

Cornerstone

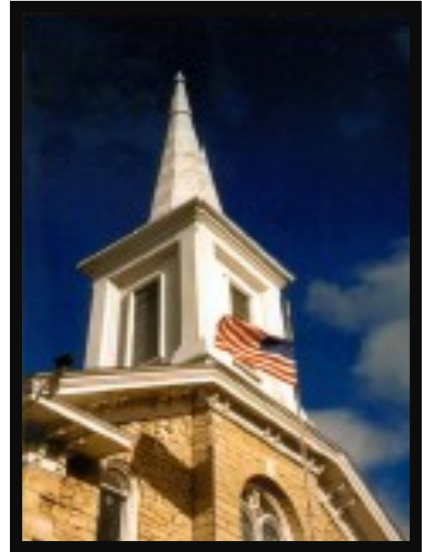
Lemont Area Historical Society

306 Lemont Street

Lemont, IL 60439

(630)257-2972

www.lemonthistorical.org



November 2017

Presidents Message...



Dear Members,

With 2017 coming to a close, we will be spending time at family gatherings and giving thanks for all of the blessings we have enjoyed this past year. At this time, I would like to thank all of you for the support you have generously given to the historical society and our Old Stone Church. We will continue to need your support in 2018 as the historical society is facing some very difficult challenges. Please plan to attend our general membership meeting Tuesday evening, November 28th at 7:00 p.m. We need your help in setting goals for the upcoming year, forming committees and electing candidates for expiring Board seats.

We will again be hosting our Holiday Open House and Cookie Sale on Sunday, December 3rd. Doors open at 1:30 p.m. and St. Pat's and St. Al's choirs will begin singing at 2:00. The event is being dedicated to the memory of Rose Yates. For me, the event will not be quite the same without Rose. It is still hard to believe that she sang with St. Pat's choir last December 4th and Christmas Mass and left us before the month came to a close. Please make time to attend in Rose's honor...plus it is a beautiful way to begin the Christmas Season.

As 2017 comes to an end, The Board and I would like to wish you and your families a happy and blessed Christmas and New Year!

With gratitude,
Sue

"Gratitude makes sense of our past, brings peace for today and creates a vision for tomorrow."

Quote by Melody Beattie, Author

Upcoming Events

Nov 28th - 7:00 pm Annual Membership Meeting Slate Presented & Voting

December 3rd - Christmas Choral Program - doors open at 1:30pm and program starts at 2:00 pm with St. Patrick and St. Alphonsus Church Choirs.

January 19th - Flash Gordon episodes

February 9th - Drinkin' With Lincoln

February 23rd - Anguish movie



Amelia Earhart

by Pat Knight

She called herself “AE”, and Amelia Earhart is the world’s most famous woman pilot (Backus, 1982). Books, movies, magazines, monuments, and airports honor AE more than 100 years after her birth and over 75 years since she was declared legally dead in 1939. She was the “Winged Legend”, “Pilot in Pearls”, “Heroine of the Skies”, “First Lady of Flight”, “Lost Legend”, “Lady Lindy” and “Leading Lady of the Air Age”..

AE was famous for her adventures, which were often daring, sometimes reckless, and usually involved danger. In 1928, she became the first woman to fly across the Atlantic, and in 1932 she crossed the Atlantic alone. At a time when people were afraid to get into an airplane, AE pursued competitive flying in the Powder Puff Derby, and set numerous speed records. In 1935, she made a solo flight from Honolulu to Oakland, over 2,400 miles. In 1937, on her greatest adventure, a flight around the world, she disappeared. She was connected to Chicago’s Hyde Park where she attended high school.

One particular flight serves as an example of her adventures. In the early 20’s, a new type of aircraft called an autogiro arrived on the aviation scene. It was an odd flying machine, a hybrid between an airplane and a helicopter. AE became the first female autogiro pilot in the world. In 1931 she flew the 4th autogiro the Pitcairn Company built, and set an altitude record of over 18,415 feet. She followed that with a transcontinental tour from Newark to Oakland CA and back to Newark in the autogiro.

Today she is as familiar as she was in her own time. Despite recent excitement over a newly discovered photo suggesting she survived her flight around the world, no solid proof has been found. Her disappearance, which has remained in the public eye for 80 years, continues. Will it ever be solved?



Genealogy Corner



Giving-Thanks for Ancestors

by Barb Bannon

A few weeks ago I was reading an article about why people started researching the history of their family, and I noticed how their answers were so completely different. Everyone that was interviewed did have something in common, they were motivated by that one moment when they realized they needed to know more.

Usually a question comes up that goes unanswered; a child asks if grandma had an after school part-time job or a friend asks if you are related to that person that's been in the news lately. You may even ask yourself if you could possibly find a picture to go with that family story you have heard retold a thousand times.

The moment that starts the quest is not necessarily an all important, blockbuster, earth-shaking question; it could be as simple as 'Where did grandpa live when he was a boy?'

Learning our family history is important; if we understand our heritage we can then understand ourselves. It keeps memories alive and gives each generation an idea of who they are and where they came from.

The Thanksgiving holiday is well known for being about food and football but maybe we can squeeze in a bit of time for sharing family stories. This holiday presents itself as the most appropriate day to delve into our family history and possibly get a question or two answered.

Get the kids involved by starting with the youngest asking the oldest member of the family a question, this is usually a guarantee that the rest will follow on their own. Children are usually full of questions but in case they are at a loss here are a few suggestions.

When and where were you born?

What were your parents' names?

What is your happiest memory of your father? Your mother?

Did you ever get into trouble? And for what?

What are the names of your grandparents?

What is your happiest memory of your grandfather? Grandmother?

Where did you grow up?

What did you do for fun as a child?

How did you like school?

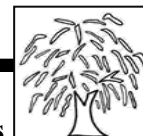
What did you want to be when you grew up?

Tell me about your first date.

How did you two meet?

Can you tell me about the day my dad/mom was born?

Genealogy doesn't start with the past, we are creating our family history every day we live our busy life. Don't forget to record the present and keep updating the questions to include current subjects and stories. Make this a Thanksgiving tradition to keep your family history up to date.



Connecting Branches

The Genealogy Committee has been made aware of the following family names being researched:

Mark Bissen – researching
Theodore, Peter & John Bissen

Researchers: Diane Wiles -
researching Fischbach &
Shafranski families

If you are doing research and would like to contact these or other genealogists, please let us know by leaving a message at the Museum 630-257-2972 or by e-mail to lemonthistorical@gmail.com

Early Days, Potawatomi, and Archer Avenue

by Pat Camalliere

Did you ever wonder what it was like here before Lemont was settled, before Illinois was a state?

Start by imagining you are walking one of the trails in our beautiful forest preserves, but look at what surrounds the trail and imagine the trail is not there. How would you go from place to place through this wilderness? Where would you be going, and for what reason?

The most convenient way to travel before developed roads was on waterways, rivers and streams that ran through the area. Most American Indian villages were located near water because food was abundant there and travel easier. However, some times of the year water routes were not passable and it was not easy to transport bulky possessions by canoe, so land routes were also needed.

Many people think that Native Americans followed trails that were originally animal trails, specifically deer trails. This is not the case. Deer graze and wander, and their trails are meandering and come to dead ends, as any hunter will tell you. Deer did not develop trails over distances, nor did they have a specific place to go; they only followed the food. So we must assume that trails were developed by Indians who wanted to go from one specific place to another. It may have been to connect seasonal camps, to visit neighboring villages, or even to wage war against an enemy.

One such trail followed what is now Archer Avenue. Let's see why.

Developed trails would have connected places people wanted to go, and would have followed as close to the familiar waterways as possible, providing a route that was free of such obstacles as swamps that often lined the rivers. Therefore, where cliffs and valleys occurred, such as in the Lemont area, the easiest routes would be on the valley's ridges.

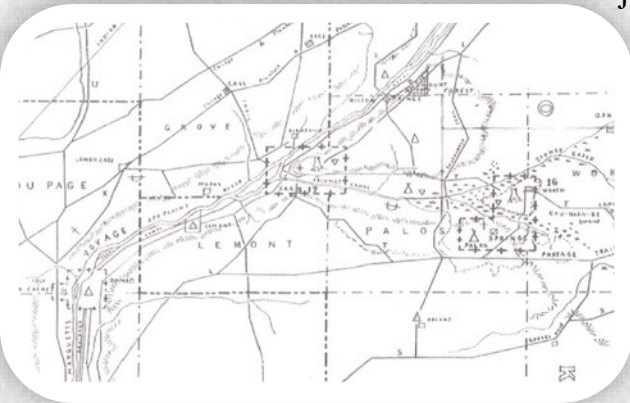
People coming to northern Illinois from the south would follow the Mississippi River to the Illinois River into the Des Plaines River. From the east they would come through the Great Lakes to where there was a harbor and later Fort Dearborn was built. They also came from Indiana via the Saint Joseph River and Fort Wayne to Lake Michigan, or from downstate following the Wabash River northward. Fort Wayne was the "command post" for the Northwest Territories.

Following the Des Plaines River from the Illinois River, passing Joliet and continuing through the Des Plaines River Valley, just past what is now Lemont, the valley branches to continue northeast to Mud Lake and the Chicago River to present-day downtown Chicago. The other branch went directly east to Lake Michigan via the Calumet River.

At the place where the valleys merge is a forested area on high ground called Mount Forest Island. Today this is the intersection of Rt. 83, Archer Avenue, and 107th Streets. St. James at Sag Bridge and the Cook County Forest Preserves occupy this area, but in the earliest days Indian Villages lined these routes and trails developed between them. The ancient Indian trail that became Archer Avenue connected here to other trails, such as the Vincennes, Sag, and Sauk Trails, going to the south end of Lake Michigan and to the rivers in Indiana.

Across the Des Plaines Valley from this vantage point was an area called Signal Hill. From that place, high on the north bluff of the river, signals could be sent and seen down three branches of the valleys for many miles to the west, east, and northwest. Signal Hill is now part of Waterfall Glen Forest Preserve.

Ultimately, explorers, soldiers, surveyors, opportunists, merchants, tradesmen, squatters, and finally settlers followed the same routes. When construction started on the I&M Canal, a road was needed, and the old Indian trail between Joliet and the Chicago Portage (near 47th and Harlem Avenue) was followed to create Archer Avenue.



Scharf Map, drawn around 1900, representing pre-settlement time overlaid with roads from 1900. Box in center is area discussed below. The triangular icon in its center represents the location of a Potawatomi village. The Des Plaines River runs diagonally toward the upper right and Chicago, the other valley directly east to Lake Michigan. The diagonal road in the same direction as the river is Archer Avenue.

Stepping Back in Time



By Susan Donahue

We have over the years lost some very good, dedicated people who kept the flame of history alive. We are fortunate to still have some from the early years and are grateful for the interest and passion of those who now are involved in our organization.

I was just thinking of some of our late LAHS members. Now I have heard how Caroline Swanson would open the museum on a moments notice for anyone who called her. Her husband Harry, who loved books, contributed many to our beginning fledgling library. Their images in paintings hang in our library as does Helen Bittles, our no nonsense librarian. The late Bernice Johnson helped her along with Norma Johnson and Char Counter.

When I started I was fortunate enough to learn from late Sonia Kallick, who had the passion for motivating others to appreciate what some feel is a rather boring subject local history. I have met some of her former students and they pass along their experiences of going to history class at Lemont High. She dealt in subjects like “Smokey Row” and the first time they heard about it they were blown away that it was even mentioned in a class. Her book and her spirit still are very much apart of many of us.

Another figure on the scene was the late Mr. Tom Ludwig, who was one of the founding members of our organization. He enjoyed story telling and our Christmas program as “MC” with his Santa Claus hat and bell ringing and colorful seasonal sweaters.

We had also been blessed with the late P.J. Fitzgerald. A kind, but when stirred, a champion fighter of town causes. The museum was packed with citizens and news people as we struggled to fight the threatening billboards on our high rise bridge against the giant Sante Fe and we won that battle.

The Wedding Committee was formed as a volunteer group and was Chaired by the late Joanne Pick. I happened to volunteer for that committee when it was first initiated and came to better know Joanne as we forged ahead with getting it off the ground. It has proven to be one of our more lucrative ideas.

I think in waxing nostalgia – and what better place then in a newsletter from our historical group – I come to remembering someone who’s year anniversary of her death is fast approaching and that is “Rose Yates”. Hard still to believe that the person who’s answer to most requests was a “Yes” is not among us. She was as most of you know our, “Choral Program Director” at our annual Christmas Choral & Cookie Fest. At first we were not sure about even having it, but then that might have been sadder and so we decided “Yes” for this year. Unfortunately Chipains is no longer in business for the containers but our capable “Cookie Chair” Barb Bannon I am sure has this covered. All we need is bakers – hint –hint.

Note: The Choir Director of St. Alphonsus, Joseph Martorano, has told me that like every year since he has been Director one of the songs they will definitely include in their performance is, “Christmas Rose” in honor of the late Rose Yates. Last year he had her stand up and be recognized before it was played. I told him it will be a fitting tribute to a friend.

“Her memory lingers in all of us - missed, but never forgotten”.



SOCIETY NEWS

By Susan Donahue

CONGRATULATE POP WARNER FOOTBALL 50 YEARS!!!

We were fortunate enough to be asked to join in their anniversary celebration on this memorable beginning with the founders, families, and friends at the Crystal Ballroom. **The founding members are: Ron Nagel, Peter (Pete) Polk, John Kickels, Bernie Kazich, Don Wiegand, and Don Heeg.**

We received a beautiful plaque which will be proudly displayed in our museum. This organization has opened opportunities for young boys to not only learn how to play football but to forge friendships, teamwork, community spirit and also life skills.

EAGLE SCOUT PROJECT

It has been about a year since a Boy Scout, Matthew Smyth, came into the museum wondering about a project he could do for his Eagle Scout project that would also benefit the LAHS.

The first idea was historic signage on our buildings downtown, but that was not meant to be. He then came up with doing some TLC to our garden. The wall that once graced the front has been slowly deteriorating and it seemed like a good fix.

He decided on a plan that was approved by our Board and the Lemont Garden Club, who has this year adopted our garden. The plan involved restoring the stone wall, fixing the railing that leads to the alley that has been bend and tipping over and the drain that exits the building to the alleyway. The Village issued the necessary permits and the utilities marked off where each connection was to avoid a mishap.

Matthew also had help from Donna Holous, who is now involved with the Lemont Garden Club, on contacts who kindly donated mulch from Homer Glen Tree Service and stone from Bromberek Stone Company. Needless to say such donations and cooperation was greatly appreciated not only by Matthew, but by our organization.

Bright and early on one Saturday morning a group of Scouts with their leadership descended on our museum grounds. The weather gave them snow, sun, rain, and wind to challenge them. They were up for it. The Scout leader used a professional digger to loosen the soil and get more of a hold on the landscape and stones. The Scouts were very dedicated to their mission and it was good to see how committed they were to the task at hand. Teamwork in action!

I am writing this as the work is in progress and am looking forward to seeing the finished project as is Matthew and his family. Matthew has very dedicated parents and a younger brother and it was nice to see how the whole family pitched in to help him achieve his goal.

We are always grateful to the community for helping us when needed. Our survival depends on such selfless acts of kindness. "Thank You, Matthew!"



Matthew is the one wearing white gloves. Photos courtesy of John Quinn. Thanks John!

Holiday Cookie Bakers Needed!

Our annual cookie sale is coming up quickly. Please help spread holiday cheer by baking a batch or two of your favorite cookies and drop off at the museum on Friday December 1, 10 am-2 pm or Saturday December 2, 9-11 am. No special packaging required, our elves will take care of that. Get into the Holiday Spirit by joining us as we welcome St. Patrick and St. Alphonsus Choirs performing Christmas favorites on Sunday, December 3, doors open 1:30 pm. Stay for an hour or spend the afternoon. Bring the family by for photos with Santa at 3:30.



LEMONT AREA HISTORICAL SOCIETY ELECTION NOTICE:

NOV 28, 2017 - 7PM

ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING - VOTING

ELECTION 2018 OFFICERS:

PRESIDENT ONE YEAR TERM:

SUSAN ROY

FIRST VICE - PRESIDENT TWO YEAR TERM:

RICHARD LEE

SECOND VICE -PRESIDENT TWO YEAR TERM:

SUSAN DONAHUE

SECRETARY TWO YEAR TERM:

TRACI SARPALIUS

TREASURER TWO YEAR TERM:

WILLIAM UZNANSKI

BOARD SEATS TWO YEAR TERMS-

VOTE FOR TWO CANDIDATES:

CAROL GARIBAY

RICHARD HOMERDING

BOARD SEATS: ONE YEAR TERM -

VOTE FOR TWO CANDIDATES:

DORIS PETERMAN

PAMELA ZUKOSKI

Welcome to our new members!!

Mary Jo & George Benek

Charmaine Drafke

Carol Gianoli

Ann Ingram

Joseph Olszewski

Clay Shoaf

Carla Vasile-Riccio

Diane Wiles



Membership Renewal Application

Make checks payable to the Lemont Area Historical Society

306 Lemont Street, Lemont, IL 60439

_____ Individual \$20.00/year

_____ Individual Life \$200.00

_____ Senior Citizen \$15.00/year

_____ Student \$10.00/year

_____ Family \$30.00/year

Name _____

Address _____

Phone _____

Email _____

Thanks to all who have renewed their memberships

Museum Hours

Tuesday and Friday

10:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.

Saturday

10:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.

Sunday

1:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m.

Library Hours

Wednesday 10:00 a.m. - Noon

By Appointment

*Just in time for Christmas! Brighten up your Holiday
with Christmas scenes of Lemont by Joyce Affelt*

Framed 8x10—\$25 Ready to frame on foam core 11x15—\$30 Framed 17x22—\$50

Limited quantities

