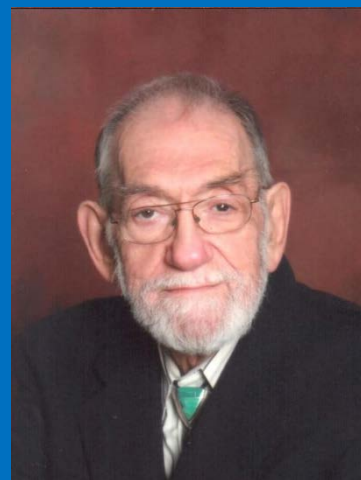


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Lemont Historical Society's Newsletter



The Lemont Area Historical Society expresses our deepest sympathy to the Charles Kallick family on the loss of their Patriarch. Both he and his wife, Sonia, had a positive impact on not only the beginnings but the survival of our organization and we are forever grateful for their contributions.



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

VILLAGE OF LEMONT
LEMONT TOWNSHIP
LEMONT PARK DISTRICT

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Dear Members,

We received word as you saw in the cover page that Dr. Charles Kallick passed away. It brought back a flood of memories from those who knew him. I served on the Ad Hoc Committee that was able to bring forth and pass the creation of the Lemont Historic District in our Village. A labor of love from him, as he knew how much his late wife Sonia believed in it's establishment. I have been in contact with the family and they have graciously designated the LAHS for any donations in his memory. We are forever grateful for this act of kindness to us by the family.

I must report that our Treasurer, Terry Blanz, gave us a scare as he found himself in the hospital with gallbladder trouble that resulted in surgery plus a hernia problem both taken care of at the same time. He has come through with flying colors thanks to the Doctors and staff of Palos and the TLC from his wife, Darlene. He is slowly regaining his energy. I imagine that in the not too distant future he and his buddy Tim Collins, part of our Maintenance Committee, will be up to some new adventures.

In bringing up the committee that does look after the everyday maintenance of our beloved museum I must let all of you know that within the last few months we were made aware of a problem with our outside stairwell that leads to our basement, or as we refer to it as our "Exhibit Area". The wall has a very large crack that has made us tape off that area due to safety concerns and right now we are exploring how to fix it and who to contract to do the job. Truthfully we have seen evidence of a slight crack, but were totally unprepared for what constant truck traffic in the alleyway and the elements could inflict on it. This will not be an inexpensive undertaking and we wanted to make sure you are aware of our determination to make it right again.

We want to acknowledge the winners of the Red Wagon Raffle Mr. & Mrs. Dave Gorski. They kindly donated the red wagon back to us for a future raffle. We definitely appreciate this unselfish act.. We did have a lot of fun in front of Smokey Row with Terri O'Neil graciously drawing the winners. We had quite a few people drive by and wave or honk their car horns. You know for a Sunday downtown Lemont was quite lively with positive energy. A definite plus!

We have postponed the "Drinkin With Lincoln Pub Crawl" that is usually held in February. President Lincoln concurred with this decision as his and our goal is to learn about history while having a fun night on the town. Covid-19 may have altered our plans, but not our determination to hold this infamous and fun time. Stay tuned for further developments as they are provided on this.

I want to also mention that I know all of us wish Gail August a complete recovery from her rotator cuff surgery that is taking place this month. Her husband, Jim, will also have surgery later this year on the same problem only his is the left rotator cuff. Needless to say we wish them both a successful surgery and a complete recovery. My wish is for all of you to stay safe and healthy as we discover what 2021 holds for us.

Susan D

GENEALOGY CORNER

Hidden Stories

By Barb Bannon

Something triggers a need to compile your family's story. For me it was one day while my dad was reading the Lemontre he mentioned a name, probably from a birth or marriage announcement or an obituary, and said "that was my grandmother's last name, your grandpa Zolecki's mom". I must have given him the strangest look because he followed up with "oh that's right you wouldn't have known her by that name". The questions were now coming to me faster than I could ask. What other relatives had last names that were never uttered during my 35 years in this family. Since that day, now many moons ago, I have had an interest in gathering family history.



Clark's Mills (now Camden East), Ontario, Canada 1910
Lennox and Addington Historical Society, Jones Collection

I assumed family history was all about collecting the documents of an ancestor. I searched for every birth, marriage or death certificate to be found, and set out to fill in charts and connect every name and date. After accumulating a stack of paper, I felt this genealogy thing everyone was talking about was a very ho-hum hobby, but a genealogy program I purchased came with some interesting family history stories and drastically changed my opinion. Documents are beneficial, but the hidden stories need to be extracted from them. One of those often overlooked sources is the Census.

I have used the US Federal Census for information and previously discovered that my husband's maternal grandfather was born in Ontario, Canada. I had found him in the 1871 census, at 11 years old, with his father, mother and 7 siblings in the hamlet of Clark's Mills on the Napanee River. Now that I wanted more than just statistics, I decided to re-examine the paperwork and look more closely at other entries on the page.

In the next dwelling was the family of Jack Joe, 50 years old and a widower. He was Indian with two children ages 8 and 10, living in a Wig Wam, he could not read or write and his trade/occupation was basket-making. I couldn't believe that I didn't notice this before. The children, close in age, could have played together, went to the same school and shared their interests; what an addition to the family story.

I naturally searched for an historical society near the town and found the Lennox & Addington County Museum website. They have been more than helpful in answering my questions and their archive had a photo of the town about 1910. I'm checking their online resources to determine what additional help I may need to continue researching this family.

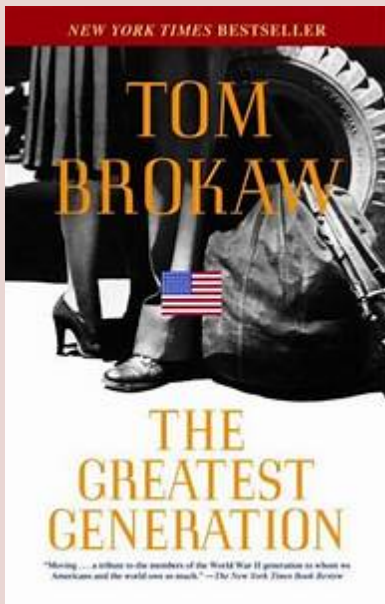
This historical society is supported by their County but many smaller societies like ours are not. Historical groups are my "go to" for help in researching and I support the smaller societies if there is one in the area. Our society is sustained by fundraisers and donations, which in the past year have of course been affected by this pandemic. For those that have not been financially impacted by this virus, the history of your town needs your help. Preserving our heritage is a vital link to all of the things that make us who we are. History matters.

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MORE FROM OUR WRITERS

The Greatest Generation

By Pat Dalman Knight



While searching my book collection, I found The Greatest Generation by Tom Brokaw published in 1998. The author's name will likely be familiar. He was a White House correspondent for NBC news during Watergate. He anchored *Today* and later *NBC Nightly News* for many years.

The author went to the northwest of France, Normandy, in 1984 to prepare a documentary on the 40th anniversary of D-Day. He says, "There, I underwent a life-changing experience." He walked the beaches with veterans, then in their 60s and 70s. He listened to their stories and was deeply moved. Brokaw returned again for the 50th anniversary as he now knew what that generation, the greatest generation, of Americans meant to history.

The book captures stories of individual men and women of that generation, the citizen heroes who went on after the war to build America. Some names you will recognize such as George Bush who served as a Navy Air Corps combat pilot who went on to . . . well you know, serve his country again as President of the United States. There are other familiar names such as Joe Foss, Art Buchwald, and Andy Rooney. But the

names you do not recognize have stories too which will move you. There are stories about men and women you will not know, but whom you will be glad you meet in Brokaw's book.

Although D-Day is not the subject of his book, there are a number of websites that have related information, pictures, and videos if you are interested.

Take some time and read *The Greatest Generation*. I know the stories will move you just as they moved me.



Lemont Boys leaving for boot camp from Orland Park train station 1942.



Lemont boys taking a break at Camp Polk Louisiana, May 1942: L-R: Jack Shafranski, LeRoy Heinz & Ray Hommerding.



Veterans gathered in Lemont for the 2011 annual Veterans Day commemoration

STEPPING BACK IN TIME *by Susan Donahue*

I would like to clarify the articles I am doing concerning the LAHS. I started at a certain date as we began our 50th Year as an organization and so the months did not correspond with the actual time we were in. I will continue in this vein as I explore our rich history of existence. I know you will keep in mind that some of the data here no longer applies to our present circumstances, but it is interesting to learn about our early beginnings. In this article I will explore what I believe is part of an answer to a question that often comes up not only from members, but the general public as they visit our museum. The questions: "What led up to your Society being formed and how old is it?" and "You just said you are not part of an organized religion so how did the Society end up in a church?"

August 5, 1970 - Committee of Three Meet with United Methodist Churches Board of Trustees. Here is the report given by President Tom Ludwig at that time to members.

"It was agreed that the Lemont Area Historical Society use the Old Methodist Church, rent free. It was agreed that the Lemont Area Historical Society start maintaining the building, cut the grass, pay light, heat and any other utilities.

It was agreed the Methodist Church continue to carry liability insurance (only) on the Old Church (their present insurance covers all buildings owned by this Methodist Group.)

It was agreed the Lemont Area Historical Society could use this building to any extent "using good judgment".

It was agreed that the Lemont Area Historical Society would be in a better position about November 1, 1970 to negotiate a purchase price. No asking price was stated at this meeting. It was suggested in November the Lemont Area Historical Society make an offer.

The Board seemed to agree to hold the mortgage, in event of our purchase, with residual rights.

Donald Urick, Vice President Lemont Area Historical Society

Follow up Letter concerning property of Sept 13, 1971

Mr. Barry Moss, Attorney -at - Law

Dear Barry,

Recently the Lemont Area Historical Society met with the Trustees of Lemont United Methodist Church relative to the transfer of the Old Methodist Church building on Lemont Street to the historical society for use as a museum. We talked to the Trustees and made this proposal: that the Lemont United Methodist Church donate the old church building to the Lemont Area Historical Society. In return for this donation the Society will maintain the building as close to its present state as possible, and put language into the deed or other legal documents regarding the transfer and possession of the property, a residual rights clause whereby in the event of the dissolution of the Society, the building and property will revert to the Lemont United Methodist Church, it's legal successor.

Would you write such a proposal up in the necessary language in order that we might present said proposal formally to the Church's Board of Trustees. As far as we know, our Charter with the Illinois State Historical Society permits us to enter into such arrangements.

If I can be of any help to you, please let me know, and I am home most evenings until October.

Yours Truly,

Thomas Ludwig

Thomas W. Ludwig, President

MORE FROM OUR WRITERS

Virtual Drinkin' with Lincoln

By Susan Roy

Unfortunately, due to COVID 19, it is unsafe to do our Drinkin' with Lincoln pub crawl. So, this year, we are doing a virtual pub crawl. So grab a glass of wine or a beer and take a tour of Lemont's historic taverns.

The Norton Building - 103 Stephen Street Corner Stone Tavern

Many consider this building Lemont's most architecturally and historically significant building. In 1862, S. J. Norton opened his original general store at 101 Stephen Street. In 1870, he expanded his operation by building a modern department store next to it at 103 Stephen Street. A grain storage elevator for canal shipments once stood where the parking lot is today. Mr. Norton opened the first quarries below the village on both sides of the canal that would unearth the famous Lemont limestone. It also had a safety deposit vault for residents to keep their valuables from the hands of Smokey Row bandits.



During the days of the Canal construction some of the engineers lived above the store. One of those engineers was Ed Kelly who served as Mayor of Chicago during the late 1930s. The grain elevator was dismantled in the 1950s. Manne Strand started The Strand store at the corner of Canal and Stephen St. His son Dale moved it to the vacated Nelson's Feed & Grain Store at 103 Stephen in 1960. Dale converted the feed and grain store into a modern sundry store and news agency.

In 1985, Bill and Edie Montgomery bought The Strand and it became famous for its Cajun food. It has since been home to Stonecutter's Chop House and Stonehouse Pub. Currently, it is home to Corner Stone Tavern.



Tom's Place -110 Stephen Street

Before coming to Lemont in 1924, Thomas Laketa worked all over the country. In early years, Tom and his wife, Mary, operated a tavern at the corner of Stephen Street and Talcott Avenue, under the name of "Tom's Place". In 1949, they moved Tom's Place to the present location at 110 Stephen Street. While living in Lemont for a half-century, Tom acquired the name of "Big Tom" and his tavern was always, and still is, a friendly place where friends met. To many children, he will always be remembered as "Uncle Tom", with his special treats and love for children. His son, Milan and his wife, Elaine, ran the tavern for many years. Now, the business is operated by their sons, Mark and Mike.

If you peak in the window up at the ceiling you can see a fine example of "Chicago Ceilings" manufactured by the Friedley family.

The Bodenshatz Building - 118 Stephen Street Hughie McClafferty's

One of our early post offices was located at the back end of this building. It was here that the Deputy Sheriff of Cook County read the Riot Act to Lemonters during the 1885 quarry strike. It was here they learned that the Illinois militia was going to occupy the town. In the days before suffrage, Miss Amelia bodenschatz served as an assistant post mistress. She took over all the duties for her father, Gustav, who operated the drugstore. Miss Bodenschatz served during Grant's administration until 1882, when she married. Before the days of medical clinics, doctors and dentists often located above a drug store as they did here.

This building was formerly home to part of H&H Mexican Restaurant. Today it is Hughie McClafferty's and is operated by Manus McClafferty. Hughie's was named after Manus' father.



309 Canal Street - Formerly Fischbach's Saloon Canal Street Pub

To get your tonsils wet, you might stop at Fischbach's Saloon. As in all the salons of the day, you'd find an old potbellied stove and a card game of Pitch or 7-Up going on. They also had a dice box and a pool table and, of course, spittoons. The tavern was also known as "Ben's Dugout" for a stretch in the 1950s. After Ben's it was the site of Bumber's Sportsman's Inn, It was then owned and operated by the Ott family for many years as "Gene's Anchor Club".

The tavern was sold to the Gothard family in approximately 1992. Ricci Gothard and his mother operated the business until 1998 under the name of "R&N Anchor".



Marty and JoAnn Tomczak purchased the tavern in 1998 from the Gothards and were the owners until Marty's passing in 2016. JoAnn sold the business to Julie Christopher and her son Jamie.

308 Canal Street - Formerly Lemont Building & Loan Association The Vault (now closed)

The building has the outline of a temple-like structure on its front. This was the site of the First National Bank of Lemont. On April 1-, 2029, this building was the scene of a daylight hold-up. Three armed bandits arrived in the village in a new Roosevelt sedan which had been stolen from Chicago the previous day. They got away with a total of \$9,200.69. The original bank vault is still in the building. The establishment has closed due to COVID-19.





221 Main Street Nick's Tavern

Nick's Tavern was opened for business in 1945 by Nick and Vera Pappas. Nick and Vera previously operated a tavern/restaurant in what is now the VFW Hall called the Suburban Club. Their daughter Joanne and her husband Louie Novak took over the business in 1963 and operated the business until 2009. They raised three boys in the apartment above the business and cooked several thousand Nickburgers "No Fries, Chips!" Over the course of the years, many celebrities have enjoyed the "Nickburger", including some of the Chicago Bears, pro. Hockey players, pro golfers and pro basketball players. People come from all over the Midwest to indulge in the famous burger. Perhaps the most famous person to sample the "Nickburger" was former

Illinois Governor "Big Jim" Thompson.

Today the tavern is owned and operated by Don Quaid and continues to uphold the reputation of the "Nickburger".

302 Main Street - Formerly "Honest John's" The Main Inn

Many years ago, on the corner of Main & Lemont Streets, there stood a tavern known as "Honest John's" which was owned and operated by John Powalisz.

On July 1, 1937, the late Andy Shafranski opened the tavern at 302 Main Street and called it Main Inn. In 1946, after his discharge from the Navy, Andy's son, Tony, went to work for his Dad. In 1961, Tony Shafranski operated the tavern, eventually assisted by his oldest son, Mark.

In March of 1989, a liquor license was issued to Duane and Linda Petersen, who changed the name to "Petersen's Main Inn". During a freak flood of July, 1996, the building suffered severe damage. The Main Inn mascot, "the Beav" was rescued and remains in a place of honor in this popular local tavern. The tavern is still operated today by Duane and Linda and remains a great neighborhood place to get together with friends or to meet new ones.



References:

Lemont and Its People, Sonia Kallick | *Lemont 125th Anniversary Book* | *Granacki Survey*



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: _____