

CORNERSTONE

Lemont Historical Society's Newsletter



NOVEMBER EVENTS

11/12 - 6:30 pm – 9:00 pm

Open mic at the Old Stone Church

11/26 - 7:00 pm

General Meeting – Board Elections

If you would like to help us decorate for Christmas,
Please come early (before the meeting)

DECEMBER EVENTS

12/01 - 1:30 pm – 4:00 pm

Holiday Open House and Cookie Sale

featuring the St. Patrick Catholic Church Choir, St. Alphonsus Catholic Church Choir and the Montessori Children's Choir + a special guest Santa Claus at 3:30pm

12/06 - 6:30 pm (doors open)

movie starts at 7:00 pm

Movie Night - *Save the Last Dance*



**Thank you
Athens Marble Club
for your support!**

VILLAGE OF LEMONT
LEMONT TOWNSHIP
LEMONT PARK DISTRICT

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Dear Members,

November 2019

For more than two centuries, beginning at Plymouth Rock, days of thanksgiving were celebrated by individual colonies and states. It wasn't until 1863, in the midst of the Civil War, that President Abraham Lincoln proclaimed a national Thanksgiving Day to be held each November. Later on in 1939, President [Franklin D. Roosevelt](#) had a lot to think about. The world had been suffering from the [Great Depression](#) for a decade, and the [Second World War](#) had just erupted in Europe. On top of that, the U.S. economy continued to look bleak. So when U.S. retailers begged him to move Thanksgiving up a week to increase the shopping days before Christmas, FDR agreed. He probably considered it a small change; however, when FDR issued his Thanksgiving Proclamation with the new date, there was an uproar throughout the country. He would probably be pretty sad to see how our Thanksgiving Holiday has evolved into the Black Friday event that it is today.

With Thanksgiving approaching, as well as the end of my term as President of the Historical Society, I would like to express my heartfelt thanks to each and every member for everything that you have done for this organization and to help me and the Board keep the organization viable over the last 8 years. There were some very challenging years, but we managed to pull through with all of your help, time and financial assistance. Whether you gave \$5 or \$500, baked a batch of cookies, or just supported one of our events, it helped to keep us going. We have been able to make some major maintenance repairs to the building and little by little we are doing more to make our Old Stone Church remain an architectural jewel in our community.

As we continue to celebrate our 50th Anniversary, we hope you can attend some of the great events that we have planned for the coming year. Our haunted bus tour was a great success! Traci Sarpalius, Charmaine Drafke and Jason Smith did a great job of organizing, researching and storytelling. Both tours were sold out. We definitely have to do this again next year. Deacon John Wilkinson packed the Old Stone Church with his presentation on St. James at Sag Bridge Cemetery. Everyone also had a great time on the Halloween Quarry Queen ride although it was a little on the chilly side. On October 25, the Sanderson Sisters took over the Old Stone Church and it was just a bunch of Hocus Pocus!! Again the place was packed. Unfortunately, we were not able to have our Skull Toss this year at Halloween Hoedown, due to the inclement weather. We were afraid the old coffin would have fallen apart if it got wet. We look forward to our Open Mic on November 12th and please don't forget our General Membership meeting/election on November 26th. We are also looking forward to our Holiday Open House on December 1st and working with the high school Social Studies Honor Society, Rho Kappa, in the assembling of our new exhibit and viewings of the movies that were filmed in Lemont. Our first movie will be Save the Last Dance on December 6th.

As I mentioned in the last newsletter, it has been an honor and a privilege to serve as president for 8 of the 50 years LAHS has been in existence. It has been a pleasure to have gotten to know and work with all of you. I look forward to continuing to be involved and support LAHS. Many thanks for giving me this opportunity!

As 2019 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



GENEALOGY CORNER

Genealogy: A Picture is Worth a Thousand... Questions?

(continued from previous newsletter)

By Barb Bannon

When I continued my search to identify the remaining people in the Barber's Corners 1902 tornado picture, I was hoping to find an article in our newspapers covering the storm that could answer many questions. No such luck, but I didn't get discouraged.

The website www.gendisasters.com lists storms, tornadoes and other disasters by location and year. Tornadoes hit ten different towns near here in 1902. This leads me to believe this was an active year here for storms, so it is probable that a fall tornado or cyclone could have occurred.



Clara (Mather) Hennes on left, Anna (Gerasky) Eipers holding daughter Juanita and Nicholas Eipers standing by daughter Annabelle

What the newspapers did reveal was that between June and October 1902 there were many storms around this area. Flooding devastated Joliet and Lockport, the rushing water washed out bridges and sidewalks and undermined commercial buildings in the downtown. The lightning and wind assaulted the rural areas, damaging homes and destroying numerous barns and silos. Ads selling tornado and storm insurance multiplied in the classified sections, similar to current day "robo" calls we receive from repair companies after storms.

To find an Eipers family connection to Barber's Corners in Du Page Township, I next concentrated on old plat maps and the Federal Census for Will County, both proved very helpful. The 1909 plat map showed the Nicholas Eipers property near John Barber, Barber's Corners founder. From the 1900 through the 1940 Census I was able to gather the following. Nicholas was married to Anna (Gerasky), she passed away before 1910 and they had three daughters, Marguerite, Anna Belle and Juanita. He lived in the home at Rt. 53 and Barber's Corners Road and was owner and operator of the general store at that location.

A search of the LAHS cemetery readings showed Anna had died in 1904, just 6 months after having their fourth child Anthony, who also died in 1904. This all occurred just 2 years after the photo was taken. The reading also listed Nicholas death date as 1943 which enabled me to find his obituary and it stated he passed away after owning the "corner store" at Barber's Corners from 1899 until his death.

Turning my focus to the others in the photo, Clara (Mather) Hennes, the niece of Anna Eipers was not married until 1905. The men closest to her are too old to be her brothers but are possibly two of Anna's brothers or hired hands. The other two men, that look quite out of place in their three piece suits, could be damage adjusters or



Anna (Mather) holding Juanita, Annabele standing, Marguerite center and Nicholas George in front of home at Barber's Corners before 1904

the like. I may never be able to confirm the identity of these four men but this mystery photo has now told me much more about this family than only having survived a tornado.

Since Barbers Corners is located at Rt 53 and Boughton Rd, I've shared the photo with the Bolingbrook Historic Preservation Commission to give it more exposure in hopes someone can add to the story. With this accumulation of facts I was able to find family trees with even more information about this family and yet another photo. Those "thousand questions" this photo raised has now resulted in writing a "thousand words" to add to the family history.



**A picture is worth a thousand words...
Are you going to write them?**

Connecting Branches



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

Mark Smith – researching George & Josephine (Kendziora) Russell or Rosol

Lori Shreve – researching Hemen & Mary (Tiff) Colvin

Zach Markiewicz – researching Peter & Mary (Hydock) Markiewicz and John George Markiewicz

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

MORE FROM OUR WRITERS

Vietnam Veteran Returns After 52 Years

By Pat Dalman Knight



On May 19, 1967, Maj. Roy A. Knight, Jr., USAF, was shot down while attacking a target on the Ho Chi Minh Trail in Laos. (Photo: None, defense.gov)

This story caught my attention. It is about a US Air Force pilot, Colonel Roy Knight (unrelated to Pat), shot down in May 1967 during the Vietnam War. He was declared killed in action in 1974, posthumously awarded the Air Force Cross, Silver Star, Distinguished Flying Cross, Purple Heart and six Air Medals. On August 8, 2019, his body was returned to Texas and his family.

This is perhaps similar to other such stories, but . . . wait until you know the rest of the story. Colonel Knight's body was returned to Love Field in Dallas. The pilot of the flight to Love Field carrying the casket was Southwest Airlines Captain Brian Knight, Colonel Knight's son. Love Field is the airport where Brian Knight, waved goodbye 52 years ago.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2JAMyqdMj_g

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ua_CvwvIDfc

On thy grave the rain shall fall from the eyes of a mighty nation. ~ Thomas William Parsons

SOCIETY NEWS *by Susan Donahue*

We are now closing in on the end of 2019 – Wow, where did it go? We are grateful to all of you who share this incredible ride of finding new ways to excite the public with the notion that history and the LAHS are not in some time warp.

We have gained new members and now have a “House Band” and like the Beatles they are not quite sure what name they want to entertain as, could it be the Hound Dogs or Landon James & Mark Anthony? If you do get a chance to come to one of our “Open Mics” held at the museum please come. They performed at our Open House and our Village and Township Fathers were impressed by their talent. You can say when they hit it big, “You knew them when”.

We have had many group guided tours during the summer and they have been quite well received. We take these buildings and the quarries so for granted because they are part of who we are, while others from different communities, states, and countries are fascinated by them like they are frozen in time.

I am sure Sue will tell you all about the exciting October events we have had. Believe me if you ever doubted the passion of those who love ghosts just talk to me they are out there in numbers and have put a new lease on the spirits, who if they could appear in the daytime, I am sure would be out there signing autographs at shopping malls and at the museum. A fun loving group with a haunting sense of humor.

You know we close the year with our “Christmas Choral Program”. This idea was first presented by the late Cerina Mitchell. A very kindly lady. The choir of St. Alphonsus performed then and will again grace our stage with St. Patrick Choir and the Montessori Children’s Choir. Yes, we are again begging for Christmas Cookies from all of you – small, cute homemade cookies. It is the first Sunday of Dec – Dec 1st to be accurate. Santa’s elf, Cid, has informed us that we are inked into Santa’s schedule.

“Ode to 2019”

2019 what a Charmer? You kept us on our toes with twists and turns that left us breathless
 As you marched forward never daunted by our complaints or impressed by our compliments
 You brought the joy of discovering new people who came up with new ideas, projects, events and were tireless in their pursuit of improving the museum with endless energy
 And we are grateful as we look to 2020 – our 50th Anniversary Year – and what more we can accomplish
 By Working Together as a Team the possibilities are endless! 2019 Sweet Dreams!

On a celebratory note, congratulates to Terry & Darlene Blanz and James and Patricia Browne on their respective 50th Wedding Anniversary this year. Their volunteerism is very generous and incredibly appreciated.

On a woeful note, we offer our deepest sympathy to the Kubalewski/Tondini family on the loss of their matriarch, Angeline, who was a LAHS member for many years.

SOCIETY NEWS (*continued*) by Susan Donahue



History Presentation at Lemont Public Library

We want to make sure we recognize Gail August for the idea of having a program at the Lemont Public Library. The presenters were: Susan Roy, Gail August, Barbara Buschman, Susan Donahue, Mark Weinberg, Terry Blanz and Richard Lee, who

were given topics on the different aspects of our community from the early years to the present. Gail helped put together a slide show. Barb Bannon, Magic Fingers, changed the slides to correspond with the subject matter. The greeters were Carol Garibay and Doris Peterman and those helping with the selling of our merchandize were Donna Pecina and Darlene Blanz.

The response from the general public was outstanding and we will have a repeat in the Spring of 2020 at the Lemont Public Library. Stay tuned for the date and please tell your friends as we love crowds.



Ghost Bus Tour

The Ghost Buses ventured out transporting all the eager paranormal believers into the realm of a mist and tapped into their mystic powers. The variety of age groups impressed me from the young adult to the senior citizen willing to explore. Yes, we went into the older sections of Lemont where buildings screamed with delight as the stories unfolded. Jason, our Ghost Transporter, beguiled us with stories as we headed into the secluded quarry area and then on to St. James of the Sag. We stayed transfixed to the tales of terror. The last stop was the Bowl area and we were treated to the secluded "Castle" and Indian burial ground. We walked upon the stones and some of us experienced, for a brief moment, a connection to those souls long lost in the dust.

After the first bus tour sold out, an additional tour was added. Traci, Charmaine, and Jason were delighted as their idea had taken off and had paid off. Next year we will repeat, so please be prepared to be treated to an awesome experience among the supernatural delights of Lemont.

Halloween Quarry Queen Ride & Storytelling

The mood was set and the weather was bone chilling as we braced ourselves for a ride on the "Quarry Queen." A small but hearty bunch took their seats and waited for the adventure to begin. The dark night air was filled with anticipation of what would come next. We were not disappointed, and even had chills going down our spines, as the creepy tales sprang forth from those brave enough to share what had befallen them. The air hung heavy with each word whispered as the ghouls shrieked with delight and danced to the music only they could hear.

STEPPING BACK IN TIME *by Susan Donahue*

I am struck by the fact that those who began this Society pooled their money together as they struggled to realize their goal of creating a place where our rich Lemont history could be stored and shared. This is very evident in the material I will share with you.

January 5, 1971 Lemont Area Historical Society Minutes: Elaine Mathy brought up the subject of fundraisers. Ida Kaminski volunteered to organize and run a luncheon the end of January. Other ideas were a Square Dance and Bake Sale.

Tom Ludwig announced we have to make a commitment to the Methodist Church by November 1, 1971. An Executive Board was set up to make plans for this and to report back by the March Meeting. Anthony Slattery and Chester Davey are on the committee.

Bernice Johnson told of a donation of two children's coffins to the Society by Gerharz Funeral Home. They are hand carved wood and rather old. It was agreed to accept them. A discussion as to the safety of the building and artifacts followed. It was agreed every possible precaution was being taken to ensure their safety.

February 2, 1971 Minutes: It was reported that \$69 was realized as profit from the luncheon in January.

Mr. Ludwig reported that there was no progress as yet from the IRS – it is hoped to be received by March. He announced that \$48 will cover the building and contents.

Mrs. Mathy stated the following info was obtained to the installation of a telephone: \$15 installation fee: \$10.45 per month for service. It was felt these charges were too high for the limited use we would obtain from the phone.

Question of further fundraising was initiated. A "Square Dance", to be held at the Lemont Teen Club on a Saturday was proposed. \$30 would be the fee paid to the caller; tickets would be priced at a \$1 or \$1.25 per person, so moved Mrs. Savage and seconded by Mr. Swanson that this action be put into motion. Motion carried. Committee appointed by President as follows: Mrs. Mathy, Chairman; Mrs. Hartman and Mrs. Davey as members.



A view from the Lemont Area Historical Society museum located at the Old Stone Church

Mrs. Hamelen reported that the Girl Scouts; Brownies; Cadets and a group of the Lithuanian School had toured the museum during the exhibit.

Members were invited to attend a lecture and film presented by Mrs. Hunington at St. Matthews Church on Wed, Feb 16, at 1:30pm. The talk will be entitled, "Shrines of American Presidents".

Calling All Members!

You can renew your membership or buy a new membership online! We have our board vote coming up very soon, and we need our existing members and new members qualified to vote!

Join By Mail

- Complete the membership application below
- Make out a check for the appropriate dues
- Mail both to the Historical Society's address on the form

You will receive your membership card in a few weeks

Join Online!

www.lemonthistory.org/membership.html

You will receive your membership card in a few weeks

Join In Person

HOURS OF OPERATION

Tuesday and Friday
10 AM to 2 PM
Saturday
10 AM to 1 PM
Sunday
1 to 4 PM

Membership Benefits

- Voting privileges at General Membership Meeting
- Cornerstone Newsletter
- Free admission to regular museum exhibit area
- Free use of Society Library
- One Guest pass for free admission to regular museum exhibit area
- Discount on Archival Photos and other image media
- 10% Discount on items in Gift Shop, including selected books

Additional Benefits for Corporate Members

- One extra Guest pass for free admission to regular museum exhibit area (Total 2 passes)
- Your business card included in one issue of the Cornerstone Newsletter
- Membership Certificate suitable for framing

Additional Benefit for Life Members

- Name will be engraved on nameplate and displayed on plaque in museum.

Opportunities For LAHS Members Our historical society has many kinds of activities that members can get involved in if they wish. New members who get involved will enable us to do more and do it more efficiently. Here are some possible opportunities:

Archiving Photos And Newspaper Articles | Tour Guides – At The Museum, Around Lemont, And New Trails
New Exhibits | New Archival Collections To Copy And Sell | Fund Raising Events | Newsletter Articles
Museum Care And Improvements | Tour Advertising | Special Programs And Reenactments
New Pages For The Website | Maintaining The Gardens



LEMONT AREA HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Located at the *Old Stone Church*
306 Lemont Street
Lemont, IL 60439

Lemont Area Historical Society Membership Form

Date: _____

Welcome to the Lemont Area Historical Society Family!

- Please check your Membership/Benefactor category and fill out the form.
- Make your check payable to: Lemont Area Historical Society.
 - Additional donations are tax deductible and are very much appreciated.
- Mail (or drop off) to 306 Lemont Street, Lemont, IL 60439 or stop by the Museum. If you have any questions, please call: (630) 257-2972.
 - Hours of Operation
 - Tuesday and Friday: 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.
 - Saturday: 10 a.m. to 1 p.m.
 - Sunday: 1 p.m. to 4 p.m.

Please enter my membership in the Lemont Area Historical Society.
Enclosed are my dues in the appropriate amount as indicated below.

- | | | | |
|--|-----------|--|---------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Athens Marble Club | \$1000.00 | <input type="checkbox"/> Family Member | \$30.00 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Friends of Keepataw | \$500.00 | <input type="checkbox"/> Individual Member | \$20.00 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Quarry Club | \$250.00 | <input type="checkbox"/> Senior Citizen Member | \$15.00 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Life Member | \$200.00 | <input type="checkbox"/> Student Member | \$10.00 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Corporate Member | \$50.00 | <input type="checkbox"/> Additional Donation | \$ |

Name: _____

Street Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip Code: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

What would you like to get involved in? Tap into your talents!

- Exhibits
 Genealogy
 Volunteering
 Programs
 Oral History
 Wedding Committee
 Home Registry
 Sunday Museum Guide
 Group Tour Guide
 Light Maintenance

Memorial Plaque: The Lemont Area Historical Society also has a Memorial Plaque where names of loved ones are engraved. \$10 (minimum) donation.

In Memory of: _____
(name to appear on plaque)

Donation Amount: _____