



November – December 2018

# Cornerstone

Lemont Area Historical Society  
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(630) 257-2972

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## Masquerade Ball 2018



Our inaugural Masquerade Ball "Magic & Mystery" was a success! We were able to raise about \$4000 to help in our preservation efforts of Old Stone Church. Everyone looked wonderful and seemed to really enjoy themselves. We could not have done it without the support of our members, attendees, our multiple auction basket donors, and the support of our following sponsors Tom's Place, Motion Inspired Photography, Lemont Township, Lemont Road/Bridge, Lemont Nursing & Rehab, Edward Jones Financial, Markiewicz Funeral Home, Kallemeyn Collision Center, Lemont Family Dental, and Forzley Eye Clinic. THANK YOU!



## Old Stone Church Gets a Fresh Face



## Upcoming Events

- 11/9 Salute Lemont's WWI Veterans  
Showing of the movie "Wings"  
Doors open 6:30 movie starts 7:00
- 11/13 Submarine History & Secrets  
Lemont VFW-New Ave & Lockport St  
7pm – 9pm Admission \$10
- 11/27 General Membership Meeting 7pm  
LAHS Election  
Showing of Rudy Kling DVD
- 12/2 Christmas Concert & Cookie Sale  
1:30pm - 4pm

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## Presidents Message...

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Dear Members,

**WE DID IT!!!** We surpassed our goal and met Pat Dalman Knight's challenge to raise \$20,000 for LAHS! We would like to thank everyone who contributed to meet this goal. We would like to give Jeanette Virgilio and Brock Reinhardt a very special thanks for their generous donation which put us over the top! And, of course, a special thank you to Pat Dalman Knight for coming up with this idea as well as her very generous donation match. I never had a doubt that we would meet this challenge - just surprised that we did it so quickly.

*"Individually we are one drop but together we are an ocean."*

*Poet, Ryunosuke Satora*

The Masquerade Ball was a great success! Congratulations and many thanks to the committee, Traci Sarpalius, Charmaine Drafke and Carla Vasile-Riccio and their families for all of their planning and hard work. It certainly was worth it! Everyone had a great time and it brought more exposure to our society besides raising over \$4,000. We would also like to thank the many volunteers who contributed to its success.

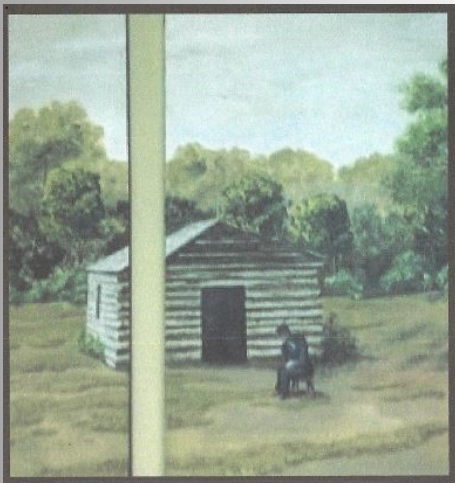
We had a wonderful time on the Quarry Queen at our "Toasts to the Ghosts" even though the weather was not that great. We had a surprise visitor join us along the way - the ghost of Abraham Lincoln just happened to be walking along the canal, so we gave him a lift.

Last week, we put a spell on a whole bunch of people who enjoyed our "Hocus Pocus" event at the Old Stone Church. We would like to thank one of our newer members, William Unhock, for coming up with this idea as well as planning and promoting the event. It was a fantastic evening!

We would like to wish St. James at Sag Bridge a Happy 185<sup>th</sup> Anniversary, which they celebrated on October 28<sup>th</sup>. St. James is the second oldest Catholic Church in Northern Illinois and dates back to 1856. It was originally a mission and was the site of a French signal post in the late 1600's. Parishioners celebrated the event with a river boat ride on the Spirit of Peoria and a lovely banquet at Cog Hill among other events.

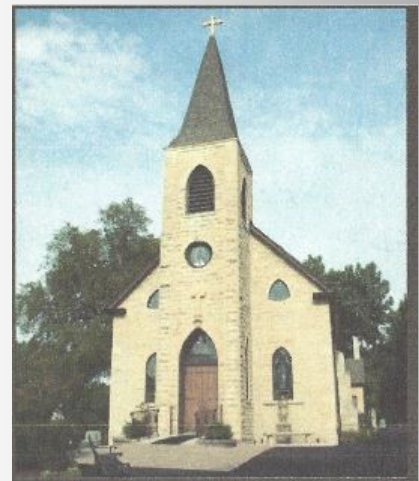
With the holidays approaching, and this being the last newsletter of 2018, I would like to take some time to thank our members and volunteers for all that they give (both of their time and money) to keep our organization viable. I would also like to thank the Village, the Township and the Park District for their continued support. We would like to thank Pat Dalman Knight and all those who rose to meet her challenge. Whether their donation was \$5 or \$5,000, it all made a difference. I would like to thank the Rotary for their grant which will allow us to digitize our archives and hopefully build new partnerships in our community. We have a lot to be grateful for this year. The Old Stone Church is looking beautiful with the new roof and repaired and painted soffits and fascia. It will be the first winter in a long time we will not have to worry about a racoon sitting at Susan's desk when she comes in to work. As 2018 is nearing its end, the Board and I would like to wish you and your families a Happy Thanksgiving and a Blessed Christmas and New Year!

Sincerely,  
Sue



To the left is an image of Father Tom Koy's rendition of the original log cabin church that was built shortly after the first Mass was celebrated by Fr. Irenaeus St. Cyr in a barn or a bar, in October of 1833.

To the right is an image of St. James at Sag Bridge Church as it stands 185 years later.

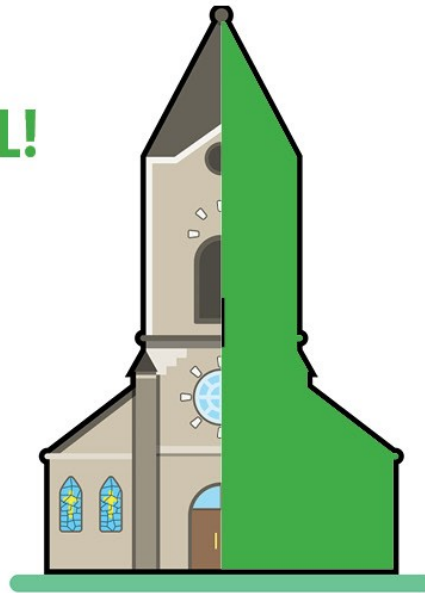


# PATRICIA KNIGHT MATCHING DONATION FUND

**WE HAVE REACHED OUR GOAL!**  
**\$10,000+**



**= \$20,000 FOR LAHS**



**\$10,000.00**

\$ 9,000.00

\$ 8,000.00

\$ 7,000.00

\$ 6,000.00

\$ 5,000.00

\$ 4,000.00

\$ 3,000.00

\$ 2,000.00

\$ 1,000.00

**Pat has offered to match donations up to \$10,000.** We currently have received **\$10,000+**. We've reached our goal! A special thank you to Pat Knight and all those who contributed!

Gloria Abboud  
 Joyce Affelt  
 Gail & Jack Ahrens  
 Sal Alfano  
 Gail August  
 Joe & Barb Bannon  
 Lisa & Thomas Bitsky, Sr.  
 Terry Blanz  
 Ealee Bromberek  
 Jeff Bromberek  
 Pat Browne  
 Gail Gerrie Cassidy  
 Citgo Refinery

Susan Donahue  
 Carol Garibay  
 J.G. Garvey  
 James & Mary Jo Grandall  
 Bill & Barb Gwodz  
 Joy Homerding  
 Terrie Jungles  
 William Kerns  
 Mary King  
 Richard Lee  
 Rita Ludwig  
 Becky Malak  
 Marge Malkosky

M. Kay Manning  
 Dieter & Marjorie Michaelsen  
 David Molitor  
 Rick Nelson  
 Ken Novak  
 Rich & Linda O'Connor  
 Donna Paris Petrowiak  
 Don Quaid  
 Donal K. Quaid  
 John Quinn  
 Karen Rodde  
 Gary & Susan Roy  
 Jeff & Amy Rutter

Bruce Taylor  
 Pam Schmitz  
 Annette Simon  
 George & Linda Stoops  
 Jeanette Virgilio &  
 Brock Reinhardt  
 Sandy Wall  
 Gary & Mary White  
 E.D. Wiles

### **In Loving Remembrance Matching Donations Given By:**

Sandy Wall in Memory of her Husband, Don Wall  
 Kenneth Novak in Memory of his Aunt & Uncle, Louis & Joanne Novak  
 Barbara Buschman in Memory of Family Friend, Richard Forzley

### **Celebratory Matching Donations Given By:**

Susan Donahue to commemorate the 50th Wedding Anniversary of Jim & Gail August

# *Living Side by Side*

## **Native Americans and Newcomers to Northern Illinois**

**By Pat Camalliere**

### *Introduction*

**Settlement of Illinois began in the southern part of the Illinois Territory, near the Ohio and Mississippi Rivers. Northern Illinois and Lemont were not settled until the 1830s.**

**Like much of the north Illinois Territory prior to permanent settlement, the area was occupied in the 1700s and 1800s primarily by Potawatomi Indians. This did not mean the area was unfamiliar to white newcomers prior to 1830. Explorers and fur traders had traveled the rivers and lands since the mid-1600s. Early frontiersmen, speculators, and squatters came, anxious to be the first to see and stake their claim on the new land as statehood approached.**

**Plans were being made as early as the late 1700s. Between that time and 1835, when the final treaty between the U. S. and Indian nations was negotiated, Potawatomi and newcomers lived side by side, for the most part peacefully. One of those places was the area that would later become Lemont, where a Potawatomi village stood on the north side of the Des Plaines River and a fur station on the south side in 1816.**

**This is an excerpt from *The Mystery at Black Partridge Woods* that tells what those years were like from the viewpoint of Lemont's original inhabitants, and follows with biographies of some notable Native Americans who lived in what is now Northern Illinois.**

## ***Wawetseka's Tale: A Story of Early Illinois***

*An excerpt from The Mystery at Black Partridge Woods by Pat Camalliere*

...Most of our people lost their homes to treaties and left Northern Illinois for reservations in the West, especially after the Treaty of Chicago in 1833. Not everyone left. Some remained in the Midwest, and they still live in small communities in places such as Dowagiac, Michigan. Among those who stayed were people who were educated by missionaries, Catholics, and people who had established friendly or favorable relationships with white people...

...men from Canada and eastern parts of the newly formed United States [arrived along the Des Plaines River]. As the Illinois Territory awaited imminent statehood, each man, whatever his origin, was convinced the land was rightfully his. Their reasons were as varied as were their origins.

The Indian's belief in his right to Illinois land was rooted in semi-migratory culture and seasonal moves. We farmed in the summer and hunted in the winter. We established lodging patterns traditional to our tribes and sacred areas to bury our dead. We did not live in a single place but habitually returned to the same places.

Indian farms in the Illinois Territory were extensive and well laid out, capable of producing crops for sale or trade. When we left our summer villages unoccupied to travel to winter hunting grounds, we expected to return to our fields, much as "snowbirds" do today when they move from northern states to warm climates in the winter. We defended these home grounds from tribes that attempted to steal them and eventually from white men who thought our land was unoccupied.

First to arrive, in the mid-1600s, explorers and priests came and established missions. Fur traders set up trade posts at approximately the same time. Missionaries taught religion to the native population, but they also taught white culture, including language and reading. Women and children attended mission schools, but our men were more interested in trade. They brought furs to the posts and bargained for items available only from white people. Native people initially welcomed them, anticipating trade for things we desired but did not have, items such as cloth, kettles, metal tools, and weapons.

...white newcomers desired not only our furs but our land, spreading across the territory from crowded colonies in the East. We faced a dilemma. The fur supply was becoming depleted, leaving us with little to trade. The reduction in game forced us toward starvation and dependence on land to grow crops. We could fight for the land the white men wanted and become farmers, or we could trade land for annuities on which to survive.

*Continued on page 5*

Illinois tribes knew when white men would arrive. News traveled west, spread by Eastern tribes and by honeybees that announced their coming, penetrating the forests fifty miles ahead of the frontier. Surveyors had already arrived and other men would follow to occupy the northern part of the new state. [We] knew that Illinois was about to be granted statehood and what that meant.

Many of these men viewed us as intellectually inferior and called us “savages.” We had no written language, but we were shrewd negotiators. We generally got the better part of trades. Why, then, did we lose our land?

“Americans” of the newly formed United States did not understand the migratory nature of the Indian and thought unoccupied land was just that, available.

Nor did Americans understand our communities and personal customs; they thought one Indian tribe represented all Indians and negotiated land purchase with any tribe willing to deal. A tribe may have known the land in question was occupied by others, but thought they were being presented with gifts. As a result, Americans thought they had bought our land, another tribe thought they were recipients of good fortune, and we who had resided on the land for generations returned to find our traditional homeland forbidden to us.

By 1817, the area of Northern Illinois that presently includes the cities of Chicago, Peoria, and Rock Island was sparsely populated but widely traveled by a startling variety of people. This is contrary to the prevalent idea that prior to the Indian removal period, which began after the Treaty of Chicago in 1833, only Indians lived in Northern Illinois. The following are some people [we] encountered, and why they claimed a right to these lands.

French priests followed a mission to educate and convert natives to what they believed was a better way of life. They thought of everyone as God's people, and they lived in God's land.

French traders and voyageurs had lived in the country since the sixteenth century and saw no reason to cease fur trade operations. Brides were sent over from France, and families gathered into hamlets. Some men lived with the Indians and intermarried. Both parties benefited from this “kinship” arrangement.

English trading companies established trade routes and had won the right to do so in the French and Indian War. The Northwest Territories were part of the United States by 1817, but the English didn't all agree to abandon their successful private trade interests and relationships with Indians.

American traders disagreed with English and French traders and attempted to license those who could trade legally. The territory belonged to America. And they believed only Americans had rights there, and others should leave. They had fought and won a war to make it so.

Frontiersmen had already developed paths and small settlements as they pushed westward. These men had unique appetites: they craved adventure and were wanderers and explorers. They wanted to be the first to experience a new land and perhaps stay.

Soon to follow frontiersmen were the earliest settlers, mainly from Eastern states and emigrants from Europe. Why did these people leave the comfortable Eastern Seaboard for the hardships they would encounter in Illinois? In the early 1800s Eastern cities were already centers of industry, commerce, and finance, with factories, universities, and cultural activities—desirable places to live. But opportunity favored the wealthy. In cities, no jobs were to be had for common people who lived in crowded conditions. In rural areas the rich lived in mansions, while small farmers made small profits. Property went to the oldest son, leaving nothing for other family members. The young country was outgrowing itself. But land—and opportunity—awaited those willing to work for it in the West. Invaders fanned out like rivers and disappeared into the wilderness of the West.

Men who fought in the War of 1812 discovered the open lands of Illinois and found them attractive. After the war, they returned with their families for a chance at a better life than they had in the East.

Still others sought to lose themselves in the sparsely populated land. Some had miserable lives, were misfits, or unlucky at love. Some were lazy and deluded into thinking life would be easier. The poor and the well-to-do alike came, bringing all their possessions with them. Land would soon be available for purchase. Surveyors were already mapping out a new canal. The area was about to become prosperous. They wanted to be the first to stake claim to the best piece of the pie. Craftsmen and tradesmen followed the settlers, knowing their goods would be needed and their fortunes would soon be made.

Criminals, speculators, con artists, and opportunists, knowing the newcomers were carrying all they owned and were vulnerable, looked for easy pickings in a land with little if any law enforcement. Military and rangers were sent to build blockhouses and forts to protect and attempt to keep peace between the varied groups. Volunteer militias were raised among the frontiersmen, and agents were appointed to represent and trade with Indians. Judges rode circuits and sheriffs covered vast areas, alone but for men in positions of authority at trade posts or settlers they could recruit. Vigilantes enforced their own interpretation of justice.

And we Indians—invaded, bewildered—struggled to survive.

In this time, and in this place, [I] lived. This is [my] story.

Wawetseka, Potawatomi

# SOCIETY NEWS

By Susan Donahue



## NEW VOLUNTEER

We introduced you to a new volunteer in the last newsletter, Mark Weinberg, and interestingly enough he encouraged one of his friends also a musician to join too.

Please Welcome Landon Florencic to our LAHS Family.



## WEDDINGS:

You know many times with weddings we have had a few sentimental ones and some that you wonder about.

Recently one gentleman came into the museum and wanted to view the chapel in particular. This happens from time to time as some people look at our building, see it is a church, and want to say a prayer here. I find nothing wrong with that.

In this case it was someone who stood in the chapel and then decided to leave and as he did so I asked him, "Had he been here before?" He replied, "Yes, I was married here." "Oh, how nice", I said.

He gave me this rather angry look and said, "It was a marriage that came as close to hell as I have ever been and she was the devil. It was the worst mistake I have ever made in my life." Had no quick reply to that except, "I am really sorry about that." He then said, "Don't know why I even came in, just had a few minutes to kill before an appointment in Lemont, like visiting the scene of an accident you were in just to see if it really happened."

On to a more pleasant experience as a couple came in to visit the chapel on a Sunday as they were celebrating their first wedding anniversary. It was the day in September when the weather was so very hot and the groom decided to wear leather pants. I posted their picture in one of our past newsletters. They just sat there in the front pew and held hands.

On to another wedding and the best man, best friend to the bride – "Chance" who wore black and white to blend with the bride and groom as you can see!



## Connecting Branches

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

**Maureen Berquist**-researching **Rouse family, Hugh Gaffney & Lillian (May)Ryan**  
**Susan Murray**-researching **Elizabeth Fischer 1949 Auto Accident**  
**Colleen Fitzpatrick**-researching **Szafranski/Shafanski family**

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](mailto:lemonthistorical@gmail.com)



# Genealogy Corner



## Dream Job

by Barb Bannon

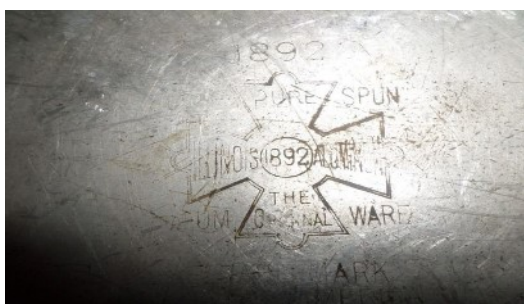
For many Americans in the 1930s, working was more of a dream than a reality. Between 1929 and 1933 the unemployment rate ballooned from 3 percent to almost 25 percent.

When the Depression hit, men often saw themselves as failures. Women, on the other hand, saw their roles increase and worked diligently to make ends meet. They sought employment away from home as nurses, school teachers, secretaries, and in manufacturing. Society viewed the role of men as the breadwinners and women as homemakers; annual pay was about \$525 for women and \$1,027 for men.

We have at the museum, a March 1933 list of 120 Lemonters employed at American Aluminum Co, some with residence address. The majority worked for pay in the range of \$9 to \$15 per week; equal to \$175 to \$291 per week in today's dollars. On this list the 18 lowest paid employees, identified with first names, were all women. The information on the list gives the impression that men without families may also have been short changed, since some were identified as "single".

I have used the 1930 Federal Census for Lemont Township in my research, and found that many residents were employed in aluminum manufacturing. Aluminum, a new material, became popular in cookware as early as the 1890s. There were two aluminum companies, located here, Illinois Pure Aluminum Co, and Aluminum Products Co.

The Illinois Pure Aluminum Company, among one of the first manufacturers making Pure Spun Aluminum Cooking Utensils coined the slogan, "What Sterling means to Silver, this Trade Mark means to Aluminum Cooking Utensils".



This Lemont company was established in 1892 at 109 Holmes St and quickly developed a regional market for its line of products, including aluminum combs, hairpins, thimbles, cookware, and road signs. One of the original founders was Edwin P. Walker, a long-time Lemont resident. Shortly after its beginning, Edwin's son George S Walker became the company president. Its line of cooking utensils was marketed as "Walker Ware".

The family-owned business employed about 100 workers in Lemont and greatly expanded the plant in 1922 with a fireproof reinforced concrete addition constructed to the south and west of the original building. Illinois Pure Aluminum continued in business through the 1970s. By 1985 the property was in receivership and the factory was demolished in 1987.

About twenty years after the Illinois Pure Aluminum Company opened in 1892 the Aluminum Products Company established a factory and warehouse at the west edge of Lemont on New Avenue.

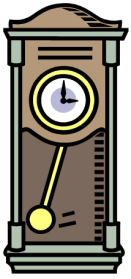


The original plant consisted of a series of one-and-one-half and two-story brick buildings; approximately 250' long with steel framing and a steel roof. An addition attached to the main plant, is a three-story concrete block building.

Called Plant No. 2, American Aluminum Co began operations around 1912. The company produced aluminum cooking utensils and specialty wares.

By the 1940s, Reynolds Metals Company, later known as Reynolds Aluminum, had acquired the Aluminum Products Company, and was operating Plant No. 2, producing stainless steel cooking utensils. The factory was then slightly expanded with a brick warehouse addition adjoining the original plant to the west.

There were more people than jobs during the depression, and people didn't ask what it paid before they said yes to a job offer! These two companies, along with Globe Oil & Refining Co. (now Citgo) were providing sorely needed jobs to the community. I'm sure our ancestors didn't think so at the time but Lemont was lucky to have even this limited amount of employment available.



## STEPPING BACK IN TIME

by Susan Donahue

A personal column on one of our iconic treasures, “St. Patrick Church”. A place near and dear to my heart with family ties that go back generations.

This year in finding out about our bells and a chance again to ring them as some other churches are now doing it was discovered that there were some major issues that needed to be addressed.

The old wood from the 1890’s in the tower was deteriorating and pushing out the stones that surrounded it. It could be a tragedy if suddenly it would give way and injure someone on the ground. It was decided that in order to repair this the steeple would have to be removed. I watched as others did as the steeple was separated from the rest of the church and slowly and carefully set down on the ground near the rectory. It never occurred to us at that time that it would be the last time it would grace the church. Many of us took pictures of this historic undertaking.

A fence was put up on direction of the Archdiocese. Time went by and it became summer and then from our bulletin came a survey at the cost to restore the steeple to it’s rightful place that it held for 178 years. Too expensive for our small congregation was the consensus of the majority. There was still hope from some of us that it could be saved with a “Go Fund Me Page” and then the fence was removed.

Next day, Tuesday, October 16, at 9:30am. I went past the parish buildings and saw workers dismantling the steeple. I immediately went into the museum parking lot and ran down the alley - standing there watching the steeple being torn apart and tossed into the dump truck like trash was one of the hardest things I have ever had to witness.

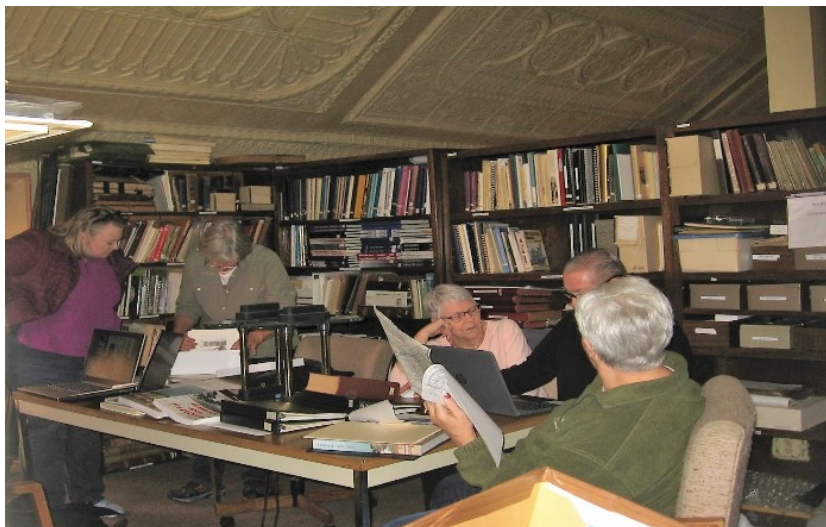
This was part of my history being torn apart and in a way like my insides being ripped apart. I stood there and said a prayer for those who had worked so hard to build a church like those in Ireland they left behind so many years ago graced by a steeple.

I emailed those who I felt would be interested. Nothing could be done at this date and time to stop it I was told. Part of me will always feel that some of this was my fault and I know others do too. We waited too long to come up with a resolution. Was it even an issue and could it have even been put back as it was once? We will never completely know.

I always speak about the fact that the visitors coming from the north first impression is the steeples dotting the landscape and that Tuesday as I was uttering those words – I had to stop because after all this time it no longer was true for the gateway into Lemont.

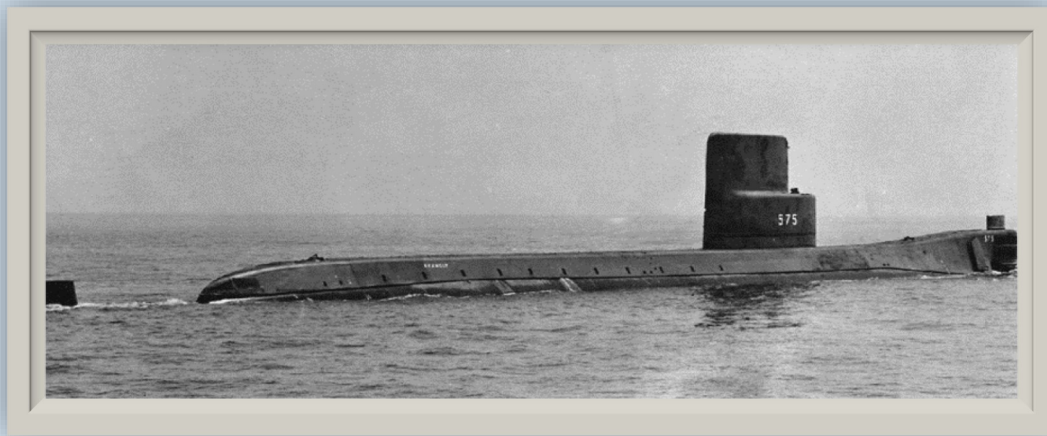
My personal opinion is that if it was no longer viable then tell us and give us the opportunity to say a proper good – bye. Have a ceremony where parishioners could be offered a piece of the steeple if they wanted and then have a controlled burn and let the ashes be spread in our cemetery. We owned it to those who came before and sacrificed so much to keep vigilant and care for it.

### LAHS “History Detectives” in our Library on Oct 20<sup>th</sup>



Join us in the Spring for another Free Research Day





Original USS Seawolf 575

**"Submarine History & Secrets"**

Lemont VFW Hall, New Ave & Lockport St  
Nov 13th 7pm-9pm Admission \$10

Much research has been done since our program "It All Started Here", covering the Navy's development of the nuclear-powered submarine. Hear about the new found developments and secret technology that now makes them our first line of defense. Refreshments will be served, featuring "Sub" sandwiches.

**A great time  
was had by  
all at the  
Hocus Pocus  
event this  
year!**



**Now let's enjoy  
Thanksgiving  
and Christmas!**

