



Cornerstone

Lemont Area Historical Society
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ELECTION RESULTS
ONE YEAR TERM
BARBARA BANNON
TONI BLAESER

THREE YEAR TERM
CAROL GARIBAY
DORIS PETERMAN
RICHARD HOMERDING

PROP. AMENDMENTS PASSED

January 2015 Edition

Feb 13 —“Drinkin with Lincoln” Pub Crawl 7pm.

Feb 22- 1:30pm. “Volunteer Appreciation Luncheon”

**“Drinkin with Lincoln” Pub Crawl
7pm. Starting at Smokey Row
\$25 a Ticket**

Please join us at what promises to be a fun, informative and entertaining evening as we take a walk through Lemont's historic hangouts with a pub crawl. Visit the saloons of days gone by to learn their history. Feel free to bring photos or any memorabilia you may have.

It might be that you have never entered a tavern downtown and always wondered what went on behind those closed doors. Now you can find out.

Itinerary: 7pm. start off Smokey Row Antique, Stonehouse Pub, Tom’s Place, Canal Street Pub, The Vault, Nick’s Tavern, and Main Inn.

President Lincoln might join us to keep us on the right path, while the saloon owners tell the history of their bar. A LAHS rep will also be there to answer questions if needed. Souvenir items include a booklet on the history of each bar and a surprise keepsake.

“VOLUNTEER LUNCHEON FEB 22”
We honor our LAHS volunteers on Feb 22 starting at 1:30pm at the museum. The Board is grateful that you are willing to sacrifice your time and talents to further our mission of preserving our rich history and want to say,
“Thank You” **Please RSVP by Feb 20.**

ST. PATRICK OLD SCHOOL HEARING

We wish to ask our members, their family and friends to join us at the Lemont Historic Preservation Commission hearing on
FEB 12 AT 6:30PM. AT THE VILLAGE HALL

Your presence and your interest in this matter is vital. We need to look for another solution besides demolition. – “HELP US!”

NEW DVD’S AVAILABLE

Two new DVD’S for sale, “Canal Walk” with music background and “Lemont Limestone Fen” which is a unique feature of our Heritage Quarry area. Upcoming, “Building the Sanitary & Ship Canal” and an updated version of the Rudy Kling collection with a video clip of air races ready in Feb. Thanks to Richard Lee and Paul Froehle.

President's Message .Best Regards, Sue



Dear Members,
Happy New Year to all of you! We wish you and your family all the very best of health, joy and prosperity for 2015. We really appreciate everything you do for the Society. Working together, we accomplished a lot in 2014 and with your continued help we will do even better in 2015! I am very grateful to all of you for the success of our 2014 events and I am looking forward to an exciting 2015!

We appreciate those who came out for our program at the VFW for the 70th anniversary of D-Day and especially Joe Forzley, Jessie Tasharski, Albert Wend and Mr. Hoinacki for agreeing to speak. We would also like to thank all the folks who brought memorabilia for us to share and who were willing to contribute to the evening's history accounts. Also, a special thank you to Commander Bill Ward for letting us use the VFW facilities.

On February 22nd at 1:30 p.m. we will be hosting our Annual Volunteer Appreciation Luncheon. We do not have the menu set in stone yet, so as soon as it is available, we will post it on the website and on Facebook. Just to make sure that we have enough food, please let us know whether or not you will be attending by calling 630-257-2972 or 630-888-5259 by February 20th. This is a way for LAHS to acknowledge all the volunteers who have given so much throughout the year. We sure hope that you can join us.

On March 7th, the Village of Lemont will be sponsoring their St. Patrick's Day Parade. Several of the Board Members along with

the Lemont Quarrymen participate in the parade. We would absolutely love it if you could join us this year. If you are interested, line-up is at 12:30 pm at Safety Village, the parade starts at 1:00 and then off to the VFW. As long as the weather is cooperative, it is a great afternoon!

We are working on a new exhibit commemorating the 100th Anniversary of the Eastland Disaster in Chicago for an exhibit opening and program in May. As you may or may not know, it concerned the picnic that never happened for Western Electric Workers on July 24, 1915 when the Lake Michigan steamer *The Eastland* tragically rolled over in the Chicago River killing 844 Western Electric workers and family members. Please let us know if you have anything you would like to share to add to our exhibit and program.

Also, March 1st is our membership renewal date. Please do not forget to renew your memberships. Maybe you have a friend or relative who would really enjoy the resources the Historical Society has to offer. Please tell them about us if they do not already know!

Looking forward to seeing you all in 2015!

St. Patrick Day Parade 2014



Genealogy Corner



By Barb Bannon

Research Tool Bin

In the past I have written about the many finds of family history information in our collection of newspapers, documenting events such as births, marriages, deaths and everything interesting in between. I have often used many different search sites that have newspapers available but have tired of repeating the same search entries over and over again.

There is a newer search site available called Elephind; it is a service that searches only online historical digitized newspapers. You can search across many newspaper sites at once and not have to repeat each search separately.

Elephind has indexed 2,677 newspaper titles, more than two and a half million editions, from March 1803 up to August 2013. One well known site included is Chronicling America (from the U.S. Library of Congress) as well as smaller collections like Door County Library in Wisconsin. The smaller sites may be difficult to find with the usual search engines, but are searchable from Elephind. Searching is as easy as any other search engine; it can be done with words or phrases. There is also an advanced more sophisticated search that allows you to narrow the search to any combination of specific newspaper titles, country or range of dates.

Searching for Lemont, Illinois I found the following article in The Plymouth, Marshall County Independent (Indiana) Friday June 28, 1895. It is one of a number I found in different states describing the view other parts of the country had of our town when violence and lawlessness prevailed.

“Ungratefulness”

While any controversy between The Independent and a publication in an other state, is of no concern or interest to our readers, sometimes it is necessary to speak out in "meeting " regarding some matter that does not pertain to Plymouth, and Marshall county. Two weeks ago we commented on the report that the president of the town board of Lemont, Illinois had taken the position that astounded the citizens of that town, by issuing a proclamation; all saloons should be closed on Sundays, between the hours of nine and twelve a. m. This was done because the churches held their regular services at that time. We also spoke about an article that appeared in the Times-Herald, a prize fight that was to take place, the location being kept a secret. The Valparaiso Star, desired to know the location, and being of an obliging turn of mind we gave the information, that it was Lemont. To show how accurate we were. But a few days later an article appeared in the Chicago dailies, telling of a woman who had been shot in this notorious town. It also developed that the whole police force, some twelve in number, were attending a prize fight a few doors from where this high-class mistress received her death wound from a revolver in the hands of an indignant wife. The Observer of that place took exception to the remarks, and got back at us. He says in last week's issue: "Among the leaders in the gang of editorial Jackdaws who delights in saying anything and everything detrimental to Lemont, is A. R. Zimmerman, formerly editor of this paper." The above quotation will surely bear us out in one particular, at least, and that is, we are fully versed with the condition of Lemont. A beautifully located city, in the DesPlaines Valley, with a beautiful surrounding country, natural advantages, that stand pre-eminently above a greater portion of the prairie state of Illinois. Among the citizens of this town are some worthy men and women, as can be found in any locality. But it is truth to say in the minority. A city with great improvements,

electric lights, water works, electric fire alarm, and other improvements utilized by metropolitan cities. But shall we look at the other side. We would fain bury from the gaze of an intelligent community the facts. Over seventy saloons, bawdy houses, gambling halls, dancing halls, and every device that the human mind can originate to defraud the poor illiterate hobo of his hard earned cash. We believe the citizens of Lemont are not responsible for this class of men being among them, but their city officials are responsible for the laws that permit such lawlessness. The mayor permits all saloons to run wide open on Sundays contrary to the laws of Illinois, and tries to smooth it over by ordering them closed on Sunday, between the hours of nine and twelve a. m., giving them the remainder of the day to continue their death dealing business. Now Brother Heavener, while we readily admit the position you are in is not pleasant, do not call names when only a small portion of the truth is told.

The pages found at this site are very legible, easy to view and can easily be enlarged with the viewer. For family historians this is a very good tool to help in finding newspaper articles that will add to the mental image of our ancestor's life and times. Elephind may be found at <http://www.elephind.com>. Additional newspapers are added frequently. And unlike many of the sites I have found recently, it is free!



Mailbox

If you have a general genealogy question please send it via regular mail or email to lahsgenes2@yahoo.com with "Genealogy Corner Mailbox" in the subject and we will do our best to have the answer in the next newsletter.



Connecting Branches

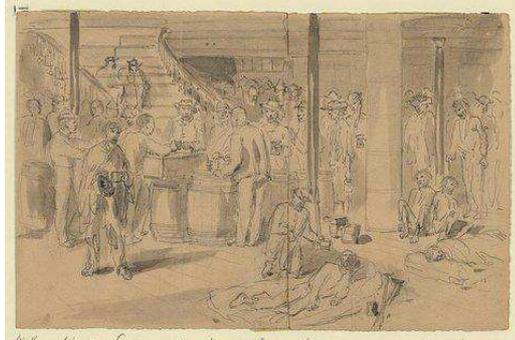
If you are doing research and would like to contact these or other genealogists, please let us know by leaving a message at the Museum 630-257-2972 or by e-mail to lemontahs@sbcglobal.net

"How Coffee Fueled the Civil War"

By JON GRINSPAN

JULY 9, 2014 7:47 PM July 10, 2014

Submitted by Richard Lee



Exchanged Union soldiers receiving rations aboard the ship "New York" Library of Congress source of sketch

It was the greatest coffee run in American history. The Ohio boys had been fighting since morning, trapped in the raging battle of Antietam, in September 1862. Suddenly, a 19-year-old William McKinley appeared, under heavy fire, hauling vats of hot coffee. The men held out tin cups, gulped the brew and started firing again. "It was like putting a new regiment in the fight," their officer recalled. Three decades later, McKinley ran for president in part on this singular act of caffeinated heroism.

At the time, no one found McKinley's act all that strange. For Union soldiers, and the lucky Confederates who could scrounge some, coffee fueled the war. Soldiers drank it before marches, after marches, on patrol, during combat. In their diaries, "coffee" appears more frequently than the words "rifle," "cannon" or "bullet." Ragged veterans and tired nurses agreed with one diarist: "Nobody can 'soldier' without coffee."

Union troops made their coffee everywhere, and with everything: with water from canteens and puddles, brackish bays and Mississippi mud, liquid their horses would not drink. They cooked it over fires of plundered fence rails, or heated mugs in scalding steam-vents on naval gunboats.

(To be continued in next issue)

SOCIETY NEWS 

By Susan Donahue

IN SYMPATHY

We wish to extend our deepest sympathy to Syneta Olson on the passing of her husband, Jack. When I would call their home he would often answer and we always had a pleasant conversation. Very nice man.

We would also like to acknowledge the passing of Bonnie Campbell. She helped us with some research that we needed. I had seen her recently with her husband at a program at the Lemont Public Library on the CCC Camps. Turns out her dad was a supervisor at the one run at Sag.

WEDDINGS:

We had our last wedding of 2014 on December 13. The couple availed themselves of our Christmas decorations minus the Baer Family and their presents. It was the first time I had seen a red runner used, which really fit the season to a tea. We have had 8 Weddings, 1 Baptism, 1 Renewal of Vows and 1 Memorial Service.

BROWN FAMILY VISIT

One of Dr. Bruce Brown's grandsons, Chris and his fiancée and her cousin, came in for a visit..

Stuart Brown, Dr. Brown's son, is working on his family genealogy and, of course, knows and appreciates his Lemont ties. It was more of an exploratory visit in which in a three way phone conversation he, Chris, and myself expressed the possibility of donating some family memorabilia, doing more research on the family and the possibility of a revolving exhibit at the museum of the items.

It was something that is in the infancy stages but one that looks promising for all concerned and updates will keep you informed in our newsletter.

VFW PROGRAM 2014



WWII Veterans left to right: Tessie Tasharski, Joseph Forzley, VFW Commander Bill Ward, Albert Wend & Mr. Hoinacki

WEDDING DEC 13, 2014





STEPPING BACK IN TIME

By Susan Donahue

The recently released movie, "Unbroken" tells the true story of a POW in the Pacific but what about the POW of the European theater?

THE LEMONT JUNE 7, 1945 SCHMITZ TELLS EXPERIENCE AS NAZI PRISONER

Lt. James R. Schmitz, former Lemont newspaperman who is well remembered here, and first to be freed from a German prison, vividly described the "terrible calculated cruelty" of the Nazi's.

Lt. Schmitz was leader of a platoon using mortar weapons. After several days his battalion received orders to cross the Rapido in Italy with the instruction to go and stay at all costs.

"At 4:10pm the following day, June 22, 1944, the Germans launched a counter attack. Only 18 of us were left out of 75, so I decided to save the lives of those left by surrendering and did.

"Then came the "terrible psychological reaction". To begin with no one ever dreams he's going to be taken a prisoner. You can imagine being shot, or wounded and even killed, but a prisoner? No, you just don't think of that."

"When I was taken prisoner there came again that dreadful feeling of loneliness. As part of an army you have supplies and equipment. As a prisoner you're alone, at the mercy of the enemy."

"I was separated from my men, and was in a front line German company command post. Those front Germans are good soldiers. We respected them and they respected us. While there I found out one thing – we knew in our lines that German artillery and mortar fire was severe and tough, but believe me, ours hitting into their lines was a heck of a sight worse."

"The Germans on the front line were living up to the Geneva International Agreement as we did."

After his capture Lt. Schmitz had no water for two days. "They don't seem to drink much water in Europe and have few good wells."

Then he joined a group of 26 other American army officer prisoners. "I felt better then that I wasn't the only American who had been captured, and there was no stigma attached."

"The Germans interrogated me, but I wasn't bothered with personal questions. They asked, "Why are you Americans over here fighting?" and I told them because Germany declared war on America." The German ancestry of my name caused me to lie a little bit, for which I hope I am forgiven."

"We were moved back the second day and had only one piece of bread. It was terrible. There we joined 1,000 other prisoners of war in a small stockade. The Germans came in with a small piece of meat and they told us it was a goat. Well, it looked like a dog and while they furnished us nothing to eat out of or with, we ate anyway. The only containers were old tin cans, and they were passed up and down the line."

"We also received some weak, watery soup. This camp was near Frosinone, from where we were taken by trucks, in convoys of three. We went to the famous Italian Highway 6, and zig-zagged around Rome, as the Germans were worried by the Anzio beachhead, which was established by the Americans, we learned, the day we were captured.

"American planes scrapped the convoys, and I mean they did a good job of it. The other two trucks in our convoy were machine gunned, and some of our soldiers were killed, but ironically there was a feeling of satisfaction at the same time knowing how good our aviation was. My truck was not hit."

"Jan 27-30 we stayed at Spoleto, with 500 in a room 73 ft. long and not very wide.

Conditions there were awful. Food was scarce and some went through garbage for potato peelings, which they would wipe off, and eat later.

"It was a job to keep your self respect under such conditions. Then we were loaded into boxcars for a 90 hour ride to Muhlbeurg and

Stalag 4B, south of Berlin. There was straw on the floor, we lacked food and sanitation facilities were terrible, what with a large group of prisoners, many of whom had dysentery, etc

. (To be continued next issue)

Lemont Area Historical Society

In the Old Stone Church at
306 Lemont Street Lemont, IL 60439
630-257-2972

www.lemonthistorical.org

Museum Hours

10 am to 2 pm Tuesday, Friday
10 am to 1 pm Saturday
1 to 4 pm Sunday

Library Committee

Meets 10 am to 12 noon on Wednesday.
Visits by appointment only.

The main floor of the museum is available for weddings, meetings, and events.

Board of Directors

President Susan Roy
1st Vice President Rose Yates
2nd Vice President Richard Lee
Secretary Susan Donahue
Treasurer Gary Roy

Board Members

Barbara Bannon ,Toni Blaeser, Patricia Camalliere,
Carol Garibay, Richard Homerding, Doris Peterman,
John Quinn,Wm. Uznanski

Committees:

Strategic Planning: Gary Roy, Susan Roy

Resource Center: Carol Garibay

Collections, Library, Genealogy,
Oral Histories, Photographs

Community Outreach: Rose Yates

Publicity, Historic Sites

Human & Financial Resources

Fund Raising- Richard Homerding, Grant Writing

Exhibits: Richard Lee

Program: Gary Roy, Susan Roy

Tours: Gail August

Membership: Susan Donahue

Wedding Committee:Carol Garibay, Susan Donahue

Building & Maintenance: Bill Uznanski, Richard Lee Richard Homerding

Web Master: Paul Froehle

Society members are encouraged to participate in Committees and Subcommittees

Lemont Area Historical Society Membership

Student:\$10 _____
Senior Citizen:\$10.00 -----
Individual: \$15.00 -----
Family: \$25.00 -----

Corporate:\$50
Life Member:\$200-----
Old Quarry Club:\$250.00 -----
Friends of Keepataw:500.00 -----
Athens Marble Club:\$1,000.00 ----
Additional Donation _____

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____

Email Address: _____

Mail to:

LAHS
306 Lemont Street
Lemont, IL 60439

ATHENS MARBLE CLUB MEMBERS
VILLAGE OF LEMONT
LEMONT TOWNSHIP
LEMONT PARK DISTRICT

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