

The Historian

Preserving & Promoting Neighborhood History

Volume 33, No. 1
Spring 2017

In This Issue

- From the President's Desk
page 2
- Annual Meeting Reviews Year's
Accomplishments
page 3
- RPWRHS Board Welcomes New
Member
page 5
- First Annual Hank Morris Historian
Award Given to Its Namesake
page 6
- In 2017 We're Exploring the
Activist Past and Present of
Rogers Park and West Ridge
page 6
- Activism in Action: Thanks to a
Fundraising Hero
page 7
- Historical Society Visits ECAC
Ethiopian Cultural Center
page 7
- Items from the Ethiopian
Museum at ECAC
page 9
- Remarks of Dr. Erku Yimer at the
Ethiopian Community Association
Program on February 23, 2017
page 10
- Historic Building at 1730 W.
Greenleaf Still Standing after
Many Years
page 12
- Profile of Office Assistant
Stephanie Barto
page 16
- "Property" Exhibit Results from
Collaboration
page 18
- Culinary Historian Colleen Sen
Writes about Food Around the
World
page 19
- Ashland Avenue, Named for
Kentucky Estate of Henry Clay
page 20

Coming in October: *The World in One Neighborhood Cookbook*

By Dona Vitale, Cookbook Team Leader

Rogers Park and West Ridge have long been known as among the most ethnically and culturally diverse neighborhoods in Chicago. Successive waves of newcomers have brought their food traditions to our community, and the foods we eat every day reflect a cornucopia of cuisines from around the world. To preserve and celebrate the rich variety of foods served in local homes and restaurants, the Rogers Park/West Ridge Historical Society is putting together a cookbook to collect and share recipes treasured by members of our community, past and present.

The idea for this project originated with Loyola University Public History graduate students Kate Johnson, Ariel Medoff, Stephen Petrie, and Jill Walker, who suggested a community cookbook as part of the fundraising proposal they prepared for a 2016 class presentation to the RPWRHS board. A modified version of their proposal was adopted by the board as the Historical Society's major fundraising effort for 2017. As suggested by the team, when the cookbook is ready for sale in October, we'll be holding a "Taste of Rogers Park/West Ridge" to celebrate the publication and raise additional funds.

To make the students' vision a reality, **we need recipes from current residents, former residents, restaurateurs, and anyone else with a delicious dish to**



share. We hope to include recipes from all eras, all ethnic groups, and all corners of the community. We're looking for every type of recipe: everyday family favorites, traditional ethnic dishes, foods that celebrate holidays and special occasions, and menu items from local restaurants past and present. Favorite appetizers, main dishes, soups, salads, side dishes, baked goods, desserts, snacks, and beverages are all welcome.

Sponsors

The Rogers Park/West Ridge Historical Society is grateful for the support of the following sponsors. Please patronize them.

Platinum

S&C Electric Company

Gold

Closet Box

Clark Devon Hardware

Silver

Heather Steans State Senator

Vivid Seats

Rosenfeld Injury Lawyers

LaGrange Country

Bronze

State Farm Insurance

Winnemac Properties

Baird & Wagner

CAPS Beat 2411

Hydra-Stop

New and Renewing Members

October 1, 2016 -
March 31, 2017

Annual Members

Stephanie Barto

Justin Bergquist

Wendy Bright

Irwin Davis

Art Gilfand

George Glastris

Sam Grayson

Christina Guswiler

Steve Heller

Marcia Hermansen

Christopher Hillbruner

Stacie Hull

Erik Hull

Atanasios Kalantzis

Heather Kirkpatrick

The names of contributors will be shown with their recipes, preserving their place in the history of Rogers Park and West Ridge. Recipes can also be contributed in honor or in memory of anyone who has lived in the neighborhood or left a mark on it, making the submission a great way to honor a family member or friend.

Local restaurant contributors will also be recognized in a Restaurant Directory to be included as part of the book.

The volunteer cookbook team, consisting of Linda Bressler, Katy Donlon, Kate Johnson, Earl Manesky, Harriet Russell, Colleen Sen, Carol Veome, and Dona Vitale has begun soliciting recipes from friends and neighbors, community groups, and local restaurants. They

are also scouring our archives at the Historical Society for recipes from the past. More help is welcome; contact info@rpwrhs.org or call 773-764-4078 to join the team.

Recipes have already come in from a variety of contributors, and everyone is welcome to share their favorites. To submit recipes, go to www.rpwrhs.org/cookbook, stop by the office, or call 773-764-4078 to find out how.

The cookbook will be for sale to recipe contributors, community members, and anyone interested in Chicago's food heritage; it will be a wonderful holiday gift for every cook on your list. Check your recipe file, and make your best dishes part of neighborhood history. □

From the President's Desk



President Ken Walchak

I want to welcome everyone to our spring issue of *The Historian*. This is the first issue to appear without the guiding blue pencil of our longtime

editor, board member, and transportation buff, [Henry "Hank" Morris](#). Hank never failed to answer the call to help with virtually any Historical Society project. He often wrote much of the content for the award-winning publication that you are reading now. We all miss him, and I think the best way to honor his memory is to carry on publishing a newsletter that Hank would be proud of.

If any of you are willing or able to jump in and give us a hand with this vital project, please contact me at kenwalchak@clarkdevon.com or call the Historical Society at 773-764-4078 to be roped in as a volunteer. (Leave a message on the office phone if no one answers.) You will find the salary we offer well below what you are used to earning. That, along with our incomparable benefit package, will keep you committed.

A couple of weeks ago, I, along with a standing-room-only crowd of your neighbors, attended a program at our office at 7363 N. Greenview. The exhibit shared at the program focused on the Participatory Budgeting process pioneered by Joe Moore, our long-time Alderman, and was curated by Cecilia Salinas, our newest board member. Along with the bulk of our programming for this year, it centered on the theme of activism—personal and community.

Activism has taken many forms over the years. From Joe's Participatory Budgeting, to David Orr, the Clerk of Cook County, and a former activist Alderman of the 49th Ward; to Michael James, longtime neighborhood activist, and co-founder of the Heartland Café. Volunteerism and activism seems to be in the DNA of Rogers Parkers and West Ridgers. It's what makes our two neighborhoods so vital. Our recent programs at the Ethiopian Community Center, and others like it, just continue to reinforce this activist streak. Please help us keep this programming free and available to all by joining your Historical Society. Even if you are reading this from outside the immediate area, consider making a donation. Just go to our website www.rpwrhs.org and click on the big green "Become

New and Renewing Members
continued

Annual Members

- Mary Krause
- Isabell Kyrk
- Phillip J. McGovern
- Charle Metalitz
- Carol Migalski
- Mark Milkovic
- Geoffrey Murphy
- M. C. Peceny
- Bonnie Ruben
- John Schermerhorn
- Hilary Ward Schnadt
- Laura Skender
- Glen Timmerman
- Robert L. Tull
- Susan Varno (Vance)
- Bill Wallace
- Margaret Wallyn
- Kathe Walton
- Joseph Winsberg

Annual Senior Members

- Nathan Arrington
- Ellen Hepner Barnes
- LeRoy Blommaert
- Linda A. Bloomfield
- Patricia Daly
- Raymond DeGroote
- Roberta Goehmann
- Emily Gross
- Martin Halacy
- Thomas Joseph
- Gary Knutson
- Carleen & Jan Lorys
- Dan Miller
- Geraldine Moran
- Rosalind Morris
- Benita Myles
- Tom Nall
- Mary Oellrich
- Margaret Penkrot
- Carole Reed
- Bruce Rottner
- Pat Shaw
- Thomas & Karen Smith
- David and Ingrid Stalle

a Member” button.

I spoke with a man the other night who shares my uncle’s last name. While it doesn’t appear we are relatives, he is planning on becoming a lifetime member of our organization. While we encourage as many of you as possible who have the means to follow this man’s lead, we are interested in attracting as many new members as possible, regardless of the level. So please consider a contribution to help us solidify our finances.

One last thing before the editor gets out the hook and hauls me off my soapbox. We are having a fundraiser this fall. As part of it, we are publishing a community cookbook. (See the article in this issue for more.) We are looking to

collect personal recipes from different eras and ethnic groups, along with those from restaurants whether in business now or long gone. Allow us to publish old family recipes, and we will help honor your ancestors, and earn my undying gratitude (and that of my wife!). To get more information, go to rpwrhs.org and click on the green “Cookbook” button, or click here: rpwrhs.org/cookbook.

And finally, one thing to remember: A recent research study that I can’t properly cite showed that volunteer work is associated with a lower incidence of cognitive complaint. That means that those who volunteer are happier. So... have fun—volunteer for the Rogers Park/West Ridge Historical Society!! ☐

Annual Meeting Reviews Year’s Accomplishments

By Dave Kalensky



Lin Prucher from the Rogers Park Food Co-op

The 2017 Annual Meeting took place Saturday March 25, 2017 at the Rogers Park Public Library. The program opened with board president Ken Walchak’s remembrance of Henry “Hank” Morris.

From there Ken reviewed goals and accomplishments since the 2016 Annual Meeting. The graphs in this article are taken from a PowerPoint program created to illustrate the accomplishments. The complete PowerPoint can be found on the website at rpwrhs.org.

The Society made significant strides in almost eliminating an operating deficit, which decreased from \$25,690 in 2015 to \$3,024 in 2016. Treasurer Dona Vitale and the board accomplished this “miracle” by trimming operating expenses while increasing the revenue stream through attracting business sponsors and growing the membership (Figure 1).

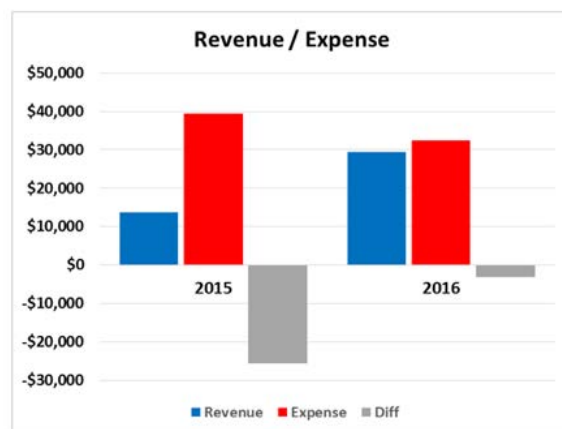


Figure 1. Society Revenue / Expense

Society membership grew to 287 in 2016, adding 72 new members. Business sponsorships increased to 12. Ten new sponsors were added, the result of a spring 2016 letter writing campaign (Figure 2).

New and Renewing Members
continued

Annual Senior Members

- Karen Tipp
- Carol Veome
- Karen Werner
- Katherine Wier
- Carol Ziegeldorf

Annual Student Members

- Bleu Caldwell

Annual Supporting Members

- John Garrison
- Ann Glapa
- Kristin Jacobsen
- Barry Katz
- William Kundert
- Richard Lanyon
- Patricia Mooney-Melvin
- Patricia O'Neal
- Sandi Price
- David Richert
- Richard Rouse
- Tom & Nancy Ruby
- Beverly Siegel
- Sue Sosin
- Ronald Tarrson
- Christine Taylor
- Betsy Vandercook

Annual Sustaining Members

- Susan Carlson & David Stahr
- Patti Blazer
- Michael Blazer
- Linda Bressler
- Glenna Eaves
- Elaine Igelman
- Stephen Silverman

Complimentary Membership

- Aklilu Adeye
- James Akerman
- Matt Amyx
- Grace DuMelle
- Theodore Karamanski
- Michael Krepps
- Erku Yimer

Note: Program speakers and tour leaders receive a one-year complimentary membership.

Visit rpwrhs.org/become-a-member or fill out the form on page 22 to join the RPWRHS.

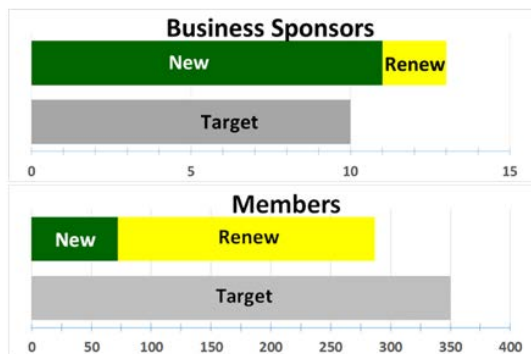


Figure 2. 2016 Membership and Business Sponsors.

Ken acknowledged and thanked members for their increased giving, particularly for responding to his end-of-the-year request to help erase the deficit. He noted the need for more volunteers and encouraged members to participate however they can. (Figure 3)

The Society continues to attract people to its website and other social media outlets. The year saw 7% growth in traffic to its website.

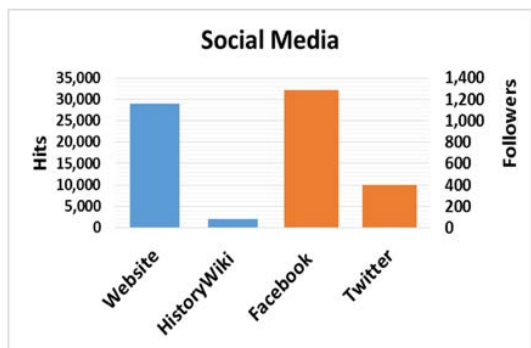


Figure 3. 2016 Social Media Traffic Summary

The Society expanded its public programs of talks and walking tours in 2016. Among other tours, students in Loyola’s Public History graduate program led three Historic Pub Crawls and Colleen Sen hosted two *Culinary Tours of Devon Avenue*. It was noted that attendance continues to grow at the free “Living History” talks which are a partnership with the local public libraries (Figure 4).

Ken ended the overview by summarizing the Museum Assessment process that took place in 2016 through a grant from the American Alliance of Museums. As a result, the Society is revisiting its role within the community. The board is considering how best to continue the

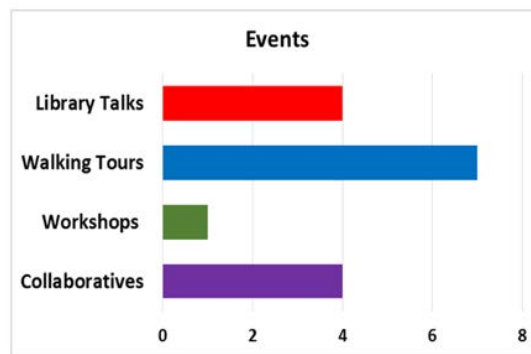


Figure 4. 2016 Society Public Programs by Type

Society’s mission of collecting, preserving, and sharing local history with the Rogers Park and West Ridge communities. The peer reviewer whose visit was supported by the grant, Allison Weis, Executive Director of the Sandy Spring Museum in Maryland, encouraged the board to re-examine the assumption that a historical society should maintain a collection and have a physical location.

Two major announcements of plans for 2017 capped the review. First, Ken announced that a major theme of this year’s events would be “Activism.” In doing so, he acknowledged modern-day activist Bruce Rottner, who launched a fundraiser to upgrade the Historical Society’s computers.

Second, the Society will stage a major “Taste of Rogers Park” fundraising event in October to coincide with the publication of a cookbook reflecting the diversity of the neighborhood.

Members present at the Annual Meeting unanimously elected the Society’s board. The 2017 board consists of Ken Walchak, Kay McSpadden, Dona Vitale, Bruce Boyd, Dave Kalensky, Cecilia Salinas, and Frank Valadez.

Ken’s review of the past year was followed by a presentation by guest speaker Lin Prucher, a board member of the Rogers Park Food Co-Op. In addition to her talk, the presentation included a short video about the benefits of food co-ops to a community. Lin’s talk was part of our continuing effort to connect with other nonprofits in Rogers Park and West Ridge. □

RPWRHS Board Welcomes New Member

By Kay McSpadden

Our newest board member is well-known in Rogers Park. Cecilia Salinas has presided over the Participatory Budgeting initiative of Alderman Joe Moore for the past six years. Recently she received the 2017 Good Neighbor Award from Chicago Math and Science Academy. Cecilia was elected to the board of the Rogers Park/West Ridge Historical Society by the members present at this year's annual meeting on Saturday March 25.

The most telling thing that was said about her at the Good Neighbor Award ceremony was that she "can't say no." Her biography bears out that statement. (The details below are taken from the Good Neighbor Awards, citation by Irene Bermudez, Community Engagement Coordinator at Chicago Math and Science Academy.)

Cecilia came to Chicago from Venezuela in the late 1980s. Before that, she received a Bachelor's Degree in Social Work from Universidad Central de Venezuela. As we know, the 49th Ward Participatory Budgeting initiative was the first such program in the United States and has been widely recognized; Ms. Salinas is largely responsible for its success.

Each year the number of people voting on the projects selected in the Participatory Budgeting process has increased. The 49th Ward has partnered with Stanford University to create the first Participatory Budgeting electronic ballot which is both in English and Spanish. More than thirty projects approved by voters have been implemented in Rogers Park, including the planting of three hundred trees, painting of twenty-five murals, replacing carpeting at Rogers Park Library, and other significant infrastructure projects.

In addition to her work on Participatory Budgeting, Cecilia has coordinated four "Know Your Rights" events for the Alderman's office, helped create the Rogers Park Arts Alliance, and organized for the past three years the "Art Round Trip" event in which more than sixty artists have exhibited their work at galleries and other businesses at the "L" stops in Rogers Park: Loyola, Morse, Jarvis, and Howard.

Ms. Salinas's professional background includes work as an Account Specialist at Bethel New Life, a nonprofit organization on the West Side of Chicago; Executive Director at Asset



Cecilia Salinas

Builders Community Development Corporation; and Marketing Manager at Northside Community Federal Credit Union. She has served on the boards of the Organization of the Northeast (ONE) and the Jane Addams Resource Corporation (JARC) and has chaired several committees, including ONE's Immigration and Strategy Team, JARC's Computers Subcommittee, and the Workers Advance Committee. She also chaired the Bilingual Advisory Council of Inter-American Magnet School and was a "Freedom Rider" for the Illinois Coalition for Refugee and Immigrant Rights. □

First Annual Hank Morris Historian Award Given to Its Namesake

By Kay McSpadden



Henry "Hank" Morris

Hank Morris, a long-time member and volunteer, was editor of *The Historian* for many years preceding his death in 2016. Shortly before Hank died, the board voted to create the Hank Morris Historian Award and to name him the first recipient, in honor of his numerous scholarly articles on the history of Rogers Park and West Ridge and for his many contributions to the Historical Society.

For Hank the Rogers Park/West Ridge Historical Society was his life. He had a deep knowledge of neighborhood history and was looked to as an authority. In recent years he contributed the bulk of *The Historian's* articles on the history of Rogers Park and West Ridge.

Another favorite subject was trains. He could—and did—talk for hours about trains and wrote *The Trains that Ran through Rogers Park* that has been a strong seller. (When the Historical Society's office was on Morse Ave, a man came frequently to the Society looking for Hank, drawn by a shared knowledge of "train facts" and a love for conversation about trains.)

Hank's dedication to the mission of the Society also led him to create the online "History Wiki" and to spend most of his time adding items to it. He was a member of the board of directors and reluctantly gave up his position when he had served his full complement of three successive terms.

Whenever there was a call for volunteers to greet visitors, Hank responded until health issues prevented him from doing so. He and his wife Carol were often part of the audience at Historical Society events. He was also working on assembling and identifying the hundreds of photographs left to the Historical Society by former president Marty Schmidt. □

In 2017 We're Exploring the Activist Past and Present of Rogers Park and West Ridge

By Dona Vitale

Debates. Demonstrations. Marches. Movements. People everywhere have turned to activism as a way to shape the city, the country, and the world. But activism is nothing new to Chicago's Far North Side. From the Cabbage Wars of the 1890's to the Council Wars of the 1980's, Rogers Park and West Ridge residents have been actively engaged in the issues of the day, and remain so today.

That's why we chose *Activism* as the theme for our 2017 programs. Throughout the year, we are looking at how ordinary people at the grass roots have made their voices heard and made the community a better place to live and work.

So far this year, we've heard about the work of the Ethiopian Cultural Association, the Rogers Park Food Co-op, and County Clerk David Orr's effort to win election as 49th Ward Alderman in 1979. We've asked local artists to create works on the theme of "Property," in partnership with the Roman-Susan Gallery, and we're currently hosting an exhibition on Alderman Joe Moore's Participatory Budgeting program. There's more to come, because activism is alive and well in Rogers Park and West Ridge.

Whatever your interest, whatever your political persuasion, plan to be active in 2017. It's the year of *Activism* for the Rogers Park/West Ridge Historical Society. □

Activism in Action: Thanks to a Fundraising Hero

By Dona Vitale

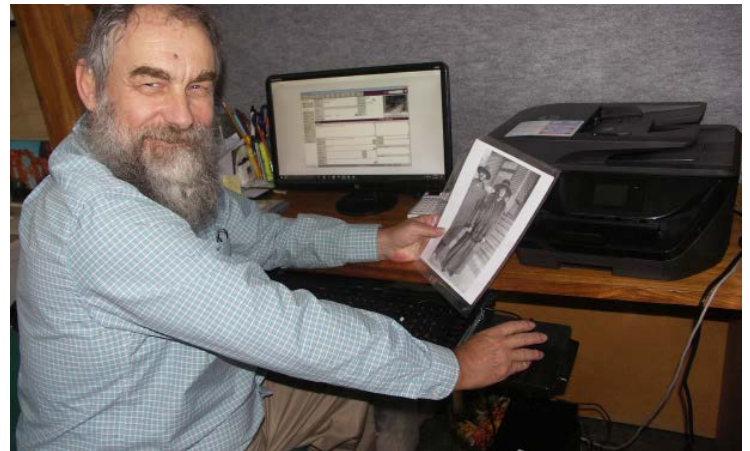
Our season theme of *Activism!* is demonstrated in our community every time a group or an individual sees a problem that needs attention and takes action to address it. Recently, the RPWRHS benefited from a great example of activism, and we want to share the story.

Early this year Bruce Rottner, a graduate of Mather High School, a long-time member of the community, and a former Commander of Police District 24, contacted the Historical Society looking for photographs to use as at his fiftieth Mather High School Class Reunion. Glenna Eaves, one of our devoted volunteer researchers, spent an afternoon with Bruce combing our photo archive. Together they selected a number of photos to be put on display at the reunion. Bruce was pleased, but felt that the search and retrieval process took an exceptionally long time, mostly due to the Historical Society's old and slow computer system. The well-used computers, donated by supporters over the years, were outdated and patched together into a not-very-efficient network, something the board had been planning to upgrade as soon as funds became available.

Being an activist at heart, Bruce took on the challenge, reached out to his personal network, and asked his friends to help us out. In his appeal, he stressed the value of the work done by the Society to keep the history of the neighborhood alive for future generations. He asked friends who may have grown up here or

may have worked here, along with those who may have almost no connection to the neighborhood, to support this work with a contribution.

The result has been amazing. To date, a total contribution of \$1,680 (and Bruce says possibly more to come) has funded the purchase of a fast and powerful new computer that has replaced two of the old ones, new software for managing the photo archive and for carrying out everyday office functions, an efficient new printer, a new backup system that protects the archive from loss, and a reworking of our network structure to make all of our equipment work better together. □



Volunteer Rob Case uses new equipment in the RPWRHS office

Historical Society Visits ECAC Ethiopian Cultural Center

By Dona Vitale

The Rogers Park/West Ridge Historical Society co-sponsored an evening with the Ethiopian Community Association of Chicago on February 23, 2017. The event gave members and guests an opportunity to visit the ECAC Center in the historic "Jewel Laundry Building" at 1730 W. Greenleaf.

The audience of about sixty people was greeted by Aklilu Adeye, Executive Director of ECAC. Michael Krepps, Director of Development for ECAC, presided and introduced the speaker Dr. Erku Yimer.

"Dr. Erku," who recently retired after thirty years as Executive Director of ECAC, described some of the work of

the Association, which serves immigrants and refugees not only from Ethiopia but also from other African and Middle Eastern countries. Services include resettlement and placement, employment, job-training skills such as English as a Second Language and computer technology, health education, and citizenship and civic education.

Dr. Yimer also discussed the history and culture of Ethiopia, one of the oldest civilizations in the world. A brief slide presentation showed the many World Heritage sites which are located in Ethiopia. (Dr. Yimer's talk is included later in this issue.)

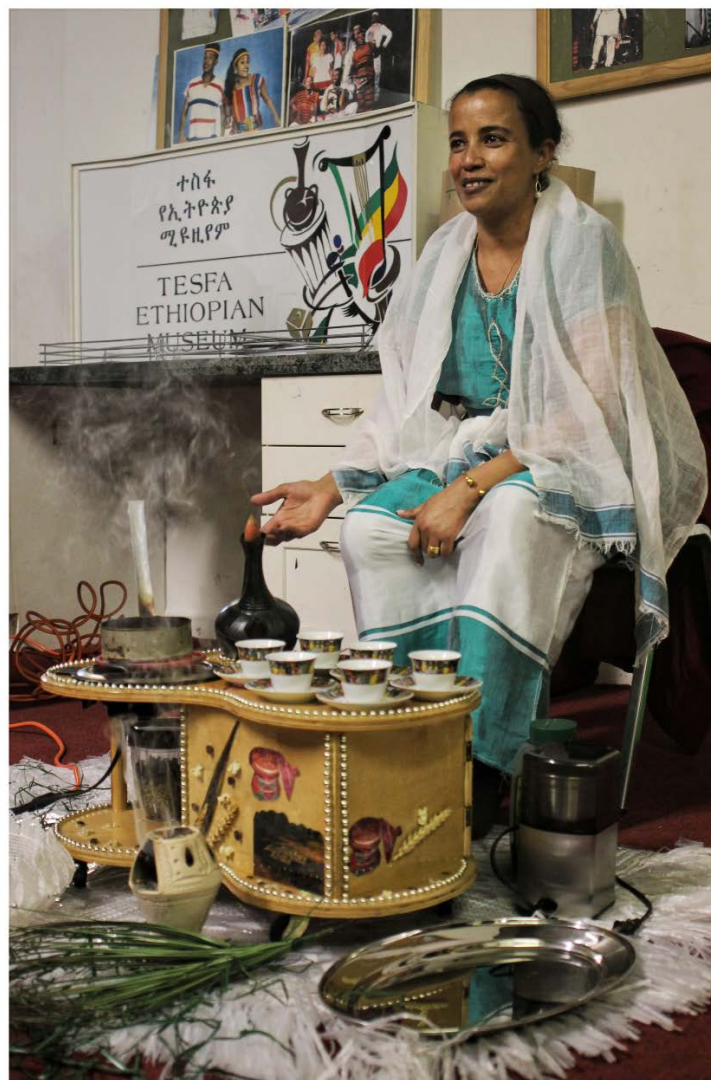


Attendees also had the opportunity to view the beginnings of the Ethiopian Cultural Museum of Chicago. Currently occupying a room within the Ethiopian Community Center, the museum has categorized and displays approximately two thousand artifacts donated by the late Ato Tesfaye Lemma, a highly regarded musician and composer. As far as is known this will be the only museum in the United States solely devoted to Ethiopia. Irene Falconer, a volunteer with ECAC and museum curator, led tours of the museum.

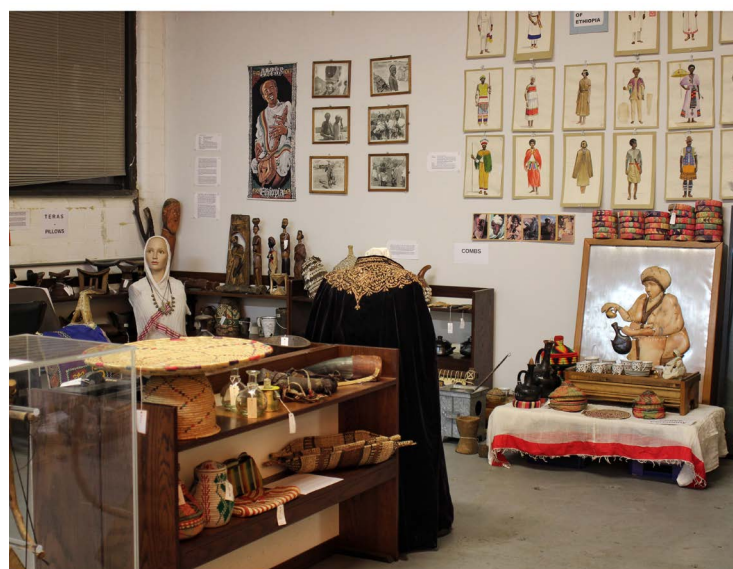
A sensation of the evening was the Ethiopian coffee ceremony demonstrated by Fikirte Assefa wearing traditional dress. The coffee beans are ground and then roasted over an open fire; after that the coffee is prepared and served in demitasse cups. Fikirte also served her delicious homemade bread. (The recipe for the bread will be in our Historical Society cookbook, plans for which are described elsewhere in this newsletter.)

Ethiopian appetizers, savory and sweet, were created by Almaz Yigizaw, owner of Ethiopian Diamond II Restaurant, 7537 N. Clark.

Though the date had been set previously, this program took place just after the Trump Administration announced its efforts to curtail immigration from six Middle Eastern countries. As a result the ECAC was forced to lay off staff and has put the building up for sale. □



Demonstration of traditional Ethiopian coffee ceremony by Fikirte Assefa



Inside the museum

Items from the Ethiopian Museum at ECAC

By Irene Falconer, Collection Manager, ECAC Museum



Dolls in the Ethiopian Community Association Museum Room

Amhara Dolls

The photo shows four handmade dolls in the Ethiopian Community Association Museum Room. Each doll is approximately nineteen inches tall.

The two dolls on the left and the one on the right represent women who are members of the Amhara ethnic group in their traditional clothing. They are wearing hand-woven, off-white cotton dresses which cover most of the leg. As is the custom, the dresses have embroidery at the end of the sleeves, around the neck, and down the front ending in a cross-like shape. The embroidery includes many colors but strong black outlining is a particular characteristic. Large dome-shaped earrings and pendant necklaces, resembling bridal jewelry sets, also adorn the dolls.

The three dolls have leather or suede baby-carriers, called “*ankelba*” in Amharic, on their backs. When the “*ankelba*” is worn for daily work, it is usually unadorned, but a special “*ankelba*,” such as the one on the back of the doll to the right, would be decorated with cowry shells and glass beads.

The dolls of women also have bundles of unspun cotton tied to their waists. The cotton bundles represent abundance and the good life as do the jewelry and the beadwork on the baby-carrier. Men have traditionally been the weavers in Ethiopian culture, but the woman’s role might be cleaning and combing raw picked cotton prior to spinning it.

Ethiopian Orthodox Priest Doll

The fourth doll, the second from the right, represents a priest in the Ethiopian Orthodox Church. All the faces are painted onto the dolls’ cloth bodies, but the doll of the priest has a traditional beard painted on its face. The tunic under the priest’s cape is natural woven cotton with embroidered borders, but many

fancy textiles—brocades with metallic threads, embossed and velveteed fabrics—are used for priests’ robes. The shape of the straw hat on the priest doll resembles a religious artifact, the “*tilabot*,” in Amharic, an umbrella in a colorful, special fabric carried by an Ethiopian Orthodox priest. The priest doll also has a large metal key hanging from its wrist perhaps to signify the wisdom of the Church, the key to salvation or life eternal.

All the dolls’ hand-painted faces resemble the faces of religious figures, saints and angels portrayed in Ethiopian Orthodox icons.

A few dolls have tags noting they were made in Ethiopia; they were acquired for the collection by the original collector, Tesfaye Lemma. The “smalls” in front of the dolls are miniatures of traditional Ethiopian musical instruments. Little collections of drums with their particular shapes and stringed instruments including the “*begen*” and the “*mesinko*” are made for sale to tourists.

Conservation Issues

A close look at the digital image of the dolls shows one of several conservation issues: The cotton dresses have a brown acid building up in the fabric due to continuing exposure to the elements. An expert would be able to test the dresses’ cotton fabric and possibly wash them or treat them locally to remove the brown acidity without shrinkage, but the restoration cost may well be more than the value of the object.

For a short time Lemma, the original collector, realized in Washington, D.C. his goal of establishing a museum showcasing Ethiopia. The ECAC received the collection after Lemma’s death and after a long period of storage in less than optimal conditions in the basement of the Ethiopian Embassy in Washington.

As with other small museums the expense of maintaining air-quality and temperature control, buying special conservation-quality housing and surfaces for the museum artifacts, and engaging restorers to reverse problems is beyond the resources available to the ECAC. Contributions to help the Association acquire conservation-level storage boxes and wrapping materials are greatly appreciated. Please go to www.ecachicago.org to make contributions either to the museum or to the refugee and immigrant work of ECAC. The website allows donors to direct their contributions. In addition, there is a full description of the crisis facing ECAC at this time. □

Remarks of Dr. Erku Yimer at the Ethiopian Community Association Program on February 23, 2017

Please see the Historical Society Visits ECAC Ethiopian Cultural Center article earlier in this issue for more information about the program at which Dr. Erku Yimer spoke.

Thank you for your interest in your neighbors from Ethiopia. First I thought it might interest you if I talked a little bit about the country from where your neighbors migrated.

Ethiopia is Biblical and Ancient. When ancients say Ethiopia, it is not limited to present day Ethiopia. The name is derived from Biblical usage—of applying “Ethiopian” to all peoples from the African interior extending to all territories where the black population resided.

There is an increasing scholarship that claims civilization originated in the Nile valleys and was transported to the Middle East and continental Europe, and Ethiopia is thought to be the center of where human life started. Civilization as we know it including domestication as well as crossbreeding of animals (horse and donkey to produce mules), and agriculture—barley, teff, millet, coffee etc. -- started there.

Ethiopia has its own alphabet, calendar, and is one of the four major Empire states--Roman, Persian, Chinese and Axum where Abrahamic religions---Judaism, Christianity and Islam -- have been practiced and grew. It prides itself on holding the Arc of the Covenant that has intrigued many historians and theologians. However the claim is not disproved or proved until to this day.

Ethiopians were one of the first people to accept Christianity and Christianity became a state religion in 332 A.D. With the decline and finally collapsing of the Axumite Empire, starting from the 9th century, the encircling of Ethiopia by Muslims prevented trade and other communication with the outside world. From that time on until now Ethiopia became an island of Christianity in the sea of Muslims. There is a famous saying that “Ethiopians forgot the external world, and they were forgotten by the world as well.”

Ethiopia has been the only independent state in Africa, defeating colonial expansion by Turks, Egyptians, the British, and Italy. The battle of Adwa in 1896 aroused the whole black population not only in Africa but also in the Caribbean and Americas. Ethiopia became a Symbol of Freedom and pride

of blacks everywhere. The name “Ethiopia” became an iconic symbol of African independence throughout the oppressed and colonized black population.

Before I go to that, again let me talk about internal migration. Migration is either forced or voluntary. Internally Ethiopians have experienced four huge migrations of war and conquest, expansion, and integration.

1. The first one is from north to south from 1000 B.C. to the 14th century A.D.
2. The second is the Muslim expansion from east to north and west from 1529 to 1544 known as Gragn Mohammed Muslim conquest of Christian highlanders that converted huge Ethiopian populations to Islam.
3. The third is the OROMO EXPANSION from south and southwest starting from the 15th century to the early 19th century.
4. The fourth is beginning from the early 19th century to the mid-20th century from central Ethiopia to south, southwest and southeast by which Ethiopia took its present political identity. All these internal migrations of war and conquest have integrated diverse populations through marriage, trade, and of course conquest.

External Migration

Speaking of migration, there have been two major external migrations throughout Ethiopian history. One is during the Italian occupation from 1935-1941 and the other is 1975-until now. Benito Mussolini defeated an Ethiopian peasant army by using mustard [gas] at the battle of Michew that exiled Emperor Haile Selassie to Britain. While the resistance was looming



Featured speaker Dr. Erku Yimer

inside Ethiopia, thousands of people from the nobility and urban population migrated to Sudan, Kenya, and Jerusalem, all of them under the rule of Great Britain at that time. Almost all came back after the Italians were chased out by the combined forces of Ethiopian patriots and British army as part of the Allies war strategy during the Second World War. That [migration] lasted only for 5 years.

The second migration of Ethiopia started after the 1974 revolution where Emperor Haile Selassie was overthrown and a communist military dictatorship took power. The military rule ignited widespread civil war to be followed by a huge migration unforeseen in Ethiopian History. That triggered huge Ethiopian migration to Sudan, the Middle East, Kenya, Somalia, Djibouti, Western Europe, Israel, Canada, the USA, and Australia. In the late 70s and early 80s there were about 2 million refugees in those countries.

Ethiopian-American Relations

Ethiopian-American relations officially began in 1903 with the arrival in Addis Ababa of an American trade mission, and Ethiopia sent its diplomatic delegation of four officials in 1919. In 1926 the *Chicago Daily News*, in co-operation with the Field Museum, supported a zoological expedition to Ethiopia. In a seven month stay, the expedition members travelled by mule through the country and collected 2,000 mammals and 2,000 birds which are stored in the Field Museum. The diaries of the two expedition leaders, Wilfred H. Osgood and Louis Agassiz Fuertes, were later written into a book titled *Artist and Naturalist in Ethiopia*.

Immediately after the Second World War, Emperor Haile Selassie sent students to America to study and about 20,000 students came. At the end of their studies 99.9% returned home. There were no Ethiopian immigrants so to speak until 1974 or 75. That changed after 1974. About 3,000 students that were here in 1974 did not return. Ethiopians were the largest group of Africans to immigrate under the provisions of the Refugee Act of 1980 until 1994 when Somalis passed the Ethiopian number.

Although Ethiopians used to come to America for business and educational purposes, huge migration to the USA started with the Refugee Act of 1980, as well as the Diversity Visa Program of the Immigration Act of 1990. This contributed to an increased immigration from Ethiopia to the United States, prompted by political unrest during the Ethiopian Civil War. The 1992-2002 period averaged around 5,000 individuals per year.

Ethiopians come in three ways: Through the Refugee Program, the Diversity Visa Program, and Asylum for those who came as visitors and students who have legitimate fear of persecution. Asylum was granted since 1980 to about 38,000 Ethiopians. About 157,000 came as refugees and 38,000 under Diversity Visa. According to the U.S. Census Bureau, approximately 68,001 people reported Ethiopian ancestry in 2000. Between 2007 and 2011, there were approximately 151,515 Ethiopia-born residents in the United States. Now the estimates range upwards of 500,000 in the United States, of which approximately 150-200,000 live in the Washington, DC area.

Ethiopian Immigrants in Chicago and Rogers Park

Ethiopians started to arrive in Chicago as refugees in 1980 and continue to arrive until now. Initially, port of entry for Ethiopian Immigrants was Uptown and Edgewater until 2005. With gentrification of Uptown, Ethiopian immigrants gradually moved to Rogers Park. Except in Section 8 buildings very few Ethiopians live in Uptown today. The majority of Ethiopian immigrants who were residing in Uptown have migrated to Rogers Park or to north and southwest suburbs.

The newcomers are resettled mostly in Rogers Park, particularly those that come through the Diversity Visa. Currently Uptown is the hub of Ethiopian resettlement in Chicago. Many find apartment rentals relatively more affordable than Edgewater and many families move by buying properties. Currently, I can count more than 40 households purchasing their own homes. The number of Ethiopians living in Rogers Park is estimated to be more than 2000.

Who are your Ethiopian neighbors?

Most Ethiopian immigrants are Coptic Christians and Muslims, and their religions have served as sources of comfort in the New World, with churches and mosques serving as community centers, health centers, and social services providers. Many Ethiopian Americans are followers of the Abrahamic religions of Christianity and Islam. Of these, the majority of Christians belong to the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church. Almost all Ethiopian immigrants living in Rogers Park are at least high school graduates. Like other African immigrants, about 50% of them have college degrees. They are hard working, not involved in any kind of crime, and very peaceful and quiet. Many of them are deeply religious. They frequent churches and mosques. They attach high value to educating their children. Many Ethiopian children are college material; there are literally no high school dropouts. Particularly, those who attend the community's after school program join colleges, in many cases top universities.

We partner and form coalitions with Mutual Assistance Associations, Refugee Consortium, United African Organization, Illinois Coalition of Immigrant and Refugee Rights, Organization of the North East, and others and conduct advocacy for refugee and immigrant rights, affordable housing, employment opportunities, and on a range of other issues. Earlier we were conducting fundraising and advocacy for Ethiopian Famine victims.

Soccer is the main past time. We have a Blue Nile Team established since 1986 and participating annually in the

Ethiopian Sport Federation and other regional tournaments. Religion, sport, music, and food go with the Ethiopian DNA. Our food is becoming one of the trademarks of Ethiopians. There are more than 300 restaurants in major cities of America and very popular as well like our own Ethiopian Diamond, Demera (Safari) and Awash all located in Rogers Park.

We also celebrate Ethiopian holidays, like Ethiopian New Year, with music and cultural shows. We very much relate with mainstream American society with our food, music, and culture. □

Historic Building at 1730 W. Greenleaf Still Standing after Many Years

By Kay McSpadden (with contributions from many others)

Our event at the Ethiopian Community Association of Chicago at 1730 W. Greenleaf inspired us to compile a history of that beautiful and historic building. A search for the complete history of the building is ongoing, but the following information has been found with help from many sources.

The Building

Jacob Kaplan of Forgotten Chicago sent us a scan of a vintage postcard showing the building in its original iteration as the Jewel Laundry. There is no date on the postcard, but judging from the old-format phone number on the postcard, it's old!



Courtesy of Jacob Kaplan, Forgotten Chicago

According to an entry in the Chicago Landmarks Historic Resources Survey, (courtesy of Larry Shure; information is also in the RPWRHS History Wiki) construction on the building at 1730 W. Greenleaf was begun on July 1, 1912. The architects were Aroner and Somers. The building was known historically as “the Jewel Laundry building.” In 1919 it was occupied by the Jewel Laundry, owned by Jed Lake Jewel. According to the Survey, the building’s details are “Classical Revival, Sullivanesque.”

Chicago Landmarks Historic Resources Survey

Architect: Aroner & Somers

Historic Name: The Jewel Laundry

Community: Rogers Park (01)

Address: 1730 W. Greenleaf Avenue

Constructed: Started in 07/01/1912

Classification: Building

Style:

Type: Commercial

Color Code: Orange

Landmark? N

National Register? N

Major Tenant:

Building Details: Classical Revival, Sullivanesque

Pin: 1131212004

The Commission on Chicago Historical and [Architectural Landmarks Individual Resource Form](#) (dated 9/27/1987), courtesy of Larry Shure, shows a handwritten description of the building, a Sanborn map reproduction, Identification on Existing Surveys [Building only on State Survey], and identification numbers of original building permit.

The Architects Aroner and Somers

Larry Shure tells us, “There hasn’t been much written on the architects, although they were often hired to design synagogues and theaters. The other Aroner and Somers building nearby [the Jewel Laundry building] is the old Post Office at the northeast corner of Lunt and Ravenswood [also built in 1913]. Somers apparently lived in Rogers Park at 6959 N. Ashland in 1919, according to a Rogers Park directory on Archive.org.”

Larry has compiled the following list of buildings known to be designed by Aroner and Somers.

Address	Name	Year Constructed	Architect	Community	Source
<u>1730-1730 W GREENLEAF AV</u>	THE JEWEL LAUNDRY	1910s	ARONER & SOMERS	Rogers Park	CHRS
<u>2323-2329 W CHICAGO AV</u>		1910s	ARONER & SOMERS	West Town	CHRS
<u>3413-3419 W DOUGLAS BV</u>	ANSHE KENESSETH ISRAEL (Shepherd’s Temple Baptist Church)	1913	ARONER & SOMERS	North Lawndale	CHRS
1611 W. Roosevelt	Orpheus Theater	1913	Aroner & Somers		The Brickbuilder. Vol 22, p.235 (accessed via Google Books)
3204-6 W. 16 th	2-story store and flats	1914	Aroner & Somers		The Construction News, March 28, 1914, Vol. 37, Page 11.
Ashland and Wilson (?)	3 story apartments	1914	Aroner & Somers		The Construction News, May 2, 1914, Vol. 37, Page 8.

Ashland and Wilson (?)	3 story apartments	1914	Aroner & Somers		The Construction News, May 2, 1914, Vol. 37, Page 8.
<u>10430-10430 S HOYNE AV</u>		1920s	ARONER & BACON	Beverly	CHRS
Fullerton and Kedzie	Synagogue under design Congregation Shaare Zetack)	1920	Aroner and Bacon		Domestic Engineering and the Journal of Mechanical Contracting, V.90. p.451 (Google)
<u>631-633 W PATTERSON AV</u> (Gary Place)	ANSHE EMES SYNAGOGUE	1916	ARONER, JACOB S.	Lakeview	CHRS, The Advocate: America's Jewish Journal, Vol. 51, p.585, May 27, 1916 (Google)
<u>6000-6000 N NICKERSON AV</u>		1910s	ARONER, JACOB S.	Norwood Park	CHRS
6359 S. Cottage Grove	Ball Room for the Fantasia Corp. (still there!)	1921	Jacob Aroner		The American Contractor, Vol. 42, Page 48 (Google)
Sunnyside and Sheridan	3-story apartments (31 units)	1915	Jacob Aroner		
	Lawndale Theater	1911	Jacob Aroner		Yearbook of the Chicago Annual Exhibition League, 1911 (Google)

More information about two of these buildings is available online. The Orpheus Theatre, now demolished but formerly at 1611 W. Roosevelt, became known as the Joy Theatre. Its ornate Sullivanesque front is pictured online. Anshe Kenesseth Israel Temple at 3411 W. Douglas Boulevard was in a greatly deteriorated state in 2012

The Occupants

1. 1912-1960: Jewel Laundry

Glenna Eaves, head of collections at Rogers Park/West Ridge Historical Society, found the following items in the data bases held by the Historical Society. In a *Directory of Rogers Park and West Ridge 1901-1902*, there is a business listing for Jed L. Jewel as manager of Nelson Brothers Laundry at 517 Greenleaf but there is no listing for Nelson Brothers Laundry. There is a personal listing for J.E. Jewel, a lawyer, and Ray W. Jewel, a clerk, both at 517 Greenleaf.

In the *Atkins & Frisbee Co's Directory of Rogers Park and Birchwood April 1915*, the Jewel Laundry is listed at 1730 Greenleaf Ave. with a telephone number of 111. There are three other entries in the Commercial Section of the directory. The directory also shows a "Personal listing" for Jed L. Jewel's office at 1730 Greenleaf Ave. with the same phone number of 111. There is the following half-page advertisement.

The Jewel Laundry

1730
Greenleaf
Ave.

The *Rogers Park Directory Summer 1930* contains a listing for the Jewel Laundry at 1730 Greenleaf with a phone number of BR 1-1000. Although the “Commercial Section” lists 14 other entries under “Lauderies,” ten of them with advertisements, there is no listing for the Jewel Laundry and no listing for the surname Jewel.

The *Rogers Park Directory Sept. 1946* lists the Jewel Laundry at 1730 W. Greenleaf, phone BRI-1000, and also a Garage at 1766 W. Lunt, phone ROG-0001. There is again a half-page ad, this time in the “Commercial” section; there is no listing for the surname Jewel.

CALL BUYERS' SERVICE *If You Don't Find It* LAU-LAU 8



LAUNDRY & DRY CLEANERS

ZORIC
ODORLESS
DRY CLEANING

- Preserves Fabric
- No Shrinkage
- Avoid Fire Risk
- More Sanitary

"Where the Promise Is Fulfilled"
The Jewel Standard of Perfection
Assures You of
FINEST QUALITY LAUNDERING
CAREFUL PERSONAL ATTENTION
PROMPT and COURTEOUS SERVICE

ENJOY THE BEST WHEN
IT COSTS NO MORE

Telephone **BRI argate 1000**
1730 GREENLEAF AV.

SERVING ROGERS PARK and UPTOWN CHICAGO'S
FINEST HOMES FOR THIRTY-FIVE YEARS

The *Chicago Tribune* archive contains three “Help wanted Route man” ads: 4/1958, 8/1959, and 7/1960. The ad in 1958 lists the address as 1740 Greenleaf; the later two ads list 1730 Greenleaf as the address.

The *Chicago Tribune* archives also show an obituary on September 15, 1980 for Martin G. Romeiser, 85, saying that he retired in 1960 as president of Jewel Laundry.

Martin B. Romeiser

Mass for Martin B. Romeiser, 85, of 8445 Morton Av., Morton Grove, will be at 9:30 a.m. Saturday in St. Martha Catholic Church, 8534 Georgiana Av., Morton Grove. Mr. Romeiser died Wednesday in Lutheran General Hospital, Park Ridge. He retired in 1960 as owner of the Jewel Laundry in Chicago. He was a past president of the American Institute of Laundries and of the Niles Township Republican Club. He was a member of American Legion Post 134, Morton Grove.

2. 1960-1986: ??

So far we have not been able to find out who occupied the building during these years. We are continuing our research and hoping that long-time residents of the area can help us with their memories of the building.

3. 1986-2008: Maya Romanoff Corporation

The Maya Romanoff Corporation was located at 1730 W. Greenleaf from 1986 to 2008. There is a brief history of the Maya Romanoff Corporation here: <https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PL2BE5AA1A171F926D>.

The company manufactures high-end wall coverings. According to its website, it is “the largest manufacturer of handcrafted wallcoverings in the United States,” maintaining “Maya Romanoff’s rigorous standard for quality, beauty and innovation.” Much of this reputation was established while the company headquarters was located at 1730 W. Greenleaf.

Maya Romanoff himself (1941-2014) was a true child of the 1960s when he developed his lifelong interest in Zen Buddhism which led to “transforming modern design by combining ancient artistic techniques with the latest production technology.” Natural materials, such as shells, glass beads, gold leaf, and wood are incorporated into the designs.

Starting from the artistic technique of tie-dye, he began by designing clothing, moved to creating large scale installations (His company designed the curtain at the Harris Theatre.), and finally to creating wallcoverings.

Shortly after acquiring the building in 1986, Romanoff developed Parkinson's disease. In 1998 he married Joyce Lehrer, who had been an employee since 1988. Following Maya's death in 2014, Joyce continued to run the company along with members of the next generation.

The company moved in 2008 to a new headquarters in Skokie and maintains showrooms at the Merchandise Mart and in New York City. In the building at 1730 W. Greenleaf, the wall of the front hallway on the first floor still displays samples of Romanoff wall coverings.

4. 2008-Present: Ethiopian Community Association

The Ethiopian Community Association of Chicago, a refugee resettlement agency, serves immigrants and refugees not only

from Ethiopia but also from other countries, mostly African and Middle Eastern countries. The agency receives immigrants sent by the United Nations and provides resettlement needs, such as locating an apartment and supplying basic furnishings, helping children start school and helping adults find jobs. The center at 1730 W. Greenleaf holds classes in job-training skills such as English as a Second Language and computer technology, health education, and citizenship and civic education. In addition, ECAC is spearheading the establishment of an Ethiopian museum, which is now housed at the building on Greenleaf.

5. The Future: ??

The building is currently for sale, the list price over \$1,000,000. The listing office is Jameson Sotheby's International Realty; the listing realtor is Trung Duong. Hopefully, a use can be found that will respect and preserve the building's beauty and long history. □

Profile of Office Assistant Stephanie Barto

By Kay McSpadden



Stephanie Barto

Let us count the many ways Stephanie Barto benefits the Historical Society. She works Wednesdays and Saturdays as our part-time office assistant. She also volunteers unpaid time attending monthly board meetings and taking minutes. In addition, she rides over to our office on her vintage bicycle whenever she's needed, perhaps to supervise a workman who can't come during her twelve office hours a week or to respond to some emergency. She volunteers additional time serving as our photographer and our Exhibits Coordinator.

Stephanie has been our office assistant since September 2015. Before that she volunteered, working with Kim Brown our then office assistant. When Kim left to work full-time for the Bernie Sanders campaign in Iowa, Stephanie knew the job and could take over. She's a multi-talented and interesting person who is an invaluable asset to the Society.

Though she generously offers her time, she's firm about not being available Tuesday, Friday, and Saturday evenings; she devotes these times to her other job as instructor and director of Read My Hips Dance Company. The troupe rehearses every Tuesday evening for their Friday and Saturday performances at Alhambra Palace Restaurant on West Randolph Street.

She is also, so far, the only subject of a profile who comes with a bibliography! Scattered throughout this article are links to articles important to Stephanie.

Are you a native Chicagoan?

No, but I am from Illinois. I grew up in Bradford, near Princeton. I'm named after Stephanie Fuller, a friend of my mother, who was a staff writer for the *Chicago Tribune* and the only woman, as of 1994, ever to serve as president of the Chicago Press Club. (http://articles.chicagotribune.com/1994-12-12/news/9412120185_1_ms-fuller-chicago-tribune-home-

How did you happen to come to Chicago?

I moved to Chicago in 1985 to complete my college education at UIC. Actually, it's more the other way around: I didn't move to Chicago because I dearly wanted to attend UIC; rather, I chose UIC because I wanted to move to Chicago! I graduated with a BA in Theater and Mass Media.

I was never suited for rural life. As a very young child, circa kindergarten, I felt pretty sure I wanted to live in NYC eventually, since it was the biggest city in the country. I started by moving to the big city of Peoria where I attended Illinois Central College long enough to earn an Associate Degree in "I still don't know what I want to do with my life," aka Liberal Arts. Then I chose to settle in Chicago; I recall coming to Chicago as a child and being excited to visit Stephanie Fuller at Tribune Tower. I greatly admired her, and for a while I entertained the thought of becoming a journalist when I grew up.

Tell us a bit about your work history.

My first office job was during my time in Peoria--I was as an office assistant for PME, a company that booked local bar bands to play at Midwest clubs. I also had a job writing a weekly column for *Nearby Nite Life*, a slightly notorious free weekly paper that advertised local clubs. I would go around the local bars on weekend nights, take pictures, and write a column about whatever I chose to see and do. The column was called "Night Nirvana," which is a bit cringe-worthy in retrospect, but hey, I came up with it when I was 18 years old. I had a lot of fun with both these jobs, which also had the bonus of allowing me to go to any bar I wanted without being carded and turned away for being too young to enter.

How did you acquire your office skills?

I developed basic computer skills at the first job I had after graduating from college. I don't look back fondly at that job. I spent two miserable years as a secretary at Citibank. It's not a job I ever imagined I would want! At that time I was very involved in the local theater community, which I loved very much, but it did not pay my bills. I had been doing temp assignments to support myself and reasoned that I might as well take a steady job instead of working at random offices.

In addition to office jobs, I have been a waitress, web designer, and freelance graphics designer. (Her company was known as "Graphics a Go-Go"!) In the late 1990s I owned Arcanum Books across from the Music Box Theatre. I developed an interest in collecting things by purchasing items at auctions and estate sales and selling them on Ebay. I also did costume design, having a very successful belly dance costume store

on Etsy for a few years. (I did costumes for the indie horror movie "Heaven Is Hell" and—my favorite project—designed Megan Cavanagh's "Ghost of Christmas Present" costume for the film "Scrooge and Marley." See the costume in action at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tQIXwUr66TU>.) I have also worked as a freelance photographer since 2012.

One of the things you like to do is roam around the city and neighborhood taking street photographs. What got you interested in photography in the first place?

Photography is something I have loved since childhood. When I was about five years old, I found an old Brownie camera in my grandmother's attic and immediately became obsessed with taking pictures. My zeal for this was so great that eventually my grandmother bought me some film for the camera I'd been using, so I could take actual photos and get them printed.

I got my first 35mm SLR camera, a Nikon, when I was about fourteen years old. (See an admiring article on Stephanie's photography at <http://conferences.outofchicago.com/2015/03/the-soul-of-the-city-through-photography-stephanie-barto/>)

What motivated you to apply to the Historical Society?

When I moved to the neighborhood, I was very excited to learn more about the history of my new home and my neighborhood and become more active in the community. I joined the RPWRHS and shortly after becoming a volunteer, I was excited to see an ad posted for a part-time job. I applied right away for the position but was not selected; happily, the opportunity became available again several months later, and I was selected to take it.

What do you like about your position at the Historical Society?

I love that our work preserves and shares our local history and all around contributes to the positive energy of our neighborhood. I also really enjoy the people I work with, including our board members, fellow volunteers, community members, and representatives of the organizations that collaborate with us.

What interests you about Rogers Park?

I love this neighborhood for its diversity, progressive values, and lovely old architecture. I also enjoy our fabulous summer festivals. Each year I especially look forward to the Glenwood Arts Festival, where I will inevitably spend hours selecting a new piece by a local artist to add to my collection.

I wish more of the city could evidence the beautiful racial and economic diversity that seem to thrive naturally here. In most neighborhoods, the idea of "improvement" tends to result in

displacing current residents to make way for those who are more affluent. In Rogers Park, we seem more inclined to think that improvement should serve and celebrate current residents while also attracting new residents who love this very unique neighborhood for what it is.

Shortly before I moved here, I read an article on the Rogers Park years of Vivian Meier by local writer Edward McClelland. The article seems to sum up a lot of what I love about Rogers Park: <http://www.themorningnews.org/article/private-eye>.

How do you participate in the neighborhood?

Oh, there are so many wonderful things to do here I just wish I

had more time! I volunteer at the Society, participate in political activism with the 49th Ward Democrats and the Network 49 progressive organization. I also enjoy seeing plays at neighborhood theaters and dining and shopping local as much as I can.

Where do you see yourself in the future?

In Rogers Park, of course! I bought a condo in 2014 in a delightful 1920's courtyard building here, and I hope to spend the rest of my life in it.

“Property” Exhibit Results from Collaboration

By Stephanie Barto, Exhibits Coordinator

In April, we collaborated with Rogers Park-based Roman Susan Art Foundation to present “Property,” an exhibit utilizing one hundred of the Historical Society’s photos. The featured images from the RPWRHS collection were placed in the Creative Commons via a [flickr gallery](#); artists were invited to “repurpose, re-imagine, or respond” to these materials. The project inspired new work from 115 artists, and all submissions were featured in a digital exhibit at our office throughout the month of April.

This exhibit, the first to be presented in our current location, was celebrated with two events: a promotional launch party as we opened the call for submissions, and another informal gathering on the evening the digital exhibit opened. Both drew a great mix of artists, members, and neighbors. The positive energy of these events inspires us toward more frequently hosting exhibits and social gatherings in our office.

If you are interested to view the exhibit but missed seeing it during its installation, there are still opportunities to check it out. The full multimedia versions of the featured works are available for viewing in our digital archive. Feel free to stop by any Wednesday or Saturday between 10 AM and 4 PM and browse the exhibit on our office computers. You can also check out an online archive of the “Property” Exhibit Guide [here](#).

We are extremely grateful to Nathan Smith and Kristin Abhalter of Roman Susan Gallery for the opportunity to work with them on this project. A special thanks also to those who answered our call to conjure art from the images in our collection, as well as to those who contributed to the vitality of the project by attending our launch party and/or opening night event.

Do you have an idea for a collaborative exhibit that you would like to share with us? [Email Stephanie](#) to discuss the possibility of bringing your idea to life in a future RPWRHS project!

Culinary Historian Colleen Sen Writes about Food Around the World

By Dave Richert



Colleen Sen

Colleen Taylor Sen, culinary historian and a long-time volunteer with the Rogers Park/West Ridge Historical Society, has published yet another book and has an additional one forthcoming.

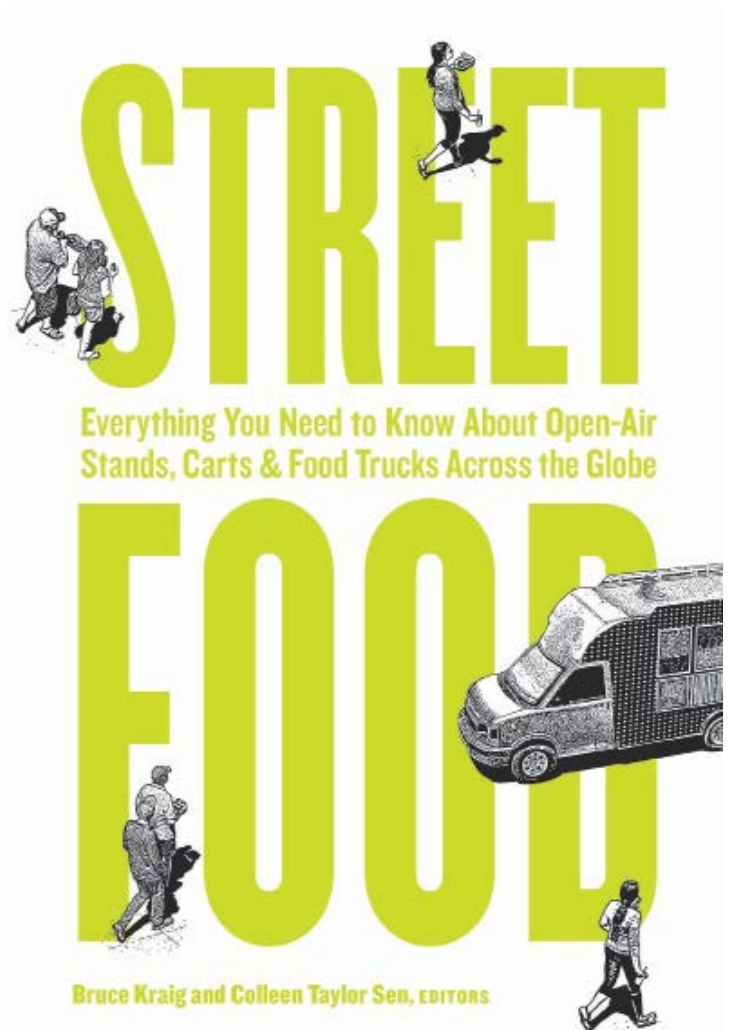
Colleen's involvement with the Historical Society began in the early 1980s when she and her husband Ashish moved next door to President Mary Jo Doyle. Mary Jo promptly recruited the Sens as participants in the Society's first house walk, held in 1988. After Mary Jo's death, Colleen became a member of the board and subsequently served as Program Chair and Acting Vice-President. She organized or helped organize several house tours and has conducted many culinary tours of Devon Avenue, most recently two tours in 2016.

Even while working full-time, Colleen contributed articles on food and travel to newspapers and magazines, including the *Chicago Tribune*, *Chicago Sun Times*, and *Travel and Leisure*. Since her retirement from the Gas Technology Institute in 2011, she has devoted herself full-time to writing books—instead of articles—with a focus on the food of the Indian Subcontinent. Her books include *Food Culture in India: A Guide to Indian Restaurant Menus*; *Curry: A Global History*; *Turmeric: the*

Wonder Spice (with Helen Saberi), and *Fasts and Fasts: A History of Food in India*. (All titles are available on Amazon.)

Her recent publication is *Street Food: Everything You Need to Know About Open-Air Stands, Carts, and Food Trucks Across the Globe*. She co-edited the book with Bruce Kraig. Published by Agate Books of Evanston, it surveys common street foods from more than seventy-five countries and regions.

In September University of Illinois Press will publish *The Chicago Food Encyclopedia*, a compendium of historical and contemporary information about the great food scene of a great city. Co-edited with Bruce Kraig and Carol Haddix, it contains more than three hundred entries written by over seventy of the city's leading journalists and food writers. The Encyclopedia features many photographs from the Rogers Park/West Ridge Historical Society archives. □



Ashland Avenue, Named for Kentucky Estate of Henry Clay

By Hank Morris

Note: Hank wrote the following article shortly before his final illness, intending it for publication.

Ashland Avenue (1600 W. from 7742 N. to 12,259 S.) was formerly known as Reuben Street, and was named in honor of Ashland, the Italianate Kentucky estate of the 19th-Century Kentucky statesman Henry Clay (1777 – 1852). Ashland was so-named because it was surrounded by ash trees. The estate is located in Lexington, Kentucky, in the central Bluegrass Region of the state. It is a registered National Historic Landmark and a U.S. National Historic Landmark.

Ashland Avenue runs through land that was first developed by Henry Hamilton Honoré (Honore Street), a transplant from Kentucky, and some credit him with naming the street. Others, however, claim that Samuel A. Walker, a Kentucky native who developed the land in the vicinity of Ashland and Garrison Street around 1864, named the street after the estate. There is a rumor that “Ashland” comes from the ashes of the Great Chicago Fire, but it was already renamed Ashland Avenue by the time the fire struck in 1871.

History of the estate

Henry Clay came to Lexington, Kentucky, from Virginia in 1797. He began buying land for his plantation in 1804. The Ashland farm—which during Clay’s lifetime was outside of the Lexington city limits—at its largest consisted of over 600 acres. It is unclear whether Clay named the plantation or retained a prior name, but he was referring to his estate as “Ashland” by 1809. The name derives from the ash forest that stood at the site. Clay and his family resided at Ashland from c. 1806 until his death on Tuesday, June 29, 1852; his widow Lucretia Clay moved out in 1854. Given his political career as a U.S. Senator from Kentucky, Clay spent most of the years between 1810 and 1829 in Washington, D.C.

Henry Clay had married Lucretia Clay, nee: Hart, who was born in Hagerstown, Maryland, on Sunday, March 18, 1781. Lucretia was the daughter of Colonel Thomas and Susanna Hart, nee: Gray. She moved to Kentucky with her parents in 1784. She married Henry Clay Thursday, April 11, 1799, in Lexington, Fayette County, Kentucky. She died on Thursday, April 7, 1864, at age 83, in Lexington, Kentucky. The Clays had eleven children, five sons and six daughters, seven of whom actually reached adulthood.

Clay divided the Ashland estate among three sons. After Clay’s death, son James Brown Clay owned and occupied Ashland proper along with a surrounding tract of approximately 325 acres. James Clay rebuilt the house, and his family resided there until his death in 1864. His widow Susan Jacob Clay put the estate up for sale in 1866. Kentucky University purchased Ashland and used it as part of its campus. Kentucky University split into what became Transylvania University and the University of Kentucky, and sold Ashland in 1882.

Henry Clay’s granddaughter Anne Clay McDowell and her husband Henry Clay McDowell purchased the estate consisting of approximately 325 acres and outbuildings. They moved in with their children in 1883. Their eldest daughter, Nannette McDowell Bullock, continued to occupy Ashland until her death in 1948. She founded the Henry Clay Memorial Foundation, which purchased and preserved Ashland. The historic house museum opened to the public in 1950.

The mansion

Henry Clay began building his Federal style house c. 1806. The architects were Benjamin H. Latrobe and Thomas Lewinski. He added two wings between 1811 and 1814, designed for him by Benjamin Latrobe. Inferior building materials, particularly a porous type of brick, resulted in an unstable structure. The building was likely damaged in the New Madrid earthquake and aftershocks of 1811-12; Clay’s many repairs could never completely stabilize the house.

Seeing no viable alternative, Clay’s son James B. Clay opted to rebuild the house with the goals of living there with his family and paying fitting tribute to his father. James had the house razed by the end of 1854, and rebuilding was completed by 1857. Local architect Thomas Lewinski designed the new structure, which utilized features of the original house: the footprint and foundation, floorplan, and massing. But Lewinski aided James in updating the house stylistically. With many Italianate features, the resulting mansion is a mix of Federal architecture and Italianate details. Inside, James employed Greek Revival features and decorated the home lavishly (see: Victorian decorative arts) with imported furnishings purchased in New York City.

During the Kentucky University period, Regent John Bowman utilized part of the mansion to house and display the University Natural History Museum. □

The RPWRHS extends a special thank you to its sponsors.

Platinum Sponsor



Gold Sponsors



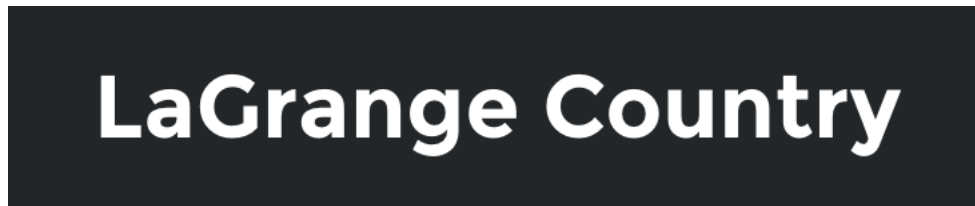
Your Storage Concierge | closetbox.me

Full service self-storage: free pickup, secure storage, and items returned on demand. Save \$50 with code: [chicagoRogersParkHistory](#)

Visit Closetbox online: <http://bit.ly/2onzRQP> or call 877.433.9636



Silver Sponsors



Bronze Sponsors

State Farm Insurance - David J. Frederickson Agency
 6263 N Clark St
 Chicago IL 60660
www.MyAgentDave.com

Winnemac Properties
 Property Management & Investment

Winnemac Properties: 4818 N. Damen Avenue.

CAPS Beat 2411

Beat Facilitator: Richard Concaidi
richconcaidi@aol.com • 773.294.1111

Beat Co-Facilitator: Morrine Sweer
sweergroup@ameritech.net • 773.297.5272

Websites
 Community Policing: <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/caps2411>
 Other topics: <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/wrogerspk/>

FRANK MAGUIRE
 Broker Associate
 773.793.4448
frank.maguire@bairdwarner.com



Do you have photos of Rogers Park or West Ridge?

Our Photo Archives and Cataloging Project is charged with the preservation of our photo collection. In it, we have literally thousands of photographs that have been donated to the Society to be preserved for future generations and today's researchers.

It's one of our most valuable resources. Why not add your old photos to our collection? We will scan them and put them in the Photo Archives. Future generations and today's researchers will thank you for your efforts.

We can scan slides, negatives, prints, whatever. While we would prefer to preserve the originals, we're not greedy. If you want them back, we will honor your request.

It would be most helpful if you could provide notes as to what is being shown in the photographs. We've never met Aunt Martha. Please tell us who is who. Neighborhoods change. Please tell us where the photo was taken and when. **Your photos can be from any time period, that means even the 2000s.**

For more information, contact the Society's office.

Rogers Park/West Ridge Historical Society
7363 N. Greenview Avenue, Chicago IL 60626-3481
Call 773-764-4078 or e-mail us at info@rpwrhs.org



New Membership

Renewal

New and Renewing Members

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

- | | | |
|---|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> ANNUAL MEMBER \$25 | <input type="checkbox"/> ANNUAL SUPPORTING MEMBER \$50 | <input type="checkbox"/> LIFETIME MEMBER \$1000 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> ANNUAL STUDENT MEMBER \$40 | <input type="checkbox"/> ANNUAL SUSTAINING MEMBER \$100 | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> ANNUAL SENIOR MEMBER \$20 | <input type="checkbox"/> ANNUAL BENEFACTOR \$250 | |

PLEASE MAIL YOUR CHECK TO:
ROGERS PARK/WEST RIDGE HISTORICAL SOCIETY, 7363 N. GREENVIEW AVE., CHICAGO, IL, 60626
TO PAY BY CREDIT CARD, PLEASE CALL US AT 773.764.4078 OR USE OUR WEBSITE: WWW.RPWRHS.ORG

NAME _____
ADDRESS _____
CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP CODE _____
EMAIL _____
PHONE _____

I would like to volunteer at the Society

Upcoming Events

Visit rpwrhs.org/programs for the most updated version of our events calendar.

Title of Event: Howard Street Then and Now Walking Tour

Date: Saturday June 17

Time: 1-3 PM

Starting Point: To be determined

Title of Event: Rogers Park/West Rogers Park Night*

Date: Wednesday July 12

Time: 5-8 PM

Location: Max and Benny's Deli, Northbrook, IL

Contact richardreeder34@gmail.com for details.

Title of Event: Glenwood Arts District Walking Tour

Date: Sunday August 27

Time: 1-3 PM

Starting Point: To be determined

Title of Event: Annual House Walk

Date: Sunday September 10

Time: TBD

Location: TBD

Title of Event: Publication of Cookbook and Fundraiser

Date: Sunday October 22

Time: 12-3 PM

Location: Indian Boundary Park Field House

**RPWRHS will have a table at this event*

About Us

Rogers Park/West Ridge Historical Society

7363 N. Greenview Ave.

Chicago, IL 60626

773-764-4078

info@rpwrhs.org

Hours: Wednesdays and Saturdays 10-4 PM

Website: rpwrhs.org

Facebook Page: facebook.com/rpwrhs

Twitter: twitter.com/RPWRHS

Comments about The Historian?

Email comments@rpwrhs.org or call us at

(773) 764-4078.

Board of Directors

Officers

Ken Walchak, President

Kay McSpadden, Vice-President

Dona Vitale, Treasurer

Directors

Bruce Boyd

Dave Kalensky

Cecilia Salinas

Frank Valadez

Staff

Stephanie Barto,

Office Assistant

Newsletter Team

Editors:

Kay McSpadden

Dave Richert

Dona Vitale

Production Manager:

Hope Shannon

Contributors:

Stephanie Barto

Irene Falconer

Dave Kalensky

Kay McSpadden

Hank Morris

Dave Richert

Colleen Sen

Dona Vitale

Ken Walchak

Layout and Design

Kate Siemianowski