



TIME & PLACE

Carol Stream Historical Society News

OUR GARDEN "PARTY"

Spring time with its budding trees and greening grass makes us want to get out and "dig in the dirt!" At the Historic Farmhouse, the leaves on the apple trees are thinking about making an appearance and the early spring daffodils are smiling at passersby from their cozy southern exposure near the front bay window. Inside the white picket fence on the east side of the house, red peony shoots are peeking through the mulch and it won't be long until the rose bushes and hostas begin to green. Along with all these beauties, however, come the thistles and the binder weed and the ever present buckthorn (a real thorn in any gardener's side.)

We got a jump on the weeds as we held a Spring Garden Clean-up Day on Friday, April 28th. We'd love to have you join us on our next similar adventure. During the spring, summer and fall, the Society will work on the grounds to keep the weeds in check and the flowers in bloom.

Susan Benjamin & Carole Ellermeier
Co-Presidents



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HOW DOES THE FARMHOUSE GARDEN GROW - A PERSPECTIVE

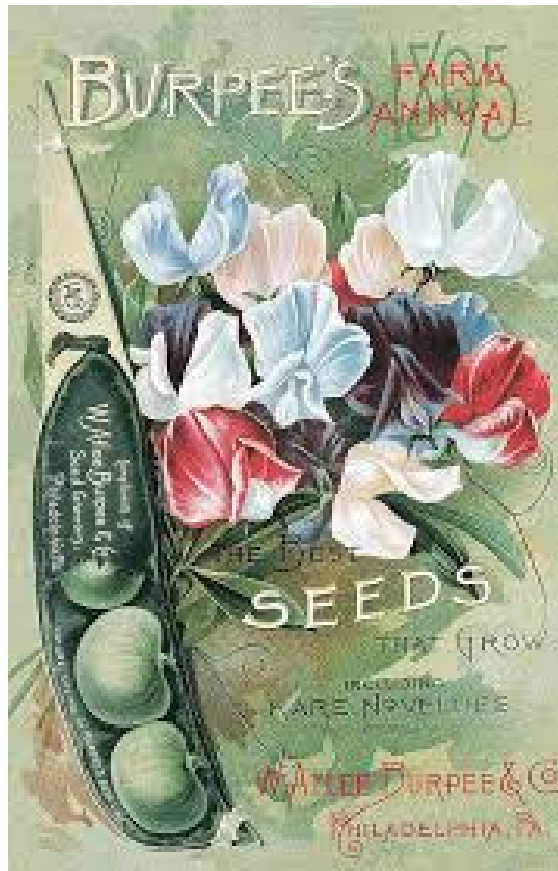
When Carol Yetken Landscape Architects designed the landscaping for the Farmhouse in 2000, the focus was on historic plant materials like those used in the late 1800's and early 1900's. Spirea shrubs and peonies were favorites. Both were hardy and attractive. Peony plants have been known to live for 100 years or more. Day lilies were also used. They too were, and are, hardy and easy to grow—to the point of growing like weeds. These cultivars along with bachelor buttons, hollyhocks, and lambs ear are all found among the Farmhouse plantings.

If Maria Stark, the farm wife who lived there in the late 1800's were surveying the gardens, she would probably be thinking of them a bit differently. She would likely be planning a vegetable and herb garden where the flowers now grow. Of course there would be some flowers but the primary focus would be on what could be grown for

food. Farm wives of the era were responsible for growing large vegetable gardens that were essential for the nutrition and survival of their families. What could not be or was not preserved for winter was eaten fresh as long as it was in season. Fresh fruits and vegetables weren't available out of season. Super markets were still way in the future. Generally only things like sugar, flour and coffee were purchased. All other food was home grown.

What would Mrs. Stark have grown? Her garden would have included things like beans, carrots, tomatoes, rhubarb,

salsify, beets, potatoes, onions, lettuce, squash and pumpkins. She may also have grown cucumbers and cabbages. There may have been a "Three Sisters" planting with corn plants surrounded by pole beans and squash vines. This very effective method of planting benefited all three crops. Most garden items were grown from seed ordered from seed



FARMHOUSE GARDEN

- CONTINUED

One seed company that Mrs. Stark may have ordered from, Burpee Seeds is still going strong. Tending the garden would have been the responsibility of Maria and the children. Water would have been carried by the buckets-full from the pump or windmill and carefully distributed to the growing plants. The fenced-in garden was faithfully weeded and harvested to maximize production. The family's winter diet depended on it and the fresh produce was one of summer's joys. Wild berries, grapes, plums and currents were a welcome addition to summer meals. Finding and gathering the fruits would have been a task involving the children.

So, how was the harvest kept for future use? The farmhouse has a cellar where the garden harvest would have been stored. Root crops such as carrots and potatoes would keep through the winter if stored properly as would apples picked from the orchard. All would have been carefully inspected from time to time throughout the cold months to cull out any that had spoiled.

Home canning was widely used during this time period and greatly extended the variety of foods available in the winter months. Maria Stark would probably have used the process which included the use of glass jars with a two piece jar lid made up of a lid and rubber gasket. Washed and prepared fruits and

vegetables were packed into sterilized jars which were then sealed.

The filled jars were then placed into a boiling water bath and processed for up to fifteen minutes.

After the jars were removed and began to cool, a vacuum seal was formed by

the lids and a popping sound signaled canning success! Prior to the discovery of the effectiveness of the canning process, vegetables such as cucumbers (pickles) and cabbage (sauerkraut) were often placed in heavy ceramic crocks and covered with brine, vinegar, or other pickling agents in order to preserve them. Drying fruits was also common. Providing nutritious meals for the farm family was a huge job that took planning and hard work. Growing your own food was the norm. Oh, how things have changed.



WHAT'S IN THE ARCHIVES?

A WORKSHOP

The Society held an Archive Workshop on February 8 at the Farmhouse. The well-attended event featured a tour of archive storage and organization. Explanations of the use of the Finding Aid and the process used to create and update it were also reviewed. Society Historian, Laura Schmidt, assisted by Kyra Millard, conducted the training.

Laura Schmidt is a professional archivist at the Wade Center located at Wheaton College. Laura holds a Masters in the Science of Information degree from the University of Michigan. Her specialty is in Archives and Records Management. Kyra Millard works with Ms. Schmidt in this ongoing work. Additionally, she is currently curating a new exhibit for the society. Ms. Millard holds a Master of Arts degree in History with a concentration in Public History from Northeastern University in Boston. The Society is most grateful for the dedication and hard work of these very capable professionals.

The Finding Aid for the Society's archives is available on the Carol Stream Historical Society website at <http://www.carolstreamhistorical.com/historicalrecordscollection.html>

History is ongoing and the Society is dedicated to preserving local history. If you have an item of potential historical significance to the Carol Stream community, we would love to hear from you. Photos are of particular interest as are documents with historic significance. Please contact us to learn more:

CarolStreamHistorical@comcast.net or 630.217.1868.



Society members and guests listen intently as Laura Schmidt reviews the procedures used.



By Kyra Millard
Edited by Laura Schmidt

REMEMBERING RAILROADS: THE HISTORY OF RAILROADS IN CAROL STREAM

Illinois has always been a state driven by the railroad, each town crisscrossed by tracks and dotted with stations and depots, some as large as Union Station in Chicago, and others as small and intimate as Gretna Station right here in Carol Stream. To honor this heritage, and in celebration of completing the work organizing the documents and artifacts in the Carol Stream Historical Society's Records Collection¹, a display with railroad memorabilia will be installed in the historic Farmhouse in May. This article provides some insights into the artifacts of that display, and contextual railroad history relating to Carol Stream.

Built in the late 19th century, Gretna Station was originally located north of St Charles Road, along the Chicago and Great Western Railroad line, located on the spot of an old sheep barn on Daniel Kelley's property². The area now known as Carol Stream was originally called Gretna,

giving the depot its name.

The station was moved to its current location in Armstrong Park in 1976 as part of the nation's Bicentennial celebrations.

As a freight station, Gretna Station stood witness to nearly all goods that came through the area. Primarily an agricultural area, grain, dairy, and livestock were the main products shuttled through the station, to or from Chicago, though far more than agricultural goods were shipped along that line.

Evidence of the wide variety of products received through Gretna Station can be found in a ledger on display at the historic farmhouse. This ledger spans from 1901 to 1905, and lists names and orders for several years. This ledger was found in 1974 inside a wall of the station when it was being prepared for relocation. How and why the ledger was stuffed into a wall remains a mystery.

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REMEMBERING RAILROADS: ...IN CAROL STREAM

Continued from page 6

Many names of the original inhabitants of the area can be found on the ledger's pages, including Anning S. Ransom, a New York native who fought in the war of 1812, and who owned many acres of land in the Milton Township³.

Another familiar local name of interest in Gretna's history is the McCormick family. Local historian Jean Moore stated "the line was also used for hauling livestock to and from market as well as shipping prize horses such as the one from Katherine McCormick, mother of Colonel Robert R. McCormick, publisher of the Chicago Tribune and resident at the McCormick estate, Cantigny."⁴ The letter from Katherine McCormick to the station master at Gretna about that particular horse is also on display at the historic farmhouse.

At the time Gretna Station was built, the area was quite prosperous, so it was necessary to build a depot to expand the businesses and encourage the urbanization of the area. In 1874, the population DuPage County was just over 14,000 people, and the value of the livestock alone stood at roughly \$1,452,604,⁵ which is about \$25,633,428 at the 2016 inflation

rate. Gretna Station allowed access to Chicago and other parts of the state that helped turn Carol Stream into the industrialized town of today. In 1987, a century after the station was built, the now iconic caboose was added to accompany the station at Armstrong Park, where they both still stand. The caboose is a 1950s relic that operated on the Elgin, Joliet and Eastern Railroad that further showcases the deep-running connection to the railroads that Carol Stream has held since before the village's incorporation in 1959. Gretna has become part of the fabric of Carol Stream, standing as a reminder of the area's long history, its origins, and its industry.

¹www.carolstreamhistorical.com/historicalrecordscollection.html

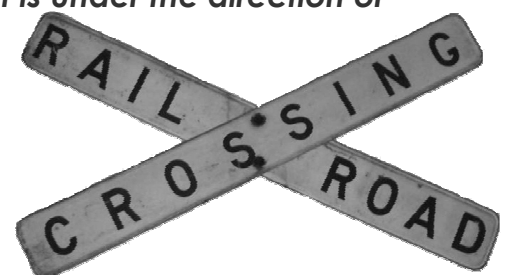
²Doddy, Patrick. Sunday Journal, vol 19 no 25. Nov. 17, 1974.

³<https://www.facebook.com/media/set/?set=oa.951216468272462&type=1>

⁴Transcript, Jean Moore, 1982. Series 2, folder 10a.

⁵DuPage County Historical Society. 1874 Atlas and History of DuPage County, Illinois (Elgin: 1975). Math done from maps of the county.

Now completed, this exhibit will be on display at the Historic Farmhouse on Lies Road. This project is under the direction of Kyra Millard.



HISTORY BY THE SEVENS

1957 Jay Stream began planning to build what was to become Carol Stream

1967 The Community Improvement Committee organized by the Carol Stream Woman's Club launched The Carol Stream News, a volunteer newspaper which continued for 12 years

1977 The Carol Stream Public Library celebrated its 15th Anniversary in its 397 Blackhawk Drive location.

1987 The Village received the Governor's Home Town Award for its leadership in seeking funds to establish the Outreach Community Center. Ross Ferraro is elected Mayor of Carol Stream

1997 A special census found the population of the Village to be at 37,982

2007 Frank Saverino was elected Mayor, ending Ferraro's 20 year tenure

2017 Carol Stream's population stands at 39,667



Newly elected Mayor Ross Ferraro (second from left) and outgoing President Jan Gerzevske (third from left) proudly display the 1987 Governor's Home Town Award sign, along with other Village dignitaries.

MAKE HISTORY -- GET INVOLVED!

We welcome your involvement!
Join us for one, two or more of our projects. Find out more about us by attending a meeting (see the schedule). Talk to our members. We would love to visit with you about how you can be involved from a little to a lot!

Contact us through our website
www.CarolStreamHistorical.com.

Come join us!



JUST PLAY! SEE US THERE!



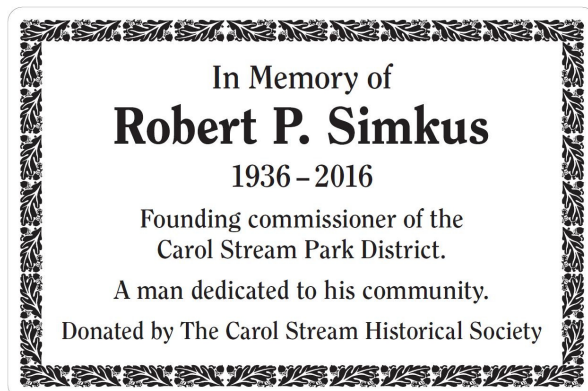
CSHS is joining the fun for the Carol Stream Park District's JustPlay! Event on Saturday, May 20 from 10:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m. at the Town Center. We won't tell you to, "Go fly a kite," but you can make a paper kite to welcome the warmer weather. Paper craft puppet making is also on the agenda. Visit us and JustPlay!

REMEMBERING ROBERT SIMKUS



Robert Simkus, CSPD Board President, seated second from right

On Tuesday, May 23, the Society will dedicate the Robert P. Simkus memorial tree planted in his memory at the Simkus Recreation Center. Mr. Simkus was a charter commissioner of the Carol Stream Park District when it was founded in 1964. He later served as Board president. Mr. Simkus passed away in 2016.



Robert (Bob) Simkus served on the board of the Carol Stream Park District for nearly a quarter of century. During his tenure District officials created 20 parks. The recreation center at Lies and County Farm Roads was approved by voters in the late 1980's while Bob was still a board member. He was

no longer a board member when it opened in 1990 and he was delighted when he learned that it would be named in his honor.

MEMBERSHIP TIME

It's time to renew your membership or join the Carol Stream Historical Society for 2017.

We run on a calendar year and have a modest cash flow based on dues and revenues from events or fundraisers.

Members will be updated about our upcoming events and news quarterly through this newsletter and other email notices.

We would appreciate it if you would pass along the word...and help us preserve the history of Carol Stream.

Questions? Contact us at carolstreamhistorical@comcast.net



2017 MEMBERSHIP FORM

JOIN US!

Please join us in our quest to preserve Carol Stream's heritage. Membership is open to anyone interested in supporting, preserving and presenting Carol Stream's history and heritage.



NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

PHONE _____

EMAIL ADDRESS _____

Special Interest Group (if any) _____

- ☐ I am enclosing my \$10 annual dues
☐ I am enclosing a "Supporting Member" donation in the amount of \$ _____

Please make check payable to: Carol Stream Historical Society

You may mail this to:

Carol Stream Historical/Membership
P.O. Box 88791
Carol Stream IL 60188

Or call: 630.217.1868 or 630.665.0686



Thank you for your support!
CONNECT WITH US:
carolstreamhistorical.com

For CSHS use: Date _____ Pd by: Cash _____ Check # _____

FUTURE

SPRING 2017

MAY 23

Board Meeting

Historic Farmhouse**

7pm

JUNE 27

Board Meeting

CS Public Library

7pm

JULY 25

CS Public Library

7pm

AUGUST 22

CS Public Library

7pm

SEPTEMBER 16

COUNTRY FAIR

Historic Farmhouse

10am to 2pm

SEPTEMBER 26

(Annual Meeting)

Historic Farmhouse

7pm

OCTOBER 24

CS Public Library

7pm

****Meeting location change**

***Please note that in the event of a change of meeting date or location, information will be posted on the Society's website: CarolStreamHistorical.com**



The Carol Stream Historical Society meets on the fourth Tuesday of each month, January through October, unless otherwise noted. Meetings are held at 7:00 p.m. either at the Carol Stream Public Library or at the Historic Farmhouse, 301 Lies Road. Members of the community are always welcome to attend.



LEARN ABOUT US

CarolStreamHistorical.com

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