



Ridge Historical Society

NEWSLETTER

April-May 2005

Visit the web site at www.ridgehistoricalsociety.org

Celebrating Local Women for Women's History Month: Mrs. Cora Heineman

Perhaps He'd Speak if They Offered Him a Drink

The Woman's Christian Temperance Union will tomorrow formally transfer a new drinking fountain to village authorities. At 5 p.m. Rev. E. Lee Howard will deliver a short address, followed, if he can be prevailed upon to speak, by President Russell, in behalf of the village board. Many of the public school children will meet at the Baptist church at 4 p.m. and march to the corner of Morgan and Western Avenues. All children are requested to meet as above without further notice. The fountain is a handsome iron one with accommodations for man and beast.

Ridge Record
July 11, 1902

"On the eighteenth of December 1874, in the little town of Holland, Michigan, I opened my eyes on this world. I liked it then, and I like it now - even after eighty years of it."

Cora deGraff Heineman
March 2, 1945

To those of you unfamiliar with RHS Bulletin #3, it is the thesis written in 1926 by Mrs. Walter F. Heineman on the early history of Beverly Hills. In the opinion of many, though briefly it is by far the most thorough and scholarly work yet done on the subject.

At the time, she was fortunate enough to interview some of our earliest settlers - albeit children at the time they arrived along the Ridge in the 1840s and '50s - who were still alive and well in the 1920s. Her original manuscript, a jewel in the RHS collection, responds to many important questions that would otherwise remain unanswered. Any subsequent works on the subject must by needs rely heavily upon her notes.

1892 had brought Cora, at almost 18 years of age, to Chicago with her parents and siblings after 16 formative years in and around Evansville, Indiana. The mighty World's Columbian Exposition, running a year behind schedule, followed hot on their heels in 1893. It was a very exciting time to be in the "Windy City" - (which moniker, as you may know, was derived from long-winded Chicagoans lobby-

ing to host the exposition, rather than from the local climate.)

As the 68th student to enroll in the new (second) University of Chicago, Cora deGraff was admitted on September 28, 1892 and completed a year's worth of work. With that and some extra study in the correspondence department under her belt, it was not until 1925 that she finally returned to earn her degree in June of 1926 - when the youngest student in her class was numbered the 99,820th to register at the school. (Just think - almost 100,000 university students had come and gone in the interim!)

Cora married Walter F. Heineman in 1901 and twenty years later they moved into the home at 10423 S. Seeley Ave. where they would live until 1940. She was living there when she wrote her history of Beverly Hills. They had previously lived at 1646 W. 104th Place, and still later at 9920 S. Hoyne.

After over a year of campaigning by local civic leaders, in April of 1938 Cora Heineman was appointed to the Chicago School Board by Mayor Edward J. Kelly. Eight years later she was being honored by the board and the education community for her outstanding achievements in effecting sorely needed improvements in school policies and standards.

We had in truth known relatively little about Mrs.

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RHS Celebrates Black History Month

A Dangerous Occupation

Clarence W. McNabb, a son of Mr. S.W. McNabb of Longwood, was killed Monday by the explosion of a boiler-head on a locomotive at Topeka, Kan. He was a fireman for the Rock Island road.

Ridge Record
July 11, 1902

Illinois Senate President Emil Jones, Jr. took time on Good Friday to spend an hour at Ridge Historical Society chatting with a room full of old friends from the Morgan Park neighborhood where he grew up. Exhibit cases surrounding them featured the stories of the churches, the families, Shoop School and its strong, unforgettable teachers, World War II heroes and the accomplishments of early businessmen, educators, doctors, firefighters and policemen. As he walked from one case to the next, he recognized photos of childhood friends, chuckled at the list of Shoop teachers, most of whom also lived in the community. He told stories of the places he played and rode his bike, and admitted to mischievous tendencies.

The visit came six weeks after the Feb. 13 opening of the exhibit when several speakers related stories of how their own families had come to the prairie-like area between Vincennes, 108th St., the Pennsylvania RR tracks and 115th St. They bought land, built houses, opened businesses and founded churches. Beth Eden Baptist Church was founded in 1891, and Arnett Chapel A.M.E. Church in 1898.

A former resident named Billy Burns spent years collecting whatever artifacts he could, and taped interviews with many old-timers or their families. He died several years ago before the book he hoped to write was assembled, and because he hadn't lived in Morgan Park for a number of years, everyone assumed his notes and all of the borrowed collections had been lost. Just a few days before the opening of the exhibit, one of the committee members, Dottie

Connie, reached Shirley Burns, his first wife and mother of his children, who was introduced as "the Mystery Guest." She assured the audience of East Morgan Parkers that she and her daughter Jennifer still have everything Burns collected and that she would do whatever is necessary to share his research. Furthermore, she added, that very day—February 13 was Bill Burns' birthday.

Discussions for the possibility of beginning a local collection and featuring a February exhibit were not even begun until shortly after the New Year. To begin, Sue Delves telephoned Peggy Jackson Chase, a former Morgan Park High School teacher now living in Roselle, and Robert Wooten Sr., prominent musician and retired educator. They contacted Dorothy Connie whose family came in 1918 about the same time as Peggy Chase's, and Mercer Jackson Billheimer and Louis Hooper who have been

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Ridge Historical Society NEWSLETTER

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Mrs. Heineman

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Heineman until recently. A chance Google search (bless the Internet!) on her name turned up, "Reflections on a Life Well Lived - Cora deGraff Heineman (1874 - 1959) A Memoir" compiled from Cora's own writings by Alan Fischer (her grandson) and Ellen deGraff Teller (her niece) and edited by Pat Kuessner. This thoughtful and tender book fills in much basic information about Mrs. Heineman's life, and then colors it richly with her own wonderful words. (The over-sized softcover book is still available by mail-order from Ellen Teller for \$22 plus postage.)

The Ridge Historical Society sells Mrs. Heineman's 12 page "History of Beverly Hills" alone for \$3.00. Anyone interested in viewing her manuscript and notes must call 773-881-1675 to arrange an appointment with an archivist.

Linda Lamberty



Black History Month

Continued from Page 2

here since the 1920's. This core group, meeting weekly, continues to expand, just as the collection grows, and they share new discoveries every Tuesday afternoon.

On a Saturday afternoon later in February, Marsha Bolden came from Ypsilanti, MI. to tell stories from her book, "Growing Up Brown in Morgan Park," followed by Alice Robinson Hill, an elegantly dressed 95 year old lady who took the microphone and related stories of her family who moved to Morgan Park in 1921. Part III was an impromptu bongo drum performance by Marsha's brother Michael Bolden, who has visited many other cultures to compare rhythms and drumming styles.

And the now-faithful new audience (by now, also new RHS members) came again March 25 to reminisce with Senate President Jones. This group continues to meet at RHS on Tuesdays.

The exhibit will shift in mid-April, and most of the material will continue to be shown. Copies of all exhibited materials will be archived at RHS. The collection will continue to grow as the committee develops an ongoing schedule of meetings, probably monthly, in preparation for February 2006.

Sue Delves

IN MEMORIAL

It is with great sadness that we inform our readers of the passing of Elmer Johnson on April 17th. Elmer was the Editor of the RHS Newsletter for many years, as well as an exemplary volunteer in the community. We wish to extend our sincere condolences to his family. Plans for a memorial service are pending.

An Electrifying Visit

Lightning played a very peculiar prank on last Friday morning at nine-thirty, when it struck the flat building at 10044 Charles Street.

The bolt of lightning struck the chimney, following it to the basement, where it struck a large water boiler. It then went back up the chimney, forcing out the covering over the chimney openings in both flats. In Mr. Boyer's flat it followed a path around the rooms, breaking eight windows and after doing considerable damage passed out through the front window. Considerable plastering fell, several pieces falling on the go-cart which held the baby. Fortunately the baby was not hurt. Mrs. Boyer received a severe shock and was under the doctor's care for a couple of days. Mrs. Teed was thrown from her chair but was uninjured.

*The Weekly Review
June 26, 1915*



WHAT'S ON YOUR HEAD?

NEWS BRIEFS

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

One Man's Castle is Another Man's Hovel

It is about time that the village authorities pay some attention to our building laws. Here we are, a community made up of intelligent people and running along with building laws that would no doubt be creditable to a backwoods village. Also the restrictions on plumbing are said to be lax.

Our building ordinances are so lax that no permit is required for a building of less than \$400 value.

Look at the tumbledown shacks along Vincennes Road. Just a little pile of bricks laid around a hole in the ground and a chimney to carry out the smoke from the stove, but no sanitary arrangements whatsoever.

Town Talk
June 7, 1913

For lots of ideas on toppers, check out the Beverly Arts Center's April/May HATS! gallery exhibit and Ridge Historical Society's **CAN YOU TOP THIS?** exhibit of historical and vintage headgear.

The Beverly Arts Center hosts an art exhibit with a hat theme April 29 to May 21, with opening reception on April 29, 6 to 9 PM, at the Center, 2407 W. 111th St., Chicago. Artists working in various media will be showing works that are hat-related, including actual hats, wearable art, photographs of people wearing hats and paintings of hats.

During this reception a video entitled, "What Is It About Hats? - A Documentary About The People Under The Brim" will be shown, made by New York milliner and filmmaker, Andee Kinzy.

On Sunday, May 1, Ridge Historical Society, 10621 S. Seeley Ave., will host a Hat Tea to inaugurate its **CAN YOU TOP THIS?** exhibit of hats from the Society's costume collection, plus vintage hats on loan from local collectors. This event will open at 2 PM with program and showing of the "What Is It About Hats?" film. Admission to the public is \$8.00, or \$5.00 for Society members. Here's a chance to wear your grandest hat!

The Beverly Arts Center's exhibit is under the direction of Jennifer O'Connor, Gallery Curator. Ridge Historical Society's exhibit and a variety of programs are being put together by Costume Curator, Pat McGrail, Museum Cu-

rator, Edris Hoover, and Vice President and Program Chair, Linda Lamberty.

For further information on BAC, please call 773-445-3838. For Ridge Historical information OR OFFERS TO LOAN HATS OR REMARKABLE PHOTOS OF HATS, please call 773-881-1675.

CARL SPENCER BICYCLE EXHIBIT TO TAKE CENTER STAGE FOR UPCOMING CYCLE RELATED EVENTS

BAPA is again sponsoring the "Beverly Hills Cycling Classic" on Friday, July 8th, and RHS will be more involved than ever before. With frontage on both Longwood Drive and Seeley Avenue, we'll be taking advantage of our double views of the race and hosting a lively party on race day. To get everyone in the mood, we are planning a bicycle theme for our entry in the Memorial Day parade and for programs in June. A limited number of tickets is available for \$40. per person for this very special party. Reserve by mail or email to RHS.

A significant feature on display will be the bicycle our own Carl Spencer rode from the Atlantic to the Pacific to commemorate the 200th anniversary of the U.S. Marine Corps. That, with his memorabilia (RHS's only permanent exhibit to date) will be brought upstairs and repositioned to take center-stage in the foyer at the heart of our cycle-related events. We hope Carl will make himself available to us, too, because no one tells of his remarkable achievements like he does!

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS FALL 2004 AND SPRING 2005

Kay B. Aurigemma
 Helen C. Ayers
 Mercer Billheimer
 Bill & Lynn Buckley
 Edward Bush
 Larry Busking
 Patricia A. Collier
 Dorothy S. Connie
 Pamela Cotten
 Suzanne Burke
 John Dreznes
 Mary Catherine Foley
 Patrick & Mary Gill
 John and Susan Geneck
 Bill & Becky Gierhahn
 Judith J. Goetz
 Wren & Joseph Gordon

Norman & Karen (Penny) Kerr
 James & Colleen Kintz
 Joseph A. Levato
 Jim, Wendy and Bethany Naylor
 William R. Nesbitt
 Oziel F. Norris
 Bart O'Toole
 William Ririe
 Dr. John M. Ross
 Herman & Lois Schell
 Phil Sherlock
 Dr. Beryl Shingle
 Marian and Richard Skipworth
 John & Monica Somerville
 Connie Swett
 John Tolley, Jr.
 Andrew Zegel

RECENT MEMORIAL GIFTS

Marcella V. Meyer has sent a generous memorial gift in honor of her late brother-in-law, **Theodore (Ted) Meyer**, seven-term Republican congressman in the Illinois House, from 1966 to 1972, and long-time Beverly resident. He was also a member of the Illinois Pollution Control Board, from which he retired in 2002. He was a graduate of St. Ignatius College Prep, John Carroll University and DePaul University College of Law. He is survived by his wife, Marilu; daughter, Jean Meyer; son, Joseph Meyer and many nieces and nephews.

MEMORIAL GIFTS IN HONOR OF:

Jean Barclay by Joyce and Mel Black

Jean Barclay by Joan Wynne Murphy

Alice Durkin Stanton by Shirley J. Haas

Catherine Lehmann, Virginia Nothnagle, Dorothy Schulenberg, Alice Durkin Stanton and **William Wendt** by Joan Wynne Murphy

**RECENT ANNUAL FUND DONORS**

Robert Filipiak
 Carol Flynn
 Jennifer and Sean Kenny
 Mildred Lamberty Kitzmiller
 Frank and Barbara Lucente
 Dorothy Lawrence
 Ed & Lori McGunn and Corporate Safe Specialists
 Brian and Carol Murphy
 Marie and Bill Sandstrom
 Gary Westefer



MEMBERSHIP RENEWALS ARE DUE. YOU SHOULD HAVE RECEIVED YOUR RENEWAL FORM IN THE LAST NEWSLETTER. THANK YOU-IF YOU HAVE ALREADY SENT IN YOUR RENEWAL. WE APPRECIATE YOUR GENEROSITY! WELCOME TO OUR NEW MEMBERSHIP CHAIRPERSON, JEFF SEBEK.

**Ethnic
"Cleansing"**

The tribe of Russian gypsies that has been in the neighborhood for some time tried to settle in Purington last Monday and had to be driven out by Officers Ketcham and Airey with the hose and a good pressure of water. The treatment was thoroughly successful.

Ridge Record
 May 9, 1902

NOT TO BE MISSED**A Calendar of Events and Attractions****CAN YOU TOP THIS?**

An Exhibit of Historical and Vintage Headwear.

Opening Exhibit Tea

Sunday May 1, 2 PM

See Page 4 for details

**BAPA Beverly Hills
Classic Bicycle Race**
Friday, July 8.

RHS will host a party on race day with views of the race on both Seeley and Longwood. Other cycling themed events and programs will take place in June in connection with the event. See Page 4 for details.

He Couldn't Catch 'Em

Tuesday morning Mr. J.W. Ketcham discovered a strange dog in his barn which seemed to be mad. He got a gun and chased it northward through Washington Heights to Fernwood, where he lost sight of it. It bit several dogs on the way. He fired at it once or twice, but missed. No one knows what became of it.

Ridge Record
July 1911



Ridge Historical Society

NEWSLETTER

Ridge Historical Society
10621 S. Seeley Ave.
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DATED
MATERIAL

FIRST CLASS
MAIL

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