



Central Square Beautification Project

by **Larry McCasland**
City Administrator

[Reprinted with permission from *The Lockport Reporter* Fall/Winter]

I hope everyone had a relaxing, enjoyable summer here in Lockport, the City of Historic Pride. Speaking of pride, we are constantly trying to make you proud of your City. Aside from the typical road improvement projects and renovation projects, the City has completed numerous beautification projects. Over the past two years alone, we have implemented many beautification projects including our Façade Program, new benches, planters, trash receptacles, banners, decorative signage, etc. The most recent project, the Central Square Beautification Project, was a joint effort between the City, Lockport Township, and the Park District. Hopefully, you have had a chance to see the improvements to the grounds of the Central Square building. The beautiful paver-brick pathways, landscaping, entertainment platform, and decorative fountain really give the Central Square Complex the facelift it needed. Also, benches are to be

installed soon. Standing as one of the most prominent buildings in the City, Central Square needs to be well maintained and aesthetically pleasing, while inviting the community to enjoy the grounds. So please, feel free to stroll along the grounds, rest on a bench, or schedule an organizational event such as an ice cream social. I hope it is reassuring to you that your three governmental bodies are working together to further beautify Lockport. ~



Photo by Char Giardina.

M

essage from the President

Drummed into the consciousness of my childhood and teen years are the many admonitions handed down by my family, church and school. Still ringing in my ears are warnings about life's trials and tribulations and how I should respond in word and deed. The memories of those who influenced me are still vivid in my mind's eye. The legacies of growing up in Lockport have shaped my view of life and have led me to join others in preserving our local genealogical, historical and cultural heritage.



Dr. Reno G. Caneva

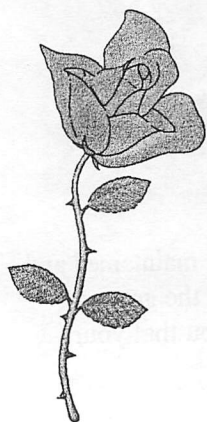
Our Society's main endeavor is to share an understanding of life in Lockport with present and future generations. We aim to impart how Lockport had its beginnings and how our way of life has evolved over the years. With our community and all who seek an understanding about Lockport, we wish to celebrate our town's 175th birthday. A committee is forming to plan observances in 2005-6. Any member or citizen of the community who would like to contribute ideas should contact the Society; this is a community observance and all input is welcome. We also welcome your family stories and historical gleanings for a publication, which will be not only a favorable report on the attributes of our town, but also a recognition of the wrinkles upon its advancing age.

One part of the Lockport story was discussed at the meeting on September 27. I regret that a long-standing scheduling conflict prevented me from attending. However, I have looked through the binders with the photos and information on the homes surveyed, an invaluable contribution to recording our local heritage. I hope the project will be an incentive for our members to come forward with information about their homes and family histories.

Continuing our mission to share information about Lockport area people, we have asked Nancy Bruce Crilly to impart her knowledge from the perspective of local cemeteries, about which she has done extensive research. Join us on October 25 at 9 a.m. at the library in Lockport for a fascinating look back at people from the past.

See you at the library!
—Dr. Reno G. Caneva, president

Special thanks to:



- ❖ Larry McCasland, City Administrator, for giving us permission to reprint his article on Central Square.
- ❖ Jodi Herman, Administrative Assistant, for coordinating the September program on the historic homes survey.
- ❖ Tina Bianco, Debra Chapp and Beverly Krakovec for coordinating with LAGHS board members on our partnership in the history-genealogy room at the library in Lockport.
- ❖ Bonnie Packley, who has generously used her home address for LAGHS mailing address since the beginning of this Society in 2000. [Note the new mailing address indicated on the masthead (right).]

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*Preserving the Past
is our Present
to the Future.*

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www.dvplib.org

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Chasing Your Tale

with Jacqueline Munch

U.S. PORTS OF ARRIVAL

The following information was taken from an article on the internet by Joe Beine titled, "Tips for Determining Your Ancestor's Probable Port of Arrival."

The five major U.S. arrival ports in the 19th and 20th centuries were New York, Boston, Baltimore, Philadelphia and New Orleans. There were also many smaller ports of arrival in the states along our eastern, southern and western coastlines.

Where your ancestors first settled may help in determining their port of arrival. If they first lived in Pennsylvania, try Philadelphia — if Maryland, try Baltimore. Settlers in states along the Mississippi River may have landed at New Orleans, especially before the Civil War. Another popular southern port was Galveston, Texas. After the Civil War, newly built train lines made it easier to travel inland from the east coast.

New York and Boston were often used by Irish immigrants. The "Irish Famine Immigrant" database is available for free searching at the National Archives website, nara.gov. A good resource for locating German immigrants is a set of books titled, "Germans to America," which can be found at major libraries, such as Newberry Library in Chicago, and also at the Wheaton Public Library.

Official U.S. government passenger arrival lists from 1820 through 1945 are available on microfilm from the National Archives and LDS Family History Centers. Also included are Mexican and Canadian border crossing records. The Canadian records began in 1895 and are called "Saint Albans Lists" because they were kept in St. Albans, Vermont prior to being filmed. The Archives does not have lists for any Wisconsin ports, except for Crew Lists. These immigrants usually arrived at a U.S. east coast or Canadian port, often Quebec. The National Archives holdings can be found at nara.gov.

A wealth of detailed information on ports of arrival can be found at Joe Beine's website, genealogybranches.com/arrivalports.html. There are many, many links to passenger lists and indexes.

Another good free website is the "Immigrant Ships Transcribers Guild" at immigrantships.net. One of the best resources is a multi-volume series of books, "Passenger and Immigration Lists Index" by P. William Filby. These are especially helpful for arrivals prior to 1820. Several volumes of this series are available at the Joliet Public Library, Main Branch.

Two good resources are available at our Lockport Library: "They Came In Ships" by John P. Colletta and "American Passenger Arrival Records" by Michael Tepper.

Judy Richardson and Char Giardina recently attended a series of free lectures by Brother Joseph Martin at Lewis University. Many members will remember that he presented a program for LAGHS in May 2002. He will be the presenter at Fox Valley's society September 2004. [Contact me at jlunch@earthlink.com or (815) 838-3795.]



Jacqueline Munch

WELCOME, NEW MEMBERS



John & Dorothy Bell	Lockport
Chris Birkbeck	Lockport
Alice Ernst	Naples, Fla.
Scott Henderson &	
Laura Poelcastro	Lockport
Carole Jacobson	Lockport
Raymond &	
Jeanne Juricic	Crest Hill
William King	Lockport
Les & Deanie Larson	Elwood
Evelyn Lindberg	Lockport
Timothy Pinnick	North Aurora

Minutes of the General Membership Meeting September

1. President Caneva being absent, First Vice President Nancy Wilda called the meeting to order on September 27, 2003, at 8:35 a.m. at the Gladys Fox Museum. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited. Members and guests were welcomed.
2. The minutes of August 23, 2003 were approved as read by Secretary Candy Hrpcha.
3. Treasurer Glenn Carlson reported the balance of \$1,165.83 as of August 31, 2003.
4. Guest speaker, Peggy Veregin, from McGuire Igleski and Associates, presented the findings of surveys conducted on homes in Lockport.
5. The meeting adjourned at 10:00 a.m.
—Candy Hrpcha, Secretary

This Month in History

1857--October 5: John Lane died in Lockport. Ref.: History of Will County, 1878, p. 255.

1852--October 10: The Rock Island "Rocket" pulled the first passenger train between Chicago and Joliet. This line bypassed Lockport and ran through New Lenox, instead. Ref.: Shirley Witt, WCHS Quarterly Spring 1992.

PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

Do You Have the Oldest Home in Lockport?

Program notes from Secretary Candy Hrpcha

The following are my notes from the program on the survey of homes in Lockport. Any individual interested in details about Local Landmark or National Register eligibility should contact Jodi Herman, City Assistant Administrator, at (815) 838.9500.

Scope of residential survey

Peggy Veregin, of McGuire Igleski and Associates, was the guest speaker at the September 27, 2003 meeting. The company was hired by the Lockport Building Commission to complete a residential survey within the historical boundaries the city. There are 150 buildings per survey phase. If businesses, churches and schools are in the survey area, they are included in the report. The survey is being done in phases as money is available. Phase I and II have been completed. The preservation component of the Planning Commission will be using this information.

How information is gathered and assessed

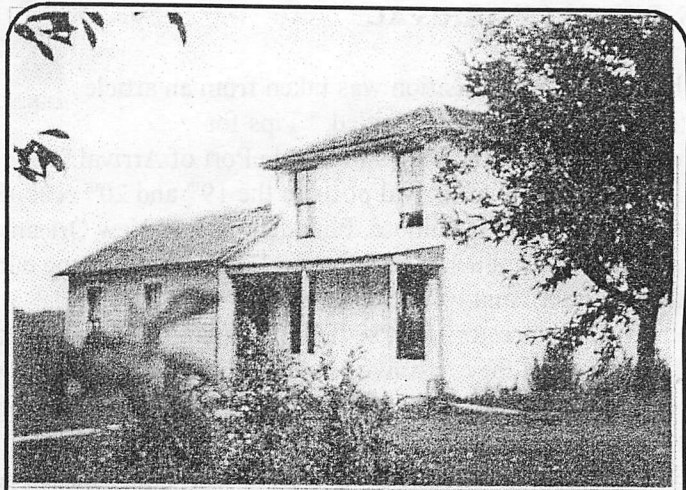
The firm uses a survey form for every building. All information is gathered from public property. They do not enter the property or discuss the building with the current owners. Finding the historical details of any individual house is not the purpose of this survey. Each building is photographed.

Often the age of the house can be determined by its shape, architectural features, original window shape and configuration of doors. The form denotes the building's style, walls, roof, foundation, and significant landscape features such as limestone sidewalks. The original house is sometimes disguised behind subsequent alterations. These alterations could include added porches, unsuitable siding, replacement windows, and additions. The subsequent changes are also noted on the form. Ms. Veregin recommends *The Field Guide to American Houses* by Virginia and Lee McAllister for an excellent reference book on house styles for the U.S.

As an example, a limestone or brick Italianate home from the mid-1800s could have had many changes in its 150 year existence. Porches were often added to these types of buildings in the early 20th century. Frequently decorative woodwork is removed from the overhang, the outside painted or sided, windows replaced and additions added.

National Register eligibility

These two phases reviewed 300 homes and buildings. Of these buildings, twenty-six were found



"The Jindra House" at Thornton (Thorton) & Madison is very likely the oldest home in Lockport. LAGHS members, Alyce Jindra Loose and her daughter, Geri, have documented that the home has been in the family since 1885. Geri is working to pinpoint the date of its construction in the mid-1800s. While recent surveys of homes in Lockport did not extend north of 7th Street, there is no doubt that this house and its occupants have much history to preserve and share. The Jindra family genealogy is filed in the LAGHS archive. ~

Photo from *Lockport Has A Birthday, 1830-1930*.

to possibly meet the city's historical criteria. Of these twenty-six buildings, ten appear to meet the National Register criteria. More buildings could perhaps meet the National Register criteria if they are restored and inappropriate changes removed.

So how can a city use this information?

A city could designate a specific neighborhood as an area of historical significance. Or a city could have a "thematic district," such as buildings constructed of limestone. Those areas or buildings could have specific codes to keep the integrity of the neighborhood or building style.

Now before you start thinking about big brother telling you what to do...

Consider some of the positive possibilities. On individual homes that could meet the criteria for the National Register, federal funds could be available to return those buildings to their historical significance. Of an area has tighter control of building changes, that usually translates into higher values on the homes within that area.

Finally, the changes to the buildings in the historic business district of Lockport should (hopefully) show the positive results of preserving the past where possible. ~

Hail, but not farewell . . .

Ruth Waldvogel retires as LAGHS director

~
Served with civic
organization to save
Central School Building
~



Ruth is pictured here with fellow members of the oral history committee of the Civic and Commerce Association (C&CA). The C&CA worked tirelessly to save Central School from demolition. Committee members, left to right are: Frank Milne, Putnam Milne, Bruce Cheadle, Ruth Waldvogel, Nelson Reed. (Photo from the C&CA commemorative booklet, *Hail and Farewell*, 1935-1989.)

Special thanks are extended to Ruth Waldvogel, who is a charter member of LAGHS and its first Librarian. Ruth is retiring from the board of directors, but she will remain an active member of LAGHS.

Ruth helped get our fledgling LAGHS organization off the ground. She has contributed a wealth of experience, expertise and good will. Ruth served as librarian at the Lockport public library and has served on many local organizations.



Ruth explained the significance of her collection of Christmas memorabilia during the Swedish Heritage Share & Tell/holiday party on November 23, 2002, at the Gladys Fox Museum. (Photo appeared in the Dec. 2002 issue of the LAGHS Newsletter).

Lockport's Old Central Grade School Building

By John M. Lamb

Historic Illinois, April 1979

The Old Central School Building is one of the outstanding structures in Lockport's Historic District. Erected in the 1890s, this three-story, native stone building was designed by a Joliet architect named Barnes, and it served the community's educational needs for seventy-two years.

Since 1967, however, the building has been vacant because of a prolonged legal battle over ownership of the land on which it stands. The case for public ownership was made by a citizen's committee anxious to preserve the structure for public use. This committee shared the expenses of the legal struggle that finally ended in 1976 when the city of Lockport was awarded the property.

The city then appointed a committee to decide the building's future. The committee, which was chaired by two local businessmen, suggested that the building be shared by the city of Lockport, Lockport

Township, and the Lockport Park District. It was proposed that each of those three agencies would use part of the building as offices or, in the case of the park district, as recreational space. To help finance this adaptive use, Will County building-trade unions agreed to allow CETA funds to be used for apprenticeship training on the building.



Photo taken 10/03 by C. Giardina

In January 1978 the city of Lockport received a matching grant from the National Trust for Historic Preservation to hire an architect to do a feasibility study on the proposed use of the old school. The architect chosen was Wallace Rapp of Chicago. His design proposals were accepted by all three governmental agencies, and work will soon begin.

This preservation project was significant in several respects. It combined the resources of Lockport preservationist and three separate local government agencies. It was the first time that CETA has been used by labor unions in their apprentice programs to save construction costs for public works. And finally, the building will not only be saved and rehabilitated to remain a central structure in Lockport's Historic District, it will also continue to serve the community. ~ [Thanks to John M. Lamb

for permission to print this article] 10/03



Snapshots in Time

by Georgene Bankroff

Bridges: a moment in time

Since Lockport lost its Division Street Bridge over the Chicago Sanitary & Ship Canal, we have experienced gridlock early in the morning and again in the afternoon to the extent that it is unbelievable. Some days trying to come into Lockport as early as 1 or 2 p.m. is almost impossible.

Georgene Bankroff

I suppose that is to be expected when one lives in a town, where on the west side of town, bridges lie in wait to make our days frustrating. Because traffic to the south and west side of

Chicago must go through Lockport, bridges have become a way of life.

I remember sitting on 9th Street/Route 7 or at Division Street, waiting for one or the other swing bridge which was allowing boat traffic up and down the canal to swing shut so that we could continue with our business. And how about the hot summer days when the heat made the bridge metal expand, and the traffic had to wait so that it could cool down and swing shut? This was great fun with four children in swim suits and floats on their way to go swimming. Not happy campers!

The second 9th Street Bridge over the I & M Canal was replaced many years ago. The store and the tavern across the street were torn down to make room for the new big Ninth Street Bridge. What great fun it was sled riding down the hill onto the Canal Bank next to the bridge. I realize now that it wasn't nearly as high as some of the hills that the uptown kids had to sled, but we thought that ours was best; anyhow our parents wouldn't allow us to go that far away to sled.

Let's turn back the clock for a moment in time ☞, then I'll continue below.

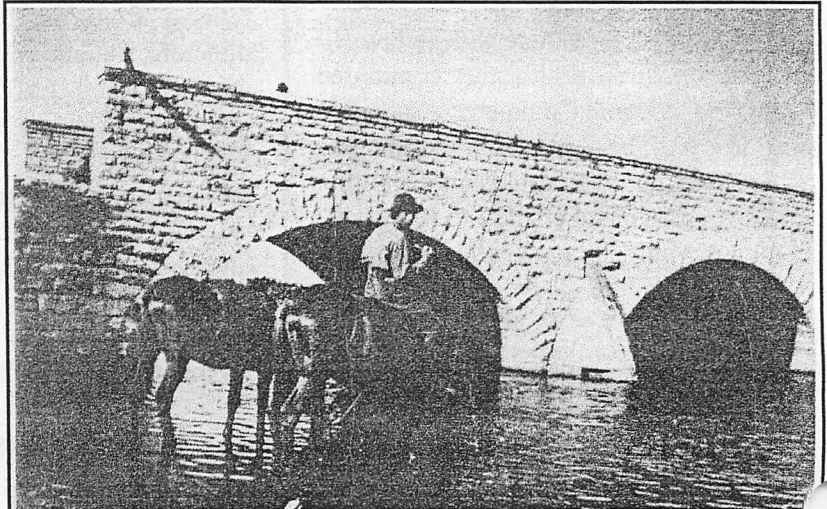
It's almost 100 years later, and we still have our bridge problems.

Don't hold your breath to see a bridge over the Chicago Sanitary & Ship Canal from Caton Farm Road to Bruce Road, although it would solve some of our traffic problems.

The only thing that we don't seem to have a problem with is tolls. Or do we? ~

[You may contact me at KG1990@aol.com, or (815) 838-1862.]

Laghs newsletter 10/03



The original 9th Street bridge was constructed of local limestone, ca. 1868. The attractive seven-arch-structure stands today, out of site, under the present bridge. The photo was taken by Lockport notable, Bruce Cheadle, in the early 1900s.

LOCKPORT BRIDGE GOES INTO CANAL

Drove of Cattle too much for Rickety Old Structure

Joliet Evening Herald News, June 14, 1906

The east span of the Ninth Street Bridge over the Illinois and Michigan Canal at Lockport gave way last night at about 6 o'clock under the weight of fifty heavy cattle. Three of the drove were lost; and Aldermen John Mackin and Thomas Corbley of Lockport, on the bridge at the same time, were precipitated into the none too clean waters.

The accident occurred when Frank Paddock of Homer was driving his drove of heavy cattle to the Santa Fe station for shipment to Chicago. The cattle, it is said, average 1,400 pounds weight, and the rotten old structure gave way under their weight. ~

HELP WANTED!

Please forward any program notices or other items that mention LAGHS that you find in the following newspapers (or other sources):

Chicago Tribune (Metro Section)
Daily Southtown
Herald News
Star
SUN



FORWARD TO: LAGHS, c/o Des Plaines Valley Public Library.

LAGHS and WCHS Join Forces at Civil War Days

~ sponsored by the Dellwood Foundation for Lockport Township Park District ~



❖ Pictured are Glenn and Bonnie Carlson with Marge Greger of the Will County Historical Society, going over some of the items on display at the Volz Fieldhouse in Dellwood Park. LAGHS and WCHS shared space in the building and spoke with many local residents and visitors about our area's connection to the war and how our societies help preserve our heritage.

LAGHS members who volunteered to set up and staff our OUTREACH table during CIVIL WAR DAYS on Sept. 6 & 7: Chris Birkbeck, Georgene Bankroff, Paul Burandt, Reno Caneva, Glenn Carlson, Bonnie Carlson, Char Giardina, Mabel Hrpcha, Candy Hrpcha, Erwin Klopstein, Ruth Waldvogel, and Program Chair Gary Ward. ❖

Lockport Area Genealogical & Historical Society
c/o Des Plaines Valley Public Library
121 E. Eighth Street
Lockport, IL 60441

Front Page Story
Central Square Beautification

INSIDE

"Hail to Ruth"
Highlights of Home Survey
Bridges: A Moment in Time
This Month in History

Meeting and Program

October 25, 2003
9 AM

Des Plaines Valley Public Library
Bengtson Room

Slide Show and Talk with Nancy Crilly

Etched in Stone: Cemeteries of Lockport

(Right) Lockport Cemetery, Charles E. Boyer family lot.
Nancy will tell us about Boyer other local notables.

Board Meeting
October 16, 6PM at the Library

