Ridge Historical Society
RECORD
BEVERLY HILLS, MORGAN PARK, WASHINGTON HEIGHTS & MT. GREENWOOD

Morgan Park United Methodist Church celebrates 125 years of history

By Sue Delves

"The Paper Saver is the historian's hero or heroine! What a joy it has been to discover reminiscences of earliest members, written in their exquisite prose and careful penmanship; Mary Wilcox Barnard's recollections of Methodist meetings in the 1850s and '60s; Dr. German's remarks for noteworthy occasions, always written on scrap paper and eventually bundled together and tied with string; letters written from afar by early members expressing their warm admiration for Dr. German and the Methodists; and a receipt for every expenditure into the 1920s. Facts not found at MPUMC were unearthed at Ridge Historical Society in files lovingly begun in the 1920s by Walker Librarian Clara German.

An early photo of Dr William German, founder of Morgan Park United Methodist Church. From the RHS collection.

And it is no surprise to learn that the Historical Society's set of glass slides of 1892 Morgan Park buildings originally were owned by Dr. German. Need we say we have formed an uncommon bond of affection for this kind, intelligent Christian gentlemen?"

--Preamble, 1987, on the 100th Anniversary of the founding of the Church

"In the spring of 1887, a few folks living in the little village of Morgan Park resolved to establish among them the worship of God after the manner of the people called Methodists."

One hundred and twenty-five years later, Morgan Park United Methodist Church, at the corner of South Longwood Drive and 110th Place in Chicago, celebrated those few folks and the church they established. The congregation observed its 125th anniversary Saturday,

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The first Methodist Church built by Dr. German across from his home on Prospect. The building still stands and is still used as a church. From the RHS collection.

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Open to the public
Tuesday 2 - 5 p.m.
Thursday 2 - 5 p.m.
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or by appointment

Look for the Ridge Historical Society on Facebook.

Methodist, from page 1

May 19 with a banquet at the church; and Sunday morning, when Northern Illinois Conference Bishop Rev. Hee-Soo Jung spoke for the Service of Celebration.

The beginning of the 125th year coincided with the arrival in July 2011 of a new pastor, Rev. Dennis C. Langdon, who enthusiastically created special Sundays such as 'Holy Humor' Sunday and a Homecoming Day for former members.

The church was founded by Dr. William German, the village doctor, whose family in Canada was Methodist. He was told by church authorities he couldn't start a Methodist church in Morgan Park "because Morgan Park is a Baptist town." (The Baptist Seminary, now Chicago Theological Seminary in Hyde Park, was part of Morgan Park Academy.) There had been occasional Methodist services and a revival on 95th St. and Western Ave. as early as the 1850s and '60s. Those early Methodists were among the first local settlers – Lacores and Barnards.

In 1887, Morgan Park consisted of fewer than 100 buildings. Center of business was the little railroad depot, besides which there was only one grocery store and a general store, no paved streets or sidewalks and no sewage system. There was a one-room school, Congregational and Baptist churches, but no Methodist Church.

The first small church, across from Dr. German's home, was the building that still stands at the corner of Prospect and Homewood. By 1908, the time had come to "move into the heart of the community because Morgan Park was growing uphill to the west." The congregation purchased a lot at Arlington and Washington Aves. (110th Place and Longwood). Groundbreaking for the present building 100 years ago was held on the 25th anniversary. The village architect H. H. Waterman designed the edifice, considered by many to be the finest example of Prairie architecture in the community.

The design features a sanctuary built with a half-round arrangement of pews beneath the soft light of the blue, green and gold stained glass dome. Large stained glass windows on the south, picturing Jesus and the children were given by England J. Barker, founder of UARCO and the first president of the original Beverly Bank. Several of the art nouveau windows at the rear of the sanctuary were given as memorials honoring charter members.

Sanctuary seating could be expanded by

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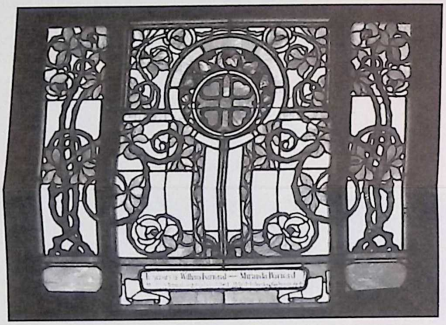

The Barnard memorial window at Morgan Park United Methodist Church. Several early prominent citizens donated memorial windows to the church. Photo by C. Flynn.

The current Morgan Park United Methodist Church at 110th Place and Longwood, designed by H. H. Waterman in the Prairie style, built in 1925. Photo by C. Flynn.

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A few more words on sidewalks…

By Carol Flynn

In the last newsletter, we ran an article on the old sidewalks and brick streets of Beverly Hills/Morgan Park. Another historic street name imprint has been located at the southwest corner of 108th and Drew. The imprint reads *'Groveland Court,'* the pre-annexation name of Drew St.

Robert Langston, collections volunteer, also came across the following excerpts transcribed from an oral history with Owen Price conducted in 1975.

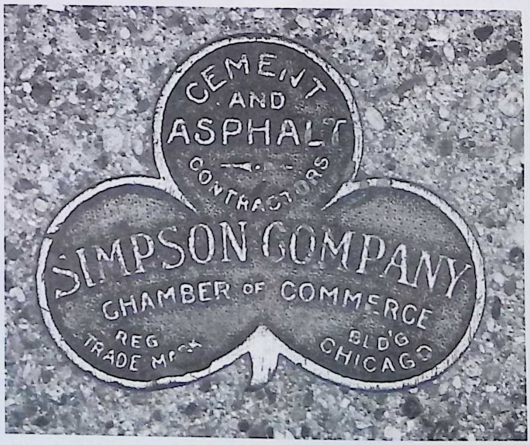
"Here is an interesting memory. They started to pave 111th Street with brick when I was maybe six years old and lived on 111th where I was born. They started with that pavement and they piled all the bricks up alongside the street. Those piles of bricks were there for two years before they actually started to lay them. They got into some legal high hassle. I think it was with the streetcar company. You see there were two streetcar lines then and the Village insisted the streetcar company should pave their portion of the street. They didn't want to and they got into some sort of a suit. In the meantime the bricks all stood in the piles along the street. Boy, did we have fun with those bricks. We'd build houses with them and run up and down the piles of bricks. I remember the workmen and watching them lay those bricks. Those bricks are still there and the streetcar tracks are still there."

RHS member, Marnie Veghte emailed:

"I enjoyed your RHS story – and I've seen the sidewalk imprints you mentioned….You would be good people to ask the following: Do you know of any squares of sidewalk paving that have in the corner the imprint, inside a heart shape, of the maker, SIMPSON Construction Co.? This was a company owned by my grandfather, and I would love to go and take pictures of the imprint to send to his surviving family members!"

Marnie, your request led us to explore sidewalk stamps, or 'contractor stamps,' and the Simpson Construction Company. Municipal codes often mandate that the contractor building the walk place a stamp or plate in the walk in front of each lot. Usually this is an actual stamp in the newly formed concrete. Less common is a brass plate embedded flush with the walk.

From old documents on line, it seems the Simpson Construction Co. was an early and innovative Chicago company in the cement industry, with references back to the 1890s. There was mention of a sidewalk brass plate carrying the name Simpson Company at 33rd St. and Wesley, in Berwyn. This called for a field trip to the site. The clover-shaped plate, unfortunately undated, is pictured here. The address is the Chamber of Commerce Building, Chicago, built at LaSalle and Washington Sts. in 1888-89, and demolished in 1928.



Sidewalk imprint of Groveland Court at 108th and Drew (top). Simpson Company sidewalk plate at 33rd and Wesley, Berwyn. Plates and stamps are embedded in the concrete to identify the contractor that installed the sidewalk. Photos by C. Flynn.

Girl Scouts anniversary exhibit opening September 9 at RHS

By Carol Flynn

Juliette Gordon Low of Savannah, Ga., started the U. S. Girl Scouting movement on March 12, 1912, by registering 18 girls as the founding troop. Mrs. Low sold her necklace of rare matched pearls for $8,000 to finance the operation in its early days.

The organization was incorporated in 1915, and by 1920, Girl Scouts was a going concern with its own uniform, handbook, constitution and bylaws. And today, there are over 3.2 million members world-wide.

According to B. LaRue Orullian, the National President when the Girls Scouts turned 80, in a *Girl Scout Leader*, Winter 1991, article, "The purpose of the Movement has always been to fill the needs of the girl, to provide a place where she can develop self-esteem and leadership ability, where she can learn to recognize her own strengths and weaknesses – and, most important, where she can try her wings while enjoying a supportive all-girl setting."

Beginning September 9, RHS will showcase an exhibit on the history of Girl Scouts of Chicago, with reference to our local neighborhoods, and some materials on the current council, Girl Scouts of Greater Chicago and Northwest Indiana. The exhibit will present uniforms, books and badges through the years. It will include an interactive component, an information 'hunt', for visiting Girl Scouts wishing to earn a stamp for their Girl Scout 'passports.'

The exhibit is under the direction of RHS Board member Carol Macola, a Girl Scout for over 40 years. Carol started as a Brownie in Troop 706 at the Morgan Park United Methodist Church.

She has been a leader of troops from the Daisy level through Senior Girl Scouts, and a Service Unit Coordinator for the Morgan Park/West Beverly neighborhood.

Currently, Carol is a Council trainer and a Council delegate, and is assisting one of the council historians organizing archival materials.

If you or someone you know would like to be involved in the exhibit, from loaning items and pictures for display to sharing stories to working on the set-up/staffing of the exhibit, please leave a message at RHS (773-881-1675, ridgehistory@hotmail.com).

We enthusiastically welcome community participation in this project!

Bethany Union Church Girl Scout Troop ready to march in the 1973 Memorial Day parade. From the RHS collection.

A changing of the guard

By Edris Hoover, President

At the RHS Annual Meeting in February I moved into my second term as Ridge Historical Society Vice President - Program Chairman, a position in which I felt very comfortable knowing there was a competent, experienced President, Doris Moulton, in charge.

Thanks to Doris Moulton (left), RHS President from 2007-2012 and Board member emeritus, for her many years of service; and welcome to Edris Hoover (right), new RHS President. Photo by C. Flynn.

Doris had been President several years ago and was willing to step up again to a second 5 year term of which 2012 would be the last year. Then in March, I found myself called upon to step into the President's role as provided for by our Bylaws.

Doris has given untold hours and vast amounts of energy to RHS over the years. She has been especially vigilant in maintaining our home, the Graver-Discoll House.

Doris has seen progress and development in our goal setting and committee structure, expanded the scope of our administrative office and worked with our Treasurer, Bill Sandstrom. She has always been available for decisionmaking, work days and social events, and has represented RHS in the community.

So it is a challenge and an opportunity to follow her leadership model. As most of you know I am a life-long product of Beverly Hills/Morgan Park. My father, John Baily, was Treasurer of RHS for many years.

My professional career was spent in Chicago and in Washington, D. C. in schools and with The American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists as Administrator of the Resource Center and Library. More recently you may have found me as a volunteer at the Beverly Arts Center, as an estate liquidator and/or as a member of Trinity United Methodist Church.

History from the minutia to the big picture has always been a part of my outlook and I cannot resist the quest for interesting artifacts and information. I see RHS at a pivotal point in our growth where we have the opportunity to move into a role as a more serious preserver of our history, as an educational resource and as a valued contributor among similar organizations.

Working with dedicated and talented directors and volunteers offers me a wonderful way to be a participant in that future. I take it seriously and I welcome the challenge.

Garage sale set for September 29-30

RHS is accepting donations of items (no clothes) and 'better' books for the annual Garage and Book Sale. Call RHS at 773-881-1675 or email ridgehistory@hotmail.com to arrange drop-off. And mark your calendar to attend (see RHS calendar on last page)!

RHS Garage Sale 2011, from left, Sue Delves, Cathy Majeske and Marnie Veghte. Photo by L. Lamberty.

David Joens, PhD., Director of the Illinois State Archives visits RHS

By Edris Hoover

Ridge Historical Society is the very fortunate recipient of a priceless archive from the Thomas Morgan Family, the early owners and developers of the area after which Morgan Park is named. The donor was the late Anne Morgan Moore Colgin, the great-great-granddaughter of Thomas Morgan.

On March 15, 2012 David Joens, Director of the Illinois State Archives paid a brief visit to RHS to see these materials. The meeting was arranged by RHS Director Joe O'Connor.

This informal visit by our state's top archivist was a very productive opportunity to get advice and to spread some awareness of what we have. Mr. Joens was joined in the RHS ' basement' by Edris Hoover, RHS collections volunteer Robert Langston, and Joe O'Connor.

The Morgan Archive covers a period from when this area was just being opened up to European settlers, and also includes some family documents and materials relating to their home in England before coming here.

There are hand-drawn maps, notes and journals, sketches of houses and other locations, legal documents and deeds, and notes on Morgan's travels throughout the world. Mr. Joens was quite interested to briefly examine some of the materials.

"This is outstanding stuff, as good as any museum has," said Joens. Secure storage in our 'basement' is the best place for temperature and humidity control at present. Our next steps are to understand what we have in more detail and to assess the needs for conservation.

Joens suggestions included:

1. Start by preparing a detailed description of what we have.

2. Organize and provide for accessibility perhaps through digitization.

3. Communicate with other organizations such as Chicago History Museum, as an equal, to network regarding study of the archive.

4. Consider the potential of publishing papers or at least an annotated bibliography.

Joens also directed us to a conservation grant from ISHRAB (Illinois State Historical Records Advisory Board) which could give us some supplies and needed archiving materials.

Robert Langston became the point person on the grant and with Joe O'Connor put together an application within two days' time to meet the deadline. RHS was fortunate to have been awarded the $2,410 grant, to be matched by in-kind volunteer hours, and is now obtaining some of the working materials.

More will certainly be forthcoming regarding the Morgan Archive which really puts Ridge Historical Society 'On the Map'!

With summer comes farmers markets. This picture from the RHS collection remembers the Van Laten Farmstand, a fixture on Western Ave. for over 55 years. The Van Laten family owned/leased several parcels of land in the area. The website for Merrionette Park states: "1940-41 James Merrion built 125 single family homes in unincorporated Cook County on property known as Van Latens Farm. The original Merrionette Park was bound by the Grand Trunk railroad tracks on the east, and Troy and Kedzie on the west."

Collections Committee carries on

Thank you to the donors who contributed funds to buy archiving supplies, boxes and shelving. Also thanks to donors who increased the RHS collections of genealogies, pamphlets, documents and photographs on local families, businesses, schools, social and civic organizations; maps; railroad memorabilia; and cultural memorabilia.

Recent donors include:

Pat Mc Grail	Peg Kapustiak	Edris Hoover
Family of Joan Wynne Murphy	Sue Delves	Laurie Kosky
Harold Wolff	Jennifer Kenny	Linda Lamberty
Lois and Herman Schell	Linda Lane	Carol Flynn
Roy Fonda	Jennifer Ehle	Gary Westefer
Eamon Rago	Winifred Cherry	Robert Langston
	Katharine Cippola	Sue Cummings
	Judith Caldwell	

Collections volunteers at work photographing and labeling the costume collection. From left, Cathy Majeske, Pat McGrail, Sue Cummings and Patti Graber. Photo by C. Flynn.

Would like to be part of our team of collections volunteers? Call 773-881-1675 or email ridgehistory@hotmail.com.

Thanks to BAPA for their email blast!

Thanks to Matt Walsh and our colleagues at the Beverly Area Planning Association for their email blast and advertisement in the Villager. Several volunteers have been recruited through BAPA's support and help.

Summer projects are underway

RHS is completing another successful summer projects period with fantastic archiving and collections volunteers! They photographed, accessioned, and sewed identifying labels into almost 400 pieces of vintage clothing and hats. Plus they assigned 'search terms' and accessioned almost 300 photographs, scrapbooks and objects.

Volunteers included:

Pat McGrail	Peg Kapustiak	Mary Brandt	Peggy Gannon
Patti Graber	Linda Lane	Jennifer Kenny	Sarah Berkey
Jeanne Hokens	Sue Cummings	Robert Langston	Lynn Meltzer
Marcia Thomas	Paula Everett	Cathy Majeske	Susan O'Neill

Methodist, from page 2

raising the doors of the north wall, opening into the Sunday School auditorium, where French doors on the balcony and main floor led to numerous small classrooms.

In 1925, as the church reached a membership of 1,000, an addition designed by Architects Perkins, Fellows & Hamilton extended the church north on Longwood, adding more Sunday School rooms, a large kitchen and banquet hall, and a gymnasium. These spaces are used today for church events and by the Council Oak Montessori School.

The Good Samaritan Chapel is popular for small weddings and other intimate services. A portion of the chapel's altar floor can be removed to access a baptistery for those who prefer baptism by immersion. Eternal Life Ministries currently uses the chapel for Sunday morning worship.

The Maple-Morgan Park Community Food Pantry, which serves close to 1,000 persons each month, also calls MPUMC home. The Food Pantry is a ministry of the Beverly/Morgan Park Community of Churches, a network formed to provide charitable services.

A pastor remarked in 1913 that, "Our church has an open door for everything of community interest. I want our church to be of service to everybody." In 2012, it is "a diverse community of faith, serving, caring and sharing since 1887," and "a reconciling congregation since 2010."

In a hallway near Pastor Langdon's office are photographs of every pastor who has served the church, but only one layman – Dr. William Henry German. He continued to be active in the life of the church until his death in 1945.

Mark your calendar for these exciting events

September 9, 2012 – opening of the exhibit on the 100th Anniversary of Girl Scouts at the national and local level.
RHS, 10621 S. Seeley Ave. Museum open to the public Tuesday, Thursday and Sunday from 2:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m., or by appointment. Girl Scouts/troops are invited to attend and use the interactive component for 'passport stamps.' For information call 773-881-1675 or email ridgehistory@hotmail.com.

September 29 - 30: RHS Annual Garage Sale and "Better" Book Sale
Saturday, 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.; Sunday, 12:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m. Accepting donations of items and books now for the sale; contact RHS at 773-881-1675 or ridgehistory@hotmail.com for drop-off days and times. Sunday's garage sale, September 30, is held in conjunction with the Beverly Area Planning Association's History Mystery Bike Tour. For more information on the bike tour, contact BAPA at 773-233-3100 or email bapa@bapa.org.

Scouts turn 100
Early photo of Juliette Gordon Low with Girl Scouts, undated, photographer unknown. Photo from Wikipedia. See the full story on page 4

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