volunteers handle, and I must thank our directors and volunteers for making what we do possible.

One item of our day-to-day operations that I would like to spotlight is the matter of the Society's function as an educational resource. What should the Society do with the knowledge, artifacts, and photos it has accumulated over the past 35 years?

We should share them!

The opportunity to share our resources with area students, researchers, and



curious history buffs is our next big breakthrough as an organization. While Mary Jo was with us—and we remember her so fondly and miss her very much—she served as a one-woman archive of all things Rogers Park and West Ridge. Fortunately, her work in amassing our archives and resources is a legacy from which we all continue to benefit. However, we are taking the steps to formalize our processes in serving as an educational resource so that we can accommodate researchers. After all, filed-away photos can't tell their stories, and boxed-up archives cannot teach. Our commitment must be to let our wealth of resources continue to teach future generations.

This is an illustration of how our mission at the Society continues to unfold and adapt for changing circumstances. I have been privileged to serve as president of the Society during the past two years, and look forward to many years ahead as a volunteer and member. I know that we all have an interest in expanding the Society to gather, chronicle, and share the history of all of Rogers Park and West Ridge.

Happy 35th anniversary to us all!

Memberships as of December 1, 2009

Welcome New Members!

Individual

Ellen Knudson
Frank Valdez

Thanks for Renewing!

Individual

Dorel Dittmann
John Hoffmann
Emily Long
Dorothy Metzler
Patricia Reding
Anne Schaefer
Justin Sugar
Glen Timmerman

Senior

Ronald Ammon
Kenneth Konrad
Doug Nelson

Family

Dan & Carolyn Goffman

Senior Family

David & Audile Fortman
John & Elizabeth Schroeder

Al & Diane Sofiakis
Margo Viscusi

Honorary Membership

The Board of Directors extends to

Mark Lebowitz

a one-year Honorary Membership for his expertise in saving our Photo Archives and Cataloging Project after a crash which could have resulted in the loss of all data.

Chicago Had Two Rogers Schools *by Hank Morris*

Earlier Rogers School (John Garin Rogers)

Located at 1247 West 13th Street and built in 1879, the first “Rogers School” was originally called the “West 13th Street School.” The name was changed on Wednesday, January 12, 1887 to honor Circuit Court Judge John Garin Rogers (1818-1887), deceased just two days.

John Garin Rogers was born in Glasgow, Kentucky on Monday, December 28, 1818. He graduated with a law degree from Transylvania University in Lexington, Kentucky and practiced law for 18 years before coming to Chicago in 1857. He was elected to the Circuit Court of Cook County in 1870 where he served until his death on Monday, January 10, 1887.

On Sunday, March 16, 1930, Rogers School was listed in the *Chicago Tribune* (p. A5) as supposedly being on West Hastings, between South Throop and South Racine, which, when you look at a map, is in the same block as the 13th Street address.

On Sunday, September 1, 1935, the *Chicago Tribune* (p. W1) reported that the grounds of Rogers School would be rehabilitated, but that the building was not to be renovated. According to Charles Spaulding Winslow’s book, *Outline History of Chicago Public Schools* [Soderlund Printing Service, Chicago, 1939. Pp. 506-507], the school was closed during the summer of 1935.

Apparently either the *Chicago Tribune* or Winslow’s book is in error.

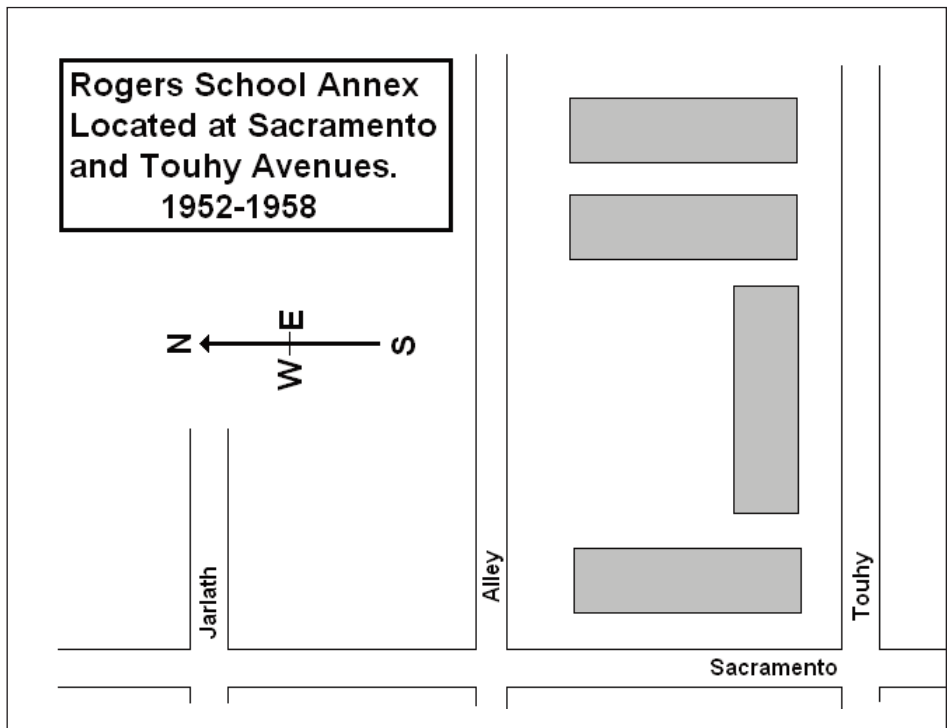
The land lay fallow for a decade. Then in 1945, the City's Bureau of Parks and Recreation created Fosco Park on the site of the Rogers School owned by Board of Education, to serve the growing population. The two-acre park included a playing field and a small brick recreation building. The city named the park for Peter Fosco (1894-1975), president of the Laborer’s International Union of North America and former Cook County Board Commissioner. In 1959, the Chicago Park District assumed management of Fosco Park. At the turn of the 21st Century, Fosco Park’s small brick recreation building and the adjacent community center were razed and a new state-of-the-art facility was erected at 1312 South Racine. The 80,000 square-foot

Community Center opened in summer 2005.

The Later Rogers School (Philip Rogers)

In 1932 and for the next five years while waiting for the Chicago Board of Education to finally build Philip Rogers School, West Ridge neighborhood children went to “Portable” School, South. These were corrugated iron huts very similar to Quonset huts; one class to a hut. Each hut was heated with a coal stove and each had a shed in back for a washroom.

The first time the *Chicago Tribune* mentioned the “new” seven-room Philip Rogers School (7345 North Washtenaw Avenue) was Sunday,



Above is a layout of the four buildings that made up the Rogers School Annex. The bottom building faced Sacramento. The rightmost building faced Touhy, and the remaining two buildings faced each other. So the area between the alley and the Touhy-facing building was frequently used by neighborhood children to play baseball. The sides of the buildings were blank facing this area. However, homeruns (actually run homes) broke a lot of the topmost building’s windows.

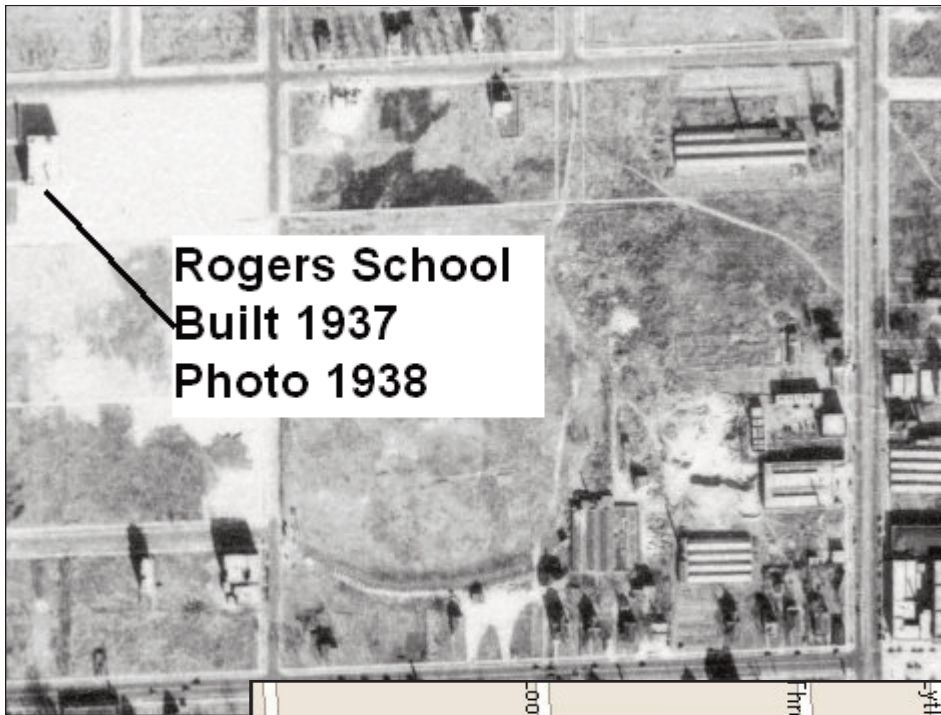
November 14, 1937 (p. SW2). The school building officially opened on Monday, September 27, 1937, but wasn't named Philip Rogers School until Wednesday, October 20, 1937.

The legendary Rogers School principal Dr. Benjamin Elkin was promoted from being the principal of Chappel and Rogers schools to Philip Rogers School in August, 1950.

During his career, he wrote nearly 20 children's books. In 1971 he was cited in the Boca Raton News as looking forward to retiring in Boca Raton.

On Thursday, February 8, 1951, p. N-A1, the *Chicago Tribune* reported that Philip Rogers School's upcoming addition would provide 10 rooms, an assembly hall, and a gymnasium and cost \$642,000. However, according to the *Tribune* Sunday, August 24, 1952 (p. N1), the addition to Philip Rogers School contained 12 classrooms, a library, assembly hall, gymnasium and lunchroom and actually cost \$775,977. The addition enabled 7th and 8th graders, who had been attending Jamieson School (5650 North Mozart Street) during the 1951-1952 school year to return to Rogers at the start of the 1952-1953 school year.

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The one-year old Philip Rogers School (above) was not exactly surrounded by lots of homes or other buildings back in 1938. Note how small it was compared to today's version.

The very first Rogers School was on the South Side of Chicago. The school is long gone and the site is now a Chicago Park District Field-house (see map at right). Graphics created using Microsoft MapPoint 2002.



Links Extend Our Reach

by Hank Morris

For those who are really interested in researching our area, the Web offers literally hundreds of thousands of Web sites. Google™ can only help get you started. It can direct you to all Web sites that contain those words you entered to begin a search. But, it can't refine the search to the level where you actually start finding the information you're seeking.

For example, you can key in a search for "Philip Rogers"—on November 22, I did this and the results were about 953,000. Are all these about the Philip Rogers for whom the school and village were named? No! One is a Welsh potter and ceramic artist. One is a Facebook™ listing for a contemporary individual, not someone who lived over a century ago. Still others were Web sites containing information about some other Philip Rogers or just the words "Philip" and "Rogers," not connected or related—just the two words showing on that page. So Google™ can only take you so far. Then you have to do a lot more digging.

Today, as we create pages for the Web site, the software allows us to embed the address of another Web site in the page being viewed. This is called a link.

One of the most helpful research tools is a list of Web sites containing the type of information you're seeking. This is what the "Useful Links" section of our new Web site offers; a categorized list of those places on the Web where you'll probably find the clues to the answer.

What is a link? Links are a way to jump to other Web pages and Web sites from the page that you're currently visiting without typing the new address into your browser. Links may also take you to another page on the web site you're currently visiting, sort of like flipping pages to another part of the same book. Web documents may contain both textual and graphical links. A textual link is in a different color, which also may be underlined. Once a textual link is used, it will change color.

Links are one of the more useful capabilities of our new Web site. Yes, we had links on the old Web site. But, we've expanded the offerings well beyond our earlier efforts.

The screen shot below shows a list of the link categories available on November 22, 2009. More links will have been added by the time you read this.

The numbers in parentheses indicate how many links are in each category.

These 83 links take you to many little-known, but wonderful sites for research. Say you want to know what the area around the Howard "L" looked like in 1938. Maps only go so far, and Google™ earth can't show us details from the past. But, the University of Illinois, The Library of Congress, and other organizations got together and sponsored an aerial survey of most—but not all—of the State of Illinois. Those photos are on the Web and can be viewed and downloaded. We have a link to that Web site and the free download that's required to view these photos.

There's a book called *The Encyclopedia of Chicago*, compiled by Northwestern University, the Chicago Historical Society, and the Newberry Library. *The Encyclopedia of Chicago* is a dynamic and unprecedented metropolitan history. Thousands of historical resources, including articles,

The screenshot shows a web browser window titled "Useful Links - Mozilla Firefox". The address bar shows the URL: http://rphws.org/index.php?option=com_weblinks&view=categories&Itemid=6. The page content includes:

- MAIN MENU:** Home, Login or Register, About Us, Committee Reports, Programs & Events, Publications (The Historian—Sample Issue), The Society Store, Get Involved!, Useful Links.
- RESOURCES:** Collections, Services, Resource Links.
- Useful Links Section:** "We have found the following sites of interest and use in our research; we hope you will, too."
 - Organizations and Resources (14)
 - Local Organizations (6)
 - Historical Information (25)
 - Early History (6)
 - The Great Fire (6)
 - 20th Century (5)
 - Architecture (16)
 - Sports History (11)
- PHOTO ARCHIVES:** A section with a search bar and a photo of a building.
- MEMBER LOGIN:** A form with fields for Username, Password, and a Remember Me checkbox, followed by a LOGIN button.

photos, maps, broadsides and newspapers, related to Chicago's colorful and complex history are at your fingertips. There's an online version of the book and we provide a link to it.

The old *Chicago Daily News* was a well-respected Chicago afternoon newspaper. Their photo archives are on line and we have a link. Many of these photos were taken but not used by the paper. These images are cataloged and indexed for easy retrieval. Yes, we have a link.

These are just a few of the over seven dozen Web sites that we have awaiting your examination. All you have to do is click on one from our Web site. If you know of other links that you think may belong on our list, as a registered member of the Web site, you can send this information to us. Once we check it, we'll include it in the Useful Links listings for the rest of us to use. Thus, your recommendation will make for a more comprehensive list.

Rogers Schools, from page 5

Rogers School Expands, Again

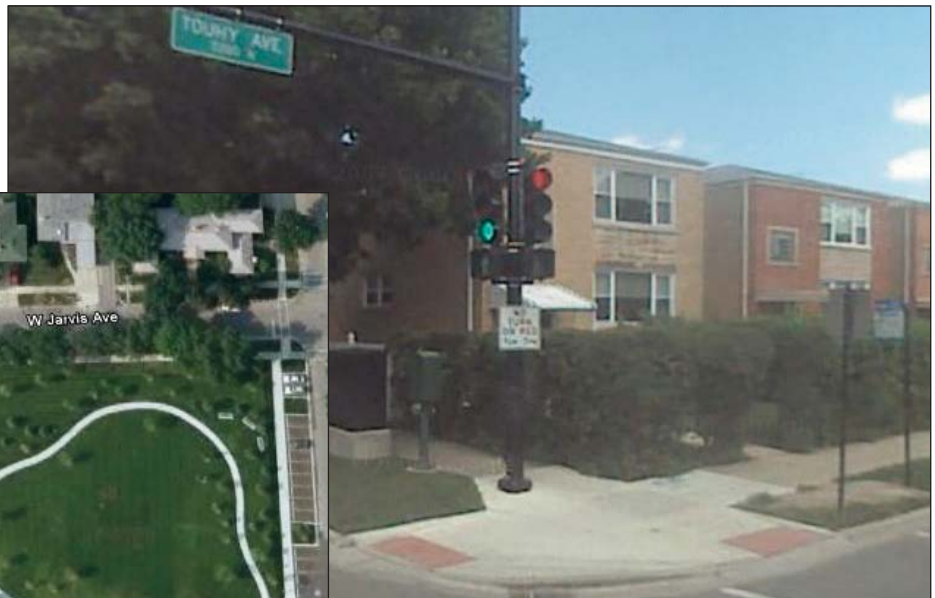
The Sunday, August 24, 1952, issue of the *Chicago Tribune* (p. N1) announced an expansion program for three north side schools Boone, Rogers, and Stone, designed to address overcrowding and double-shift school days for several years. The newly built Rogers Addition at Sacramento and Touhy was to be opened in time for registration in September, 1952. The four buildings together cost \$100,601.

In the Wednesday, September 2, 1953, issue of the *Chicago Tribune* (p. 2), it was briefly reported that the one-day-in-office, new School Superintendent Benjamin C. Willis had instructed the School Board

aides to seek rental space for pupils of Philip Rogers School, 7345 North Washtenaw Avenue.

The branch held four newly constructed, two-room, cottage-type buildings surrounded by a Macadam (crushed rock) surface on a rented lot, and was closed at the end of the 1957–1958 school year. Students were transferred to the newly completed Stephen Decatur Classical Elementary School, 7030 North Sacramento Avenue.

On Thursday, January 30, 1958, the *Chicago Tribune* (p. N1) reported that the Board of Education had awarded a contract for razing the closed Rogers School Branch that was located at 7201 North Sacramento Avenue to the Harvey Wrecking Company which submitted the low bid of \$980.



From orbit (above), today's satellite technology allows you to see Philip Rogers School along with the new park that was added to the school's campus in 2008. Today's view (below) of the northeast corner of Touhy and Sacramento Avenues where the Rogers School Annex buildings once stood.

The Landmark

by Hank Morris

Those of us who grew up in the Rogers Park/West Ridge community before 1971 will remember the Landmark. It stood 362 feet high, dominating the skyline. It was a gas holder, also known as gasometers; the name used by gas companies when referring to those huge tanks used to hold gas for distribution to the neighborhoods they served. Ours was 254 feet in diameter. It could hold 15,200,000 cubic feet of gas so we could cook our food, dry our clothes, and heat our homes.

My family moved into the “hood,” 3031 W. Jarlath Ave., on Wednesday, April 21, 1943, one week before my first birthday, (that following Wednesday). Whenever I looked out our kitchen window (which faced south), there it was. You could tell it was there even at night because of the FAA-mandated aircraft warning lights at several different locations on its top and sides.

It had always “been there.” I knew when we were nearing home because I could see that tank. It didn’t matter from which direction we traveled, there it was. Then in July of 1971, the Chicago Tribune reported that the Landmark, which was located at 3045 W. North Shore Avenue, was to be torn down, after 45 years of service. Whenever I pass this area, I can “feel” the hole in the sky where it once stood. Some things never go away.

Recently, I decided to learn more about the Landmark. I never really knew that much about it in the first place.

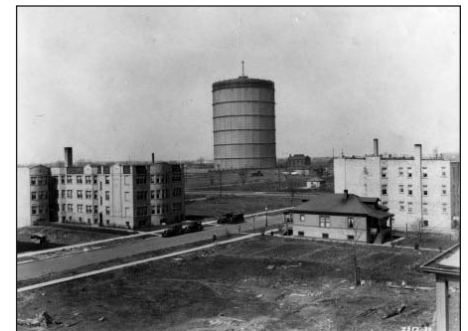
The Landmark was built in 1926 at a cost to the Peoples Gas Light & Coke Company of some \$914,000. It had stood empty at 3045 West North Shore Avenue (at the North Shore Channel) since August 1969. So it was time, I guess.

In 1938, the Illinois Historical Aerial Photography Survey (1938-1941) was conducted. A link to the website containing these images is available on the Society’s website. When you put photo C574EF8Dd01 under magnification, you will see that the top of the Landmark had writing on it. It read “Chicago Curtis Airport 9 Miles” and there was an arrow pointing northwest (see photo). This arrow was pointing to an airfield in Glenview, IL built by the Curtis Flying Service, which would be renamed on January 1, 1943, as Naval Air Station (NAS) Glenview. Operational from 1923 to 1995, this, too, is now gone, replaced by a 1,121 acre mixed-use district, with new homes, offices, and retail space known as “The Glen.”

There were two types of gas holders. They were known as tar-sealed and water-sealed types. Peoples Gas found that for their purposes, the tar-sealed type worked more satisfactorily than the water-sealed types.

Water-sealed gas holders worked like an upside down

glass floating in water. The “glass” rises or falls as gas is pumped into or out of it. The earliest water-sealed gas holders were housed in circular brick buildings, built around a deep pit foundation which was kept full of water. A steel tank (open at the bottom) would rise and fall according to how much gas was being stored at the time. The water formed a seal at the bottom of the tank to keep the gas from escaping. Later, larger water-sealed gas holders were built with an external steel framework to guide the tank as it rose and fell, but with no brick building surrounding the tank.

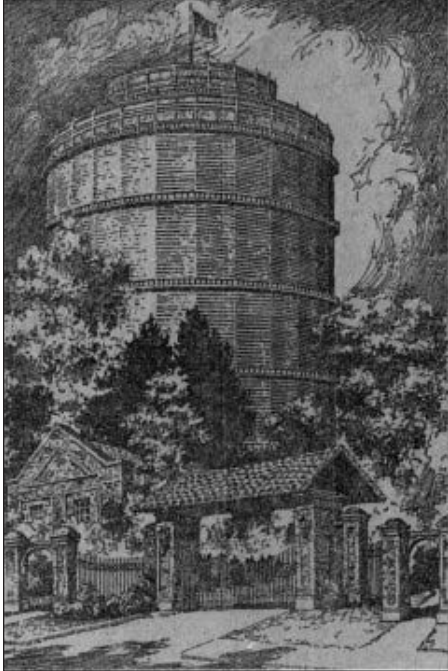


Above, a view of the Landmark (unattributed photo from the RPWRHS collection). Below, top of the gas holder with an aerial navigation sign on its roof. This aerial photo was taken in 1938; Chicago Curtis Airport was later known as N.A.S. Glenview.



You can identify a water-sealed gas holder by the open space between the top of the tank and the top of the external framework. At different times of the day, the distance will be less or more depending on how much gas it is holding.

The tar-sealed type is what was used at the North Shore Avenue gas holder. The tar-sealed holder has an outer shell with a fixed crown which slopes up toward the center. Inside the shell, a movable piston, something like a big, flat dish, floated on top of the gas. Around the outer edge of this piston was a depressed rim or “cup,” which is kept filled with tar so that the gas could not



Above, artist's rendition of the Northshore Gas Container before its construction (unattributed photo from the RPWRHS collection). Below, unattributed photo from the RPWRHS collection.



escape through the fraction of an inch between the piston and the shell. The tar would dribble slowly through the crack, was caught at the bottom, and was pumped back up.

An open stairway zigzagged up the outer shell. At six levels, an open gallery or catwalk with appropriate guardrails encircled the entire shell. The highest catwalk was still below the roof, so a stairway had to be scaled to reach the top.

Walking on the roof was not for the faint-of-heart. You were over 350 feet in the air and the winds blow rather constantly and forcefully. As you walked on the bare roof surface the center of the plate you step on depresses as much as an inch with a deep rumble. After one or two steps you learn to keep to the steel seams between the plates where internal bracing supports them.

At the top, ours had a dome covering an air vent. This was necessary to let air pass in or out as the top of the piston rose or fell during the day. On top was an aircraft-warning beacon. Another small protuberance housed the equipment for testing air samples drawn from various parts of the huge holder.

At one side of the tank was a large tubular structure which turned out to be a tiny elevator, perhaps four feet across. It stopped at each of the catwalks surrounding the shell. A ride up or down could take 3-5 minutes—but, it sure beat climbing the stairs. The elevator only went to the last catwalk before the roof. From there, you'd have to climb to the top.

A third protuberance on the roof looked like the kind of trap door

people used to have on the outside of their coal bins to allow delivery of coal into their cellars. Once opened, you climbed down a little flight of steps which seemed to be suspended in nothingness. Following the catwalk at the bottom for about 15 feet, you encountered a platform. As your eyes regained their ability to see in such dimly lit regions, having just been in the sunlight on the roof, you would find yourself in a cobweb of girders, like the spokes on a wheel, used to support the roof. Below, thanks to the light from the skylights, you could see the piston, looking for all intents and purposes like just another floor, but floating on top of several million cubic feet of explosive, flammable gas.

As you looked at the top you would discover that it had spokes, too. And, the space between the spokes was filled with what seemed like toy blocks; only, they weren't. In fact, they were 50-pound blocks of concrete. They were used to hold the lid down to maintain the gas pressure which was about a third-of-a-pound per square inch.

The internal walls of the holder were black with rivulets of tar dribbling down to the edge seal of the piston. As the gas was pumped in or out, the top could move 10-20 feet an hour. But this was barely perceptible from the catwalk. Inside the Landmark, it was as silent as the grave. If you heard anything at all, it might be an occasional drip from a sticky drop of tar falling from the tar inlet to the edge of the top, far below. And, even with millions of cubic feet of stinky gas below, the only thing you smelled was the tar.

continued on next page

Authors Wanted

Your *Historian* needs stories for each issue. All of us have one or more experiences in the neighborhood that others would find interesting or amusing. You probably already have told friends or relatives something a larger audience might enjoy as well.

“But!” You say, “I’m not a writer! Others can do a much better job than I can.”

That’s why we have editors. You don’t have to be another Hemmingway or Kurt Vonnegut. Jot down something you feel would be enjoyed by others. We’ll make it look good. You’ll get the credit and other Society members will benefit from reading it.

If possible, send the story to us by e-mail. You don’t have e-mail? Then send it by regular mail. We don’t care how we get it, as long as we get it.

Landmark, from previous page

During the holder’s construction, the roof and piston were built at ground level and raised by pumping air underneath the roof first and the piston later.

If there was any reason to actually get on the piston, there was a small elevator hanging from a cable next to the platform. For safety’s sake, the motor was outside the shell thus preventing any sparks from igniting the gas inside.

The gas holder had a constant supply of gas. It was connected to the street mains which in turn were connected to a pipeline from Texas.

During the day, the holder pumped out gas at 6-1/2 pounds per square inch to the various homes,



Volume 24, No. 2
July 2009

Upcoming Events
Founders' Day Event,
September 13
Board of Directors
Monthly Meetings

All meetings are at 7 p.m.
Monday, July 27
Monday, August 24
Monday, September 28
Monday, October 26

Board Meetings are open
to all members and are



Save the Date! Founders' Day Event

On Sunday, September 13, 2009, Society members will have the opportunity to tour the Chicago area's oldest Catholic Cemetery, Calvary Cemetery, just across the Evanston border.

We will visit the graves of many early Rogers Park and West Ridge leading citizens, including Patrick Leonard Touhy, Phillip Rogers, and Howard Street pioneer Charles W. Ferguson, as well as prominent Chicago political and sports leaders like Chicago Mayors Martin Henry Kennelly, William

Kenna, and Chicago White Sox owner Charles Albert Comiskey.

More details to follow soon on the Society's website (www.rpwrhs.org), by e-mail, and by special notice. If you'd like us to call you or e-mail you as soon more information is available, please call the society at (773) 764-4078 or e-mail us at rpwrhs@aol.com.

Meanwhile, mark your calendars for this informative and enjoyable event!

*Sunday, September 13, 2009
Tour of Calvary Cemetery*

It's time to share what you know and what you can do. Help make *The Historian* better than ever by getting involved.

Heard about something, but don't know the details? Tell us about it. Research can be fun. Maybe you can read about it in the next issue.

We can't publish it if we don't have it. This is your newsletter. You like reading it. We like putting it together.

Let's work together to make the *Historian* even better.

Send e-mails to rpwrhs@aol.com. Regular mail goes to: Editor, The *Historian*, Rogers Park/West Ridge Historical Society, 7344 N. Western Ave., Chicago, IL 60645--1814.

businesses, industries, and institutions, in its service area. At night when demand was lower, they would shut down the pumps and let the gas flow back into the holder, filling it up. This happened because the gas in the street mains was at a higher pressure than that in the holder and, without pumps, gas always flows from the higher pressure to the lower pressure. When this happened, a low howl could be heard as the gas rushed back.

Our archives contain a somewhat faded photo S013-0443, claiming to be taken of the gas holder on fire. The record shows August 1971; a month after the demolition was

announced. Yet, no account of this has been found in the Chicago Tribune Historical Database (ProQuest). If anyone has information on this, we'd like to update our records.



Above, smoke pours out of the Northshore gas container a couple of months into its demolition (unattributed photo from the RPWRHS collection).

Third Society Book Subcommittee Being Formed

by Hank Morris

Thanks to the generosity of photographer and Society founder Marty Schmidt, we are heirs to his entire photographic collection. Marty was seldom seen without his trusty camera hanging from his neck. He walked all over the area snapping photos, gathering seven huge storage boxes of photographs. Those who knew Marty know that he had a good eye for photo composition. His photos have been used by the Society for many years in books and newsletters. You can see examples of his work in the July 2009 issue of *The Historian*. They're in color on the Society's website:

www.rpwrhs.org.

Over 800 of Marty's photos are already in our Photo Archive and Cataloging Project database. Thanks

to Marty's gift, we've got several thousand more to add.

Because Marty was a master photographer, he's created quite a loving and historic collection from which we can extract some of his very best photos and produce our third Society-published book. There are undoubtedly sufficient quantities of high-quality photos to make our book, tentatively entitled: *Rogers Park Through the Eyes of Marty Schmidt*. There may even be enough for a 4th or 5th book. But, we won't know anything until we dig through these photos.

So, the Publications Committee is forming the Book 3 Subcommittee to sort through these photos and separate the wheat from the chaff, and then to go on and produce the

book(s). Anyone interested in participating in these efforts should leave a message for Hank Morris at the Society office, 773-764-4078 or by e-mail at rpwrhs@aol.com. This could prove to be a most rewarding and interesting experience.

Do We Have Your E-mail Address?

We've been e-mailing issues of our

Electronic Newsletter

If you didn't get yours it's because we don't have your e-mail address.

It's a simple enough problem to fix; just send us an e-mail asking to be added to the list.

Send it to: rpwrhs@aol.com



New and Renewing Members

Please check the appropriate category box for your renewal or new membership.

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New Membership Renewal I would like to volunteer at the Society.

Mail your check to *RP/WR Historical Society, 7344 N. Western Ave., Chicago, IL 60645*

To pay by credit card, please call us at 773-764-4078 or use our website: www.rpwrhs.org.



**Been in the "hood" a while?
Know somebody who has?**

The Rogers Park/West Ridge Historical Society is conducting an on-going oral history project. We're collecting the memories of those individuals who remember what life was like in Rogers Park and West Ridge "way back when."

Oral histories are a wonderful way to learn about our neighborhoods before all the complexities of "modern life" settled in.

Memories are precious. Whether they're yours, a friend's or a relative's. Help preserve our community's past through oral history today.

You can reach Nancy Jane Lauren to arrange an interview at: 773-338-5365 or nancyjanel Lauren@sbcglobal.net

Nov. 2009 Mystery Photo Identified

by Hank Morris

We couldn't fool John (Jack) Davis with our November 2009 mystery photo. Having been a choir boy at St. Paul's By the Lake Episcopal Church, 7100 N. Ashland Blvd., he recognized the church's Rectory, located at 1606 W. Estes Ave. The Rectory was acquired in 1910, and is said to be one of the oldest houses in Rogers Park. Mr. Davis lives in Peachtree City, Georgia and his correct reply was sent to us by e-mail at 5:19 p.m. on Thursday, December 3.

Only two hours behind Jack Davis was a 2nd correct reply, this time from C.J. Goldman which was sent by e-mail at 7:53 p.m., also on Thursday, December 3.

Mr. Davis selected the Society's award winning book entitled: *Chicago's Far North Side; An Illustrated History of Rogers Park and West Ridge.*



Do You Know?

What do you know about this house?
Send your solution to rpwrhs@aol.com.
The first person that correctly identifies the building gets a copy of one of our two Society-published books.



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To reduce our carbon footprint, we can send you this newsletter electronically instead of in print.



To participate, send an e-mail to rpwrhs@aol.com with the subject line "Green."

Save the Date for the Annual Meeting
Wednesday, February 10, 2010