



Annual Tour of Homes. See page 4.

July 2009

Newsletter of the Waukegan Historical Society

President's Letter

Sara Griffin

As I begin my final year as your President I am reminded of the hundreds of people who have supported our group. During our first 41 years we have gathered artifacts pertinent to the history of Waukegan, thousands of photographs, papers, diaries, books, maps, records, scrapbooks etc. We have a very professional Museum Director Ty Rohrer, an educational program for schools and interested local groups and a wonderful relationship with the Waukegan Park District.

An addition to the Waukegan History Museum is in the planning stages. A building committee consisting of Harry Came, Claudia Freeman (Cultural Arts Supervisor), Dennis Moisio, Tim Hagan, Greg Petry (Executive Director of the Waukegan Park District), Ty Rohrer and Sara Griffin is in place. We are working with Jim Johnson of The AT Group, Project Managers; they will oversee the entire process. Soil Management Company has completed the soil testing. David Woodhouse Architects, Chicago, Illinois has been selected. Contracts are currently in place and are being reviewed by attorneys.

This is a giant step forward for us. We are so grateful to the members of the committee and the Waukegan Park District Board of Commissioners for their support.

The annual Tour of Homes will be on July 12, 2009 from 1:00 PM to 5:00 PM. The Oakwood Cemetery Walk will be held on September 19, 2009 with buses departing to the cemetery from Bowen Park. Our next meeting will be held on September 20, 2009, at 2:00 PM, Doug Stiles will present a program on Abraham Lincoln's watch and his family's connection to it.

Watch for the order form for Ed Link's book – Waukegan: A History coming soon.

As you can see we have so much going on. Please volunteer to help us. You will be among friends.

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Ty Rohrer

Stop by the Waukegan History Museum this summer and help us celebrate the 150th anniversary of Waukegan as well as the 200th anniversary of Abraham Lincoln's birth. The museum will maintain regular hours during the summer months and will also be open during special events such as the Tour of Homes on Sunday July 12.

The Waukegan Historical Society Board of Directors and the Waukegan Park District are in the early stages of designing an addition to the museum. The intentions are to bring the Research Library over from Lilac Cottage into the new space. We hope to have additional space for exhibits, collections storage, and offices.

Ultimately, the inventory of the collections needs to be completed to be ready for possible construction in the future. The museum staff and volunteers will be focusing on the inventory of the museum's collections this summer. If you would like to help out with this important task please feel free to contact the museum.

We hope to see you this summer at the many fun special events planned and also at the museum!

WHS Board

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Gretta Dieck

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Dennis Moisio

Denyse Waters

Tour of Homes

Sunday, July 12, 1:00-5:00pm

The Society's much anticipated annual Tour of Homes will take place on Sunday, July 12 from 1:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. This year's tour will showcase the fine architecture and distinct neighborhoods of Waukegan. The private homes featured are:

921 Rogers Court: Wonderful romantic home built in 1927 with influences of the French Chateau style. This home has interesting original details and a beautiful upgraded chef's kitchen.

922 Rogers Court: A two story brick cottage built in 1928 with many Arts and Crafts elements. House was built for the parents of the original owners of 921 Rogers Court directly across the street and also on this year's Tour.

218 Gillett Avenue: This house was built in the Georgian style in 1938 and is known for its beautiful symmetry. The home and its beautiful gardens were inherited from the current owner's parents

433 Gillett Avenue: Built in 1925, this colonial brick home is located on one of Waukegan's more beautiful streets with homes of many different architectural styles.

2230 Chestnut Street: Built in 1967, this modern ranch-style home is the newest on this year's tour. The décor is mid-century modern with the owner's collection of textiles displayed prominently.

1917 N. Sheridan Road: The Waukegan History Museum will be open showcasing not only the period rooms of the 1870s but also an exhibit on the 150th Anniversary of the City of Waukegan and an exhibit focusing on Abraham Lincoln's brief but memorable visit to Waukegan in April 1860 to commemorate the Bicentennial of Lincoln's Birth.

Tickets are \$10 in advance for Historical Society Members and \$12 for non-members. Advance tickets may be purchased at the Waukegan History Museum, Jack Benny Center for the Arts (39 Jack

Benny Drive in Bowen Park), or Victorian House Antiques (650 Grand Avenue), as well as by mail to: Waukegan Historical Society, 1917 N. Sheridan Rd., Waukegan, IL 60087. If ordering by mail, please enclose a self-addressed stamped envelope. Tickets will be \$14 the day of the tour and may be purchased at any tour site.

This is the Society's main fundraiser for the year and is regularly attended by several hundred people. Encourage your friends, family, and neighbors to participate in this enjoyable event that showcases Waukegan's finest homes and neighborhoods.



218 Gillett Ave.



921 Rogers Ct.



922 Rogers Ct.



2230 Chestnut St.



433 Gillett Ave

Free Tickets to the Tour of Homes

Be a Room Watcher and receive a complimentary ticket for the annual Tour of Homes on Sunday, July 12. We need people to help direct visitors and watch the rooms during the Tour of Homes.

Sign up to work a 2 ½ hour shift, and we'll give you a free ticket to take the tour either before or after your shift. Shifts are from 12:00-2:30pm or 2:30-5:00pm.

Invite your friends to participate and we will try to accommodate by having you and your friends work at the same location during the time that you choose.

To sign up, please call the museum at 847-336-1859.

Current Exhibits

Treasures of Our Collections:

Celebrating 150 Years of Waukegan History

See the history of the City of Waukegan from its earliest beginnings up to the present. The exhibit includes a detailed timeline highlighting significant events and side notes from Waukegan's history. Artifacts on display include a relic from the Academy Theatre/Fiesta Palace, the charred remains of one of the old courthouse's clock faces, a trunk used by Jack Benny during his early Vaudeville days, maps, a digital slideshow of Waukegan postcards, and souvenirs, trinkets, and other memorabilia. Through 2009 at the Waukegan History Museum.

Abraham Lincoln and His Memorable Visit to Waukegan

Learn about Abraham Lincoln's visit to Waukegan on April 2, 1860. Artifacts on display include a replica life mask on loan from the Lake County Discovery Museum, furniture from the home that Lincoln spent the night in, and Lincoln's signature. Through 2009 at the Waukegan History Museum.

Jack Benny: From Waukegan to Hollywood

Exhibit shows the life of Jack Benny from when he was growing up in Waukegan to his prolific career in Hollywood. Memorabilia include historic photographs, programs from Jack Benny performances, and autographed items.

Exhibit on display at the Jack Benny Center for the Arts-39 Jack Benny Drive Waukegan, IL 60087 in Bowen Park. No closing date for the exhibit.

Snapshots of Waukegan: 1840s through the 1960s

Photograph exhibit shows a glimpse of the early history of the City of Waukegan from the 1840s through the 1960s.

Exhibit on display in windows of the parking garage retail space on the corner of County and Clayton Streets. No closing date for the exhibit.

What's In a Name?

Learn about the backgrounds of various streets around Waukegan and the prominent residents that they were named after. Coming Soon.

New Book

The Waukegan Historical Society is very happy to announce that our new book titled *Waukegan: A History* will be available Fall 2009. The book is a collaborative effort between historian and author Ed Link and the Waukegan Historical Society. The book has been created to celebrate Waukegan's sesquicentennial anniversary in 2009.

This is the most in-depth book that the Historical Society has published. You will also find many new images that have not been published before.

Copies of the book can be ordered in advance using the order form available at waukeganhistorical.org. The book will also be sold at the Waukegan History Museum, the Research Library, Victorian House Antiques, the Jack Benny Center, Ace Hardware, and other local stores.

Historically Speaking

Jane McAlister

by Ed Link

In another of our series on Waukegan contributors, we remember a woman who truly lived up to that title.

Jane Strang was born in Perthshire, Scotland October 18, 1817. She married John McAlister in



Canada October 2, 1838. They never had children. While her family moved to Milburn in 1838, John and Jane settled in Newport where they bought 160 acres of farm land. They came to Lake County with only the team that transported them and \$25 in cash, \$22 of which went for the purchase of a cow.

In 1882 John and Jane moved to Waukegan and their first home was on Madison Street between Sheridan and Genesee. John passed away December 6, 1888.

Jane's generosity became apparent in 1898

when she donated money to the First Presbyterian Church for the purchase of a pipe organ. She continued to support the church the following year by buying the adjacent lot and house. It was used as the manse until 1948. The church had built a new building in the early 1890s at a cost of over \$15,000. The debt was being reduced slowly until 1902 when Jane paid off what was remaining. She also donated money for what would become known as the McAlister Stained Glass Window.

The Presbyterian Church was not the only recipient of Jane's largess. When it was determined that the fourteen bed hospital in the Liebeck house was no longer meeting Waukegan's needs, a new building was required. Jane donated \$20,000 in 1903 for such a building which was built at the corner of North and Franklin after the Liebeck house was moved back. The new Jane McAlister Hospital admitted its first patient September 24, 1904, but Jane was not around



to celebrate the event. She died from a hemorrhage slightly after midnight on October 29, 1903 at her home on Clayton Street. In the news article telling of her passing Jane was called the greatest benefactress the city ever had. She certainly gave enough evidence to substantiate that statement.

One interesting sidelight to her prominence is confusion over the spelling of her name, especially when compared to the similarly named street and school. Jane's name was spelled with one "L". William McAllister (2 "L") came to Waukegan in 1871 and

lived on the south side of town. He owned property along the street which was named for him. The two “L” spelling appeared as early as the 1874 city directory. McAllister School (1902 – 1969) was named after the street and was replaced by today’s Carman-Buckner School. In spite of that, the current street signs for McAlister Avenue contain only one “L”. The confusion remains, but in fairness it must be noted that publications varied the spelling of Jane’s name during her lifetime and the street even in 1917.

Summer Intern

The Waukegan History Museum is proud to again have Kirsten Lampi join us as the summer intern. Kirsten will be helping to research and develop exhibits and inventory the collections. We thank the Waukegan Park District for the support and funding of our summer internship program.



Free History Programs Offered by the Waukegan Historical Society

For your organization, group, social event, or classroom.

Topics include:

History of Waukegan (Pre-Native American to Present -Developed for the Waukegan Sesquicentennial)

Abraham Lincoln Goes To Waukegan-
Developed for the Lincoln Bicentennial

Waukegan's Famous Civil War Drummer Boys

Louis deKoven Bowen-Her Life, the Hull House,
and Waukegan's Bowen Country Club

Jack Benny-From Waukegan to Hollywood

Waukegan and the Underground Railroad

"What-Cha-Ma-Call-It" History Trunk

All programs are multimedia presentations with hands-on artifacts. Programs generally last 1 hour. All programs are free. Call the museum at 847-336-1859 for more details.

In Memoriam

We are saddened by the sudden passing of Mary Goodley. Mary had just completed her new book on the history of the wire mill titled *A Considerable History: The Washburn & Moen Manufacturing Company, The Waukegan Highlands (The Company Subdivision) & the 1890 Village of North Chicago, Illinois*. Our last newsletter had an article from Mary giving the content of the book. Mary had set aside certain copies of the limited publication for families who had ties with the wire mill. If you are interested in obtaining a book, you may contact the Waukegan Historical Society Research Library.

Recent Donations

Helen Herman

1943 poster “Waukegan Declares War on Dirt”

Book-A Time to Remember-43 WTHS-50th Reunion

Book-60th Reunion WTHS 1943

1942 Annual

Eamon A. Rago

1 C&NW Railroad Systems Map

2 EJ&E Railroad Freight Tariff Booklets (03/29/1957 & 12/26/1990)

1 8X10 photograph of Waukegan Street Car

1 HO Scale Model of a C&NW Railroad Box Car

35 Color Photographs of Various Railroad Cars

Loretta Jolinek (in memory of Lawrence M. Jelinek Jr.)

1 Pair of Waukegan Shoe Strings

3 Glass Bottles

4 Bank of Waukegan Souvenir Banks

1 Aerial View of Waukegan

18 Besley Brewing Company Ads/Pictures

2 Waukegan Newspaper Clippings

1 Aerial View of Waukegan (oversize)

1 Little Fort Porcupine and Democratic Banner
Newspaper (09/29/1846)

1 Northwestern Paper (08/12/1857)

1 Genesee Theatre Advertising Sign

1 Waukegan Postcard

1 Mathon’s Restaurant Menu

1 Waukegan Monopoly Game

Darlene Montano

3 Photos of Edwin Montano and early Puerto Rican
Society meetings

Lake County Discovery Museum

Newspaper File on “Silver Crosses”

Ann Darrow

Index to Lake County Roots

1912 Blodgett Newspaper Clipping

Great Lakes Fur Trade Coloring Book

Lawrence E. Quinn, Sr.

Photo of Shiloh Baptist Church

Photo of Lawrence E. Quinn, Sr.

Photo of Morris Moore

Blueprints of Belvidere St. Fire Station

Letter

Dennis Moisio

Report for Presbyterian Church and Congregationalist
Church

Research by Doug Stiles

Thank you for your recent
donations to our Museum
and Library collections.

Betsy Alleman

Assorted Photos of Waukegan Historical Society
Activities

Ellen Frew

Assorted Newspaper Clippings and Pamphlets
Ann Rippel
1932 High School Commencement
1933 Waukegan Flying Club Program
1957 Article on the YMCA
1989 Newspaper Clipping

Marlene Graham

Advertising Items
Jack Benny Magazines
Ray Bradbury Articles
Illinois and Waukegan History
Schools Info

Ed Link

Waukegan Schools Info

Helen Herman

Poster "Waukegan Declares War on Dirt"
1943 WTHS Reunion Books
1942 Annual

Jeffrey Harris

Cane lakes Club Eleven Matchbook Cover

Harry Came

Glen Flora Springs Stereopticon

Mary Neely

Osling Book
Johnson Book
Blotter and Advertising Material
1935 High School Yearbook
1935 Senior Class Play Program

Margaret Ferruzzi

AAUW Scrapbooks

Chandra Sefton

Ladies Feather Pillbox Hat

Timothy Kirby

4 Gas Company Books and Chicago Flower Show Tickets

Nada Finn

2 Photos Inside Higley Store

Steve Jaronik

DVD with 1959 Centennial Parade
DVD with 1963 Glen Flora Country Club Golf Outing

Tom Delaney

Phil Austin Stationery

Thank You!

New Members

Carolyn Bergman
Ann Rippel
Gail E. Spencer

New Life Members

James Theivaght
Tim Hagan and Paul Shannon

Donations

P.J. Ashton
Robert Abbott
Jack Douglas
Doris Salmon
David Rasche
Therese Ives
Gail E. Spencer
James Theivagt
Lynn Heitman
John and Sally Katalinich

Area Events

Please call to confirm dates and times.

*The Waukegan
Historical Society's*
Tour of Homes
will be held
Sunday, July 12
1pm - 5pm

Historical Society of the Fort Hill Country, Mundelein (847-566-7743)

June 25, Speaker: Paddy Lynn, professional storyteller and actress, will present the early days of Lake County through the voice of Carolyn Wright, daughter of early settler Daniel Wright, 2pm at Fremont Library.

Lake Forest/Lake Bluff Historical Society (847-234-LAKE)

June 27, Tour of Lasker Estate, designed by David Adler. Call for details.

Fox Lake-Grant Township Historical Society, Ingleside (847-566-7743)

July 5, Pie and Ice Cream Social, Grant Hall Museum, 12-3pm.

Cuneo Museum & Gardens, Vernon Hills (847-362-3042)

July 8, Outdoor concert, The Renditions, gates open at 5:30pm, \$12 per car.

Highland Park Historical Society (847-432-7090)

July 12, Auto Historica IX, Automobile as Art on the lawn of the museum, 11-3pm, \$5 donation

Join Us!

NAME(S) _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY _____

STATE _____ ZIP _____

PHONE _____

EMAIL _____

MEMBERSHIP

Senior (age 60+)	\$7.00
Student	\$7.00
Individual	\$15.00
Family	\$25.00
Patron, Organization	\$50.00
Life, Individual	\$100.00
Life, Couple	\$150.00
My additional gift	\$_____

Make checks payable to
Waukegan Historical Society.

VOLUNTEER

Please contact me about volunteer opportunities.

Contact Us

Waukegan Historical Society

1917 N. Sheridan Road
Waukegan, IL 60087
847-336-1859
info@waukeganhistorical.org

John L. Raymond Research Library

1911 N. Sheridan Road
Librarian: Beverly Millard
847-360-4772
library@waukeganhistorical.org

Waukegan History Museum in Bowen Park

1917 N. Sheridan Road
Museum Supervisor: Ty Rohrer
847-336-1859
museum@waukeganhistorical.org

Hours

John L. Raymond Research Library

Wednesday, Thursday, Friday
10am - 2:30pm

Waukegan History Museum in Bowen Park

Tuesday, Thursday, Saturday
10am - 4pm
Additional times by appointment.

Visit our website for more information
about events, exhibits, and our
extensive library.

www.waukeganhistorical.org



Upcoming Events

***Waukegan Historical Society's
Tour of Homes
Sunday, July 12***

**Oakwood Cemetery Walk
Saturday, September 19**