



Ridge Historical Society

NEWSLETTER

August/September 2003

Visit the web site at www.ridgehistoricalsociety.org

Remembering Beverly Hills

I was born during the First World War, 1916 and spent 4 ½ years in the military in WWII, 2 ½ of those years were spent in the South Pacific. I was the 2nd oldest of ten children born to Oscar and Irma Sabel. Eight of the children survived to adulthood — six boys and two girls. Six of us are still living; Walter, William, Herbert, Jacqueline, and the twins Edward and Evelyn. The 4 older boys were all in the service during WWII, fighting for their country overseas, somewhere around the world.

In 1923, Dad bought the house at 10607 Drew St. in Beverly Hills, a suburb of Chicago. I was 7 years old at the time while Wally was 9 and Vern was 3. Dad had a good job as a building inspector for the City of Chicago. He would commute via the Rock Island Railroad at 107th St. to his office in City Hall in the Loop.

We all attended Barnard Elementary School and Morgan Park High School. I graduated from EMPEHI in 1934, right in the depths of the depression. No jobs were available at that time so I attended Morgan Park Junior College for a couple of years and still no jobs were forthcoming. The depression kept lingering on.

I then figured that if no jobs were to be had, I would create my own. In 1938, Dad purchased a rundown farm of 30 acres in northwestern Indiana and we proceeded to build a poultry farm. He commuted back and forth to Chicago every weekend while my younger brother; Robbie and I ran the farm. My brother Vern had just graduated from high school so he needed a job too and so he developed an egg route in

Chicago delivering fresh farm eggs to relatives, neighbors and friends.

Business was good and we expanded every year until 1941 when I received a notice from President Roosevelt that the military needed me, not long after World War II began.

Beverly Hills

We moved to Beverly Hills in the early 1920's when Dad purchased a 7-room home at 10607 Drew Street on the south side of Chicago. He needed larger quarters to house his growing family. The streets were not paved at this time and they were a muddy mess whenever it would rain. The rear property line was in line with the rear of the garage. In back of that was a vacant lot that became the neighborhood horseshoe pitching court. All the men would gather around at the clanking of the shoes on a hot summer evening and there was much rivalry among the competitors.

The way I understand it, the four similar row houses were constructed around 1880 for the railroad workers at the nearby Rock Island Railroad. Dad purchased 10607 in 1923 when I was 7, Wally was 9 and Vern was 3. Mother and Dad were married in 1913 and starting in 1914, they were blessed with an addition to the family every 2 years until the twins were born in 1932 and they called it quits with a total of 10. Eleanor died at 11 months while Howard died at the age of 5. Eight of us lived to maturity.

Our new home had 4 rooms downstairs and 3 bedrooms upstairs and an attic. The single bathroom was located next to the kitchen and there was a small living room, dining room

A DRY SPOT

Morgan Park is dryer than its location on the highest point of land in Cook County would justify. If one of the residents is detected carrying home two bottles of ginger ale and a pint of lemon pop the word immediately flies around the Village that a horrible orgy is about to take place and the police force is warned to be on the lookout to suppress the sickening affair.

Richard H. Little
"A Sentimental
Journey to
Morgan Park"

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From the Editor

Computers... and memories

I would like to thank the many individuals who have complimented the new look of the newsletter. When I took over this job from my predecessor Elmer Johnson, I thought that switching over to an "all digital" format would make production of the newsletter a breeze. This is a delusion many of us who work with computers suffer. Elmer would manually typeset and paste up the newsletter and deliver his camera-ready artwork to the printer. I now show up with a computer disk after having created the newsletter in a desktop publishing program. It has been a learning experience for me, including numerous trips to the printer

with updated disks and many hours spent on reformatting word processing files sent to me by contributors via disk or email. The only breeze in this process has been the one generated by my running back and forth to the printer. Each new endeavor has its wrinkles, and I think I'm close to having these ironed out.

I recently received a forwarded email with reminiscences of William Sabel, a former Beverly resident. I will be featuring his writings in this and upcoming issues of the newsletter. What Bill has written is history at its best. It is a personal account of everyday life and activities in our community; the things that seem so small and mundane when they take place but which give insight into the day-to-day lives of ordinary people. Historical societies often focus on the big names in a community's history, the movers and shakers who left their indelible mark. We tend to forget the little people whose lives mirror our own. I hope that Bill's writings will bring back memories for some and give our younger readers a glimpse of how precious and important these memories are.

David Daruszka

A HOT DEBATE

The question of the origin of C.L. Young's great cutter (sled) conflagration has agitated the community and resulted in several theories. The underwriters have made a thorough investigation and report that the cause was a pot of hot beans, which Mr. Young brought from the social and carelessly left in the straw. The cigar ash theory has many adherents. Those who know the horse best, however, say that the runners became overheated from the friction on the snow.

Community News
from the 1900's
Pauline Palmer



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Dear Editor,

Barbara Wynn Bansley's "Wit of America's First Ladies" arrived at RHS with a flourish in May and has recently departed, leaving Driscoll House feeling sadly empty. This stunning installation brought groups large and small through our doors, with Barbara's smile and enthusiasm waiting to greet them.

Barbara was a real trooper, coming in daily to clean up and give her marvelous presentation to any and all visitors. In it, she shared an intimate knowledge gained from solid research and from life. In addition, she took our phone messages, dealt with our alarm system and our idiosyncrasies, and donated a beautiful serving piece to RHS.

I would like to thank Barbara for honoring us with her work, her warmth and her own wit. In my book, she ranks among the "First" of ladies everywhere.

Linda Lamberty

Ridge Historical Society Newsletter

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Remembering Beverly Hills

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and den downstairs. A basement was under the whole house and half of the floor of the basement was concrete while the other half was dirt covered with a wooden floor. An open porch extended across the front of the house and there was no basement under the porch. Off the kitchen was an enclosed back porch that served as a refrigerator in the cold winter months and it was also used as a storage area. A coal-burning furnace in the basement heated the home. Wally remembers the many wheelbarrows of coal he had to haul from the street and dump into the tiny window of the coal bin and then go inside to level it out. Quite a dirty job for a youngster! I guess I was too small to help him, as I don't remember this grimy activity.

Leading up to the wooden open front porch were concrete steps with concrete walls on either side. Over the years they had become quite unsightly and they were tipped. Mother decided to do something about it so she started its destruction by attacking the concrete with a sledgehammer. Eventually the steps were replaced with more modern wooden ones.

Mother had been after Dad to enlarge the living room for some time, as it was rather crowded when we were all assembled there in the wintertime, especially after the twins were born. He kept putting her off time and time again. Finally around 1935 or 36, she couldn't stand it any longer. One warm spring day, after I came home from school, she instructed me to get a sledgehammer and to start beating on the basement wall at the front of the house under the living room. I did as I was told and by the time Dad came home from work, we had quite a sizable hole in the battered wall. There was nothing more that Dad could do but call up a contractor and finish the job that Mother and I had started. That was the way Mother got the living room enlarged to her satisfaction.

Another remodeling job that had to be done on the old house was the addition of another

bedroom and a half bath upstairs. Above the kitchen and off one of the bedrooms was an unfinished attic and this is where the bedroom and half bath were added. Again a contractor friend of Dad's was engaged to do the remodeling. His name was Walt Peterson and he also had a large family so we visited back and forth and became good friends. After the addition was finished, the bedroom became mine until the farm was purchased in 1938 and I moved out of the old homestead.

Next issue: Entertainment in the 20's and 30's

Bill Sabel can be contacted at wsabel@insightbb.com, and is author of "Seeds of Hope" a book which recounts his wartime experiences in the South Pacific. He can also be contacted via USPS at Green Tree Apartments, 3575 Senior Place, Apt. 217, West Lafayette, IN 47906.



Welcome New Members

We would like to welcome the following individuals and families to RHS:

Chris Clott, Dick & Pat Coughlin, Lawrence & Carol Daker, Herman & Elnora Daniel, Jeanne Duffy, Michael & Suzy Eiben, Robert Filipiak, Barbara Gaynor, David Hennessy, Terry Hilliard, Tracey Kear, Greg & Linda Klawitter, Michelle Burke & Kent Lamberty, Lillian DeMay & Carol Lewis, Florence Lorange, Marie McDonough, Kitty & Dave McKee, Bernadette Molloy, Robert & Mary Moroney, Linda & Paul Mundy, Kurt & Mary Olsson, Jen O'Malley, Joe Oswald, Sheila & Mike Padden, Randy & Joan Papp, Betty Primm, Thomas Rigoni, Edward Rimkus, Rita Rogers, Al Salvino, Sharon Swiercz, Cindy Tebo, Ed & Kathleen Tobin, M. Veghte, Don & Judy Wagner and Jeremiah Wright.

BARGAINS GALORE

FOR SALE – 7 room house at 11421 Prospect Ave. \$4400.00

WANTED – A First Class Cook and Laundress; wages \$7 a week. Apply in one week to Mrs. S.E. Loveless, 11254 Prospect Ave. Phone Morgan Park 9.

GOOD COW FOR SALE – A bargain. Price \$35 if taken at once. Phone Morgan Park 652.

FOR RENT – I have a first-class, high-power, electric motor vacuum cleaner that I will rent for \$2.00 per day to careful people. Will deliver and call for the cleaner. Phone Morgan Park 1313. B.A. Knapp.

Want Ads from "The Post", early 1900's

MILK WAGON

Long before bottled or carton milk became vogue, milk deliveries were made with horse drawn wagons. The customer would put a pitcher or pail out on the porch or step and the desired amount would be drawn off through a spigot. How many of us can remember the friendly sound of the clop, clop, clop of the horse pulling the milk wagon with the lantern that was aglow early in the morning and then again lighted at dusk.

Pauline Palmer



Tracy Hall was located on the north side of 103rd Street just east of the Rock Island tracks. It was built on land donated by William Barnard with the stipulations that the building would be made available for public use and that no alcohol would ever be served there. It was home to a number of small businesses over its history, as well as a Masonic Lodge. It was demolished in 1968, and the land it stood on remains vacant to this day.



This photograph, probably dating from the late 1800's, shows 111th Street looking west from near the Rock Island tracks. It's wintertime and children can be seen in the distance sledding down the hill. Their goal was to reach the railroad tracks. Gas lights add a quaint touch, but the new utility poles are harbingers of change to the sleepy Village of Morgan Park.

Enhancing Local Education with Local History

"Travel through time to the isle which became the Blue Island Ridge. Located just off the (now Palos) mainland in Lake Michigan's predecessor, Lake Chicago, this solid little gem played a significant role in the movement - or rather the cessation of it - of the mighty ice masses that sculpted our region many thousands of years ago. Topographical and early real estate maps give us an intimate picture of what would have been that island's main features. Online Illinois State Museum exhibits allow us to fill in the visual blanks with graphic reconstructions of flora, fauna and human habitation during successive periods. Using known evolution of the site, even its future can be extrapolated, along with the implications of choices made about land use today."

With this theme and others taken directly from the pages of local history, the "Dorothy Ann Saly Teacher Enrichment Program for Beverly Hills / Morgan Park" kicks off its introductory offering. The series, generously funded by the estate of the late Dorothy Ann Saly, long both a teacher and a Beverly resident, is geared to provide professional development opportunities to local educators.

Beginning at the Ridge Historical Society this fall, RHS will work with St. Xavier University and the Chicago Metro History Education Center to present "Creative Writing & Historical Research" based upon ongoing research done by generations of Ridge historians. It is hoped that by sharing the rich and intimate stories of early residents along with the many resources available today, we may help to spawn a new generation of creative writers with "a leg up" on history - which in itself lends insight on life.

Moving along from research and writing, the series picks up again over the winter at the new Beverly Arts Center with an array of concept options from which participants may choose. Hubbard Street Dance Chicago will provide enlightenment and resources on

Movement, while Hands On! Children's Art Museum and the Chicago Alliance of African American Photographers will offer different Visual methods of enhancement and presentation.

At last, in the spring of 2004, there will be a grand finale at the Arts Center to showcase the varied projects completed by students of participating teachers. Exhibits from RHS collections will add to the experience, which will be open to the community.

Participation will be available only to teachers through local schools. You may check with your school or BAPA to learn more.

The Ridge Historical Society is most fortunate to have been included in this dynamic effort. Under the guidance of Adeline Ray at BAPA, RHS has worked with BAPA, the Beverly Arts Center and Morgan Park Academy to create groundbreaking opportunities for local schools. As a community, we should extend our heartfelt thanks to the estate of the late Dorothy Ann Saly and her representative, Jean Roche, who devised the format of this remarkable coalition.

If you are a teacher and/or have any interest in working with the Ridge Historical Society's Education Committee in this vital effort, please call 773-881-1675 and leave a message (with your phone number) for Linda Lamberty.



OUR OLD NEWSPAPER STAND

Mr. Warren Saunders was the man who presided over the newspaper stand on the corner of Homewood and Monterey Avenues; known to all as "Shorty".

Shorty lived with his mother at 1930 Monterey. Every morning at six o'clock he would grasp the banister and slide himself down the long flight of stairs to his metal express wagon, where he waited the coming of the mailman who would pull him the block to the railroad station, and he began his morning work of selling papers. Then about 8:30 every morning one of our school-boys would pick him up at the station and pull him back in his wagon to where he lived. Then once more he would be taken to the little news stand on the corner where he sold the afternoon and evening papers.

Pauline Palmer



NEWS BRIEFS

OUR MOTTO: IF IT FITS, IT'S NEWS TO US!

RIDING ACADEMY

How many of us can recall as early residents of the Ridge community, passing 107th and Wood Streets, the 200 foot lot with its cindered race track surrounded by a typical Kentucky horse farm fence.

It is reminiscent of the old riding academy established in 1911 by William J. Plunkett, then just retired as a captain of police. He received the corner lot for an exercising and riding plot. When the area became more and more settled, Mr. Plunkett moved his riding academy to 11420 S. Fairfield Avenue, which was up until a few years ago open prairie.

Pauline Palmer

EAGLE SCOUT QUEST BRINGS RESEARCH LIBRARY CLOSER TO REALITY

The old costume room has been stripped bare and repainted by a crew of young men as part of a service project required for Eagle Scout recognition. Kevin Murphy, a Boy Scout with Troop 617 at St. Christina Roman Catholic Church, undertook organizing and supervising the work of a crew of scouts and volunteers to demonstrate his leadership and dedication to community service as part of his quest for Eagle rank. The work performed in the rooms, which included removing old wallpaper and patching, is in preparation for its conversion into a research library. Assisting Kevin were Chris Frank, Tom Sowinski, John and Matt Toussaint, Matt and Kevin Zwickl, Ron Sturm, John McInerney, Pat Maikisch, Eric Dulzo, Josh Kelly, SteveMcLaughlin, Tony Zaino and Al Wyma. Also on hand to assist was Scoutmaster Dr. Peter Toussaint and Kevin's father, Brian Murphy.

STUDENT VOLUNTEER TACKLES PRESERVATION OF REAL ESTATE BOOKS

Our new student summer volunteer, Holly Paul, has begun a "holdings maintenance" project to preserve and reorganize our real estate booklets. These books are comprised of home listings from Doris Brown Realtors (including photographs many of the individual houses) from 1950's to 1980's. This is a unique resource for anyone researching the history of their home.

LOCAL HISTORY BOOK GOES TO PRESS

"Along The Ridge" a photo history book focusing on the Beverly/Morgan Park

community, has been sent to the printer by publisher Arcadia Press. Local author, teacher and RHS member Joe Oswald spearheaded the effort to bring images from the Ridge Historical Society collections into this popular local history format which Arcadia has developed. Board member Dave Daruszka volunteered to organize and scan hundreds of photographs, as well as assisting Joe in researching and writing the many captions that accompany them. Linda Lamberty devoted a great deal of her time to "fact checking" in order to verify the accuracy of the captions. Also pitching in with editing assistance were Sue Delves and Jennifer Kenny. The book should arrive in bookstores sometime in the fall. RHS will be offering the book for sale, which are the only proceeds which will benefit our organization.

"BEVERLY'S BRAWNY BIKER" FEATURED IN LOCAL PRESS

RHS member and long-time benefactor Carl Spencer was featured in two recent articles in the Chicago Tribune and The Villager. At age 84, Carl was the oldest rider to recently complete a 178-mile roundtrip to raise more than \$3,000 for the National Multiple Sclerosis Society. A biking enthusiast since 1934, Carl was the Oklahoma State Biking Champion for seven years straight and has won 133 of the 154 races he entered. In 1975 he traveled 3,118 miles from coast to coast to celebrate the 200th Anniversary of the Marine Corps. His exploits are detailed in our only permanent exhibit at RHS, and he continues to average 8 miles a day as a pedal pusher. Ride on, Carl!

"IN THE COOL OF THE EVENING" PROGRAMS SCHEDULED FOR AUGUST AND SEPTEMBER

The Ridge Historical Society is pleased to

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NEWS BRIEFS

offer two more lectures by historian Paul Petraitis, to be held "in the cool of the evening" on the lovely Driscoll house terrace.

On August 28th, learn about "Chicago and the History of Photography" from the daguerreotype to the glass negative to digital imaging. Fine examples will be on display.

The next discussion, supported by early maps from the RHS collection, will be "The Beverly Spit and other Ancient Beach Ridges" on September 25th.

Sip champagne while absorbing history on our hilltop veranda the last Thursday of each month. Light refreshments will be served with the "bubbly".

Programs begin at 7:00pm and are \$7 (\$6 for members). Seating is limited, so call 773-881-1675 to reserve your spot now!

THE GARAGE SALE IS COMING, DONATIONS NEEDED!

The Annual RHS Garage Sale is set for September 20th, and we are looking for donations of usable items to sell. We cannot accept clothing (with the exception of accessory-type items), books (save them for the Book Sale) or electronic items such as computers (they age rapidly, although certain items such as radios have "collector appeal"). Keep us in mind over the summer as you declutter your home and bring your items to RHS on September 16 or 17 to give us time to organize and price. Furniture and large item pick-up can be arranged if we are given advance notice.

Any RHS member or friend who would like to help with this event would be most welcome. Call Gen Graf (779-3550), Pat McGrail (238-6196) or Sue Delves (445-5806) to help us raise money for RHS.

This year's Garage Sale will be combined with our Annual Ice Cream Social for a unique event. Don't miss it!

POPULAR MOUNT GREENWOOD CEMETERY TOUR RETURNS

RHS and Mount Greenwood Cemetery will be hosting "A Day In The Park" on Saturday October 4th and Sunday October 5th. A self-guided tour will run continuously from 10 am to 1 pm on Saturday. At 1 pm on Sunday, Helen Sclair, "The Cemetery Lady" and "Advocate For The Dead", will speak on mourning customs. Sclair, a cemetery historian who teaches at the Newberry Library, will address the different ways people handle death and funerals.

Donation to RHS is \$5 per day, or \$8 for both days. Society members are admitted free on Sunday. Fee includes refreshments both days, program and tour material. For additional information call the cemetery at 773-233-0136.

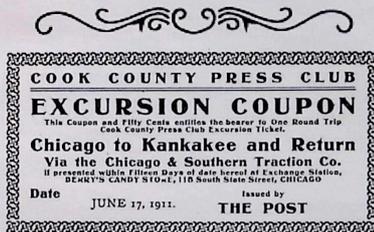
SAM THE SCISSORS GRINDER

An almost forgotten sound and sight is the scissors grinder. Far away you could hear the tinkling bell and knew it was the scissors grinder. Many years ago we all took more time to converse and be friendly – the various vendors were a welcome interlude in our busy days. We always seemed to have time to chat awhile.

Pauline Palmer

These items are taken from a history of the Ridge communities written by local resident Pauline Palmer in 1962. The history combined quotes from early residents and stories from old newspapers.

Editor



"LOST AND FOUND",
 OR "THE INSANITY OF SIN."
 REV. A. F. CLARK'S EVENING SERMON AT THE
**MORGAN PARK
 METHODIST EPISCOPAL
 CHURCH**
(Prospect and Park Crescent Avenues)
**LENTEN EVANGELISTIC SERVICES
 EACH EVENING NEXT WEEK**
ELBERT BEEMAN speaks Wednesday night.
**A CORDIAL WELCOME
 TO ALL**
SPECIAL MUSIC

NOT TO BE MISSED

A Calendar of Events and Attractions

The deadline for the October/November Newsletter is Wednesday September 10th. We also accept submissions via email at ridgehistory@hotmail.com

IN THE COOL OF THE EVENING LECTURE SERIES

August 28th and September 25th

See Page 6 for details

ANNUAL GARAGE SALE AND ICE CREAM SOCIAL

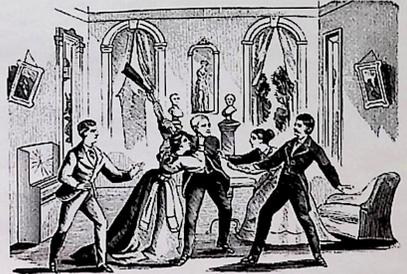
September 20th

9 am to 2 pm

MOUNT GREENWOOD CEMETERY TOUR

October 4 - 5

See page 7 for details



RIDGE HISTORICAL SOCIETY BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETINGS

Wednesday August 13th &
September 10th

7:30 pm - Driscoll House

Ridge Historical Society

NEWSLETTER

Ridge Historical Society
10621 S. Seeley Ave.
Chicago, IL 60643

DATED MATERIAL

FIRST CLASS
MAIL

Donated items
needed for
Annual Garage
Sale.

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more info.

inside...

Beverly Hills Remembered
Saly Grant Update
Cemetery Tour Returns

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