



# acorns

A PUBLICATION OF THE  
OAK LAWN HISTORICAL SOCIETY

VOLUME V

WINTER 1981

NUMBER 1

PUBLISHED QUARTERLY

BOARD OF TRUSTEES  
1980-1981

Mr. William J. Sullivan	Director
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THE OAK LAWN HISTORICAL SOCIETY

*The purposes of the Oak Lawn Historical Society are the collection and preservation of the materials and relics concerning the history of the Village of Oak Lawn and its vicinity; the dissemination of and public access to such historical information; and the promotion of knowledge and pride in the accomplishments of the people of Oak Lawn.*

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*William J. Sullivan, Editor*

GENERAL WILLIAM JENKINS WORTH

*This is the second installment of the life of Major General Worth. The first part will be found in the Fall 1980.*

William Jenkins Worth, the man for whom our township is named, reported with his regiment to Fort Winnebago, Wisconsin Territory on May 21, 1840. The Winnebago Indians were off their reservation. This was more serious since they had rebelled in 1763, 1794, 1812, 1827 and 1831. They also had alliances with the Sac and Fox. Colonel Worth and his regiment were to return the Winnebagoes to the reservation, which was accomplished without bloodshed.

By 1841, Worth took his regiment to Florida to campaign against the Seminole. These fierce swamp warriors had been at war with the Army since 1835. Ten generals, including Scott and Zachary Taylor, had tried to pacify the Indians before Worth. The Indians were unwilling to leave Florida for land offered in the Arkansas Territory and fought both soldier and settler alike.

One of the few humorous episodes occurred in 1841 when Chief Wild Cat and his Indians appeared at a peace conference dressed in Shakesperian garb plundered from a theatrical troupe. Worth threw himself fully into the campaign in summer as well as winter. Worth was thought crazy for campaigning in the disease-ridden summer in temperatures of eighty-six degrees.

Leading his men through water two feet deep in swamps, Worth found the Seminole villages and crops and destroyed them. Then he pursued the Indians across the state, in spite of staggering illness among his troops. By April, 1842, Worth crushed the

Seminole. Worth had survived the "graveyard of reputations". Worth was made a brevet Brigadier General by President Tyler in 1842. His campaign was a small part of the 1,536 deaths in the war and cost of \$19, 000, 000.

At the start of the Mexican War in 1846, Worth was ordered to join General Zachary Taylor to assault Mexican territory. Worth showed brilliant generalship at Palo Alto and again at Resaca de la Palma which planted the American flag on the Rio Grande.

Worth was largely responsible for the great American victory at Monterey. This victory made his immediate superior, General Taylor, famous throughout the nation. The Congress recognized Worth's contribution and in March of 1847, Worth was made a brevet Major General by Congressional resolution.

In the same month, Worth joined an expedition under his old friend, General Winfield Scott. The expedition was a joint army and navy operation with an amphibious assault on Vera Cruz. Worth shone at the landing at Vera Cruz, Cerro Gordo, Churubusco, Chapultepec and finally, the occupation of Mexico City.

Rather than being pleased at Worth's success, Winfield Scott grew envious not only of Worth's Mexican War generalship so far, but also for his beating the Seminoles when Scott could not. They quarreled over costly losses and over which had found a path to the enemy rear, resulting in final victory. Their feud erupted when some newspaper articles gave credit for two victories to General Pillow and were critical of Scott.

The articles were probably meant as a practical

joke on General Pillow and were obviously pure fabrications. Scott suspected that Worth was one of the authors. Scott hounded Worth to the point of asking the President of the United States to intervene. Worth accused General Scott of conduct unbecoming an officer and gentleman.

Scott retaliated by placing Worth and others under arrest and placing charges against them. When President Polk and his cabinet entered the fray on January 3, 1848, they unanimously decided that Scott should be relieved of his command and a formal inquiry of his conduct should be held. Polk also ordered Worth and the others released from arrest and exonerated.

The thirty-five year professional and personal friendship was ended. In the courtroom they each denounced the other. Worth even changed the name of his son from Winfield Scott Worth to William Scott Worth. During the trial, Worth was ordered back to duty to command the military districts of Texas and New Mexico.

Before the conflict could be resolved, Worth contracted cholera and died on May 7, 1849. Scott continued his campaign after Worth's death. Worth was considered as a candidate for President on the Democratic ticket before his death. The dashing Worth commanded great loyalty from his officers and they attempted to defend him. Unfortunately, during the Civil War, many of Worth's defenders became Confederate officers and as traitors, were discounted by Scott's Union partisans, Grant among them. This is why most history books make no mention of Worth.

But Worth is remembered. A cavalry major in Texas looking for a site for an army post soon after Worth's death, found it on high ground near

the Trinity River. He recalled the gallant Worth and his brilliant campaigns. He named the army post "Fort Worth".

There is also a Lake Worth in Florida near the scene of his triumphs against the Seminoles. A Worth Street may be found in New York City. In that city too, thousands daily pass his tomb at Broadway and Fifth Avenue. The New York subway jogs there to avoid it. Nearly the entire city turned out for his belated funeral.

Worth was without doubt a fighting general, yet he hated the effects of battle. He wrote to his family after Churubusco that he had no desire to be present at another battlefield. He spoke of "fields where God's gifts and blessings were growing literally sowed with fragments of human flesh and bone." Not even his thirty years of service had reconciled him to the bloodshed.

Worth owned a personal slave and was a firm believer in manifest destiny. He believed that America was predestined to absorb the Mexicans and seize all of Mexico, in fact the entire North American continent. He was, of course, against leaving Mexico after the peace as he felt that within fifty years, Americans would reconquer it.

FOR FURTHER READING:

General William Jenkins Worth: Monterey's Forgotten Hero by Edward S. Wallace (Dallas: Southern Methodist University Press, 1953)

The Sword of the Republic by Francis Paul Prucha (London: The Macmillan Company, 1969)

The Story of the Mexican War by Robert Selph Henry (New York: Fredrick Ungar Publishing Co., 1961)

FROM THE DIRECTOR:

THE PROCESS OF RESEARCH

One of the major processes going on constantly in the Society is that of research. This research can be divided into several groups. Firstly, there is the research that the Society does on its own. This research is to verify facts about Oak Lawn history for possible inclusion into exhibits and our publications.

Another main type of research is visitor or client oriented. For example, students involved in the Chicago Metro History Fair will want to know what holdings we have on the Oak Lawn Police Department, or when the parks in the Oak Lawn Park system were added. Usually we learn a bit in the process, which we file away for future reference.

But isn't everything known about Oak Lawn? Surely if you don't know something you can just ask one of the oldtimers! Such are the comments one occasionally hears, perhaps you have thought so yourself. First and foremost is the sad fact that what is known about Oak Lawn is only the tip of a very large iceberg. The weight of what is unknown is staggering. We do not know with any reasonable certainty who first built a permanent home in Oak Lawn. (We have determined that it wasn't John Simpson.)

Even the tombstone mystery points up the lack of certain knowledge about our early past. We call a paradox in dating the tombstone mystery because as we have written before, John Simpson's marker in Mount Greenwood Cemetery states that he died at Oak Lawn in 1880.

But unfortunately for us, the name of the area was not changed to Oak Lawn until after his death, according to the records we have been able to find. Obviously there are three possibilities: firstly, that the tombstone is some kind of practical joke, put up to confuse later people.

The second possibility is that all of the documents are not telling the truth. That our area was called Oak Lawn in 1880. Finally, the most logical answer is that the tombstone was not put up until after 1882. On this we are still looking for conclusive evidence.

We do not rely on oral history for much more than leads. An example will suffice. When we were writing the article that appeared in Acorns about how Oak Lawn got government by managerial control, we interviewed some of the participants, not one of whom was in favor of the managerial side remembered that some of the signatures on their petitions were forgeries, and several denied it. Yet court and other records clearly show they were.

We are left with getting to the documents, the maps, the real stuff of history and yet not totally believing them until we have checked them out for bias and veracity. We cannot add by hasty publication or exhibit to the vast body of mis-information being now circulated about Oak Lawn.

This is why we have moved so slowly in our exhibit program. We simply have too much data that is not totally reliable to design exhibits that may have to be changed every month or so as we find out what really happened. We have chosen instead to publish our tentative data in this format.

## ANNUAL REPORT SECTION

One of the duties of the Board of Trustees is to report to the membership on the affairs of the Oak Lawn Historical Society. In the pages that follow, those who have helped the Society prosper are listed.

There will also be found the statements on our funds and accounts for the past fiscal year, and our expenditures in running the Society. If any member would like a breakdown, he may ask the Director to see our ledgers.

I would personally like to thank the members of the Society for their help and support over the past year, and to single out a group who cannot be praised too highly for their exceptional loyalty and efforts without compensation for the Society, our Board of Trustees.

WILLIAM J. SULLIVAN  
DIRECTOR

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## RESTRICTED FUNDS INCOME

### BLUNT MEMORIAL FUND

Cash on hand-1/1/80:	\$361.37
Interest	\$20.46
	<hr/>
TOTAL INCOME	\$381.83

OAK LAWN HISTORICAL SOCIETY

INCOME

FOR THE YEAR ENDED DECEMBER 31, 1980

	OPERATING FUND	ENDOWMENT FUND
Cash on hand-Jan. 1, 1980	\$67.08	\$776.17
Donations	\$503.35	\$2.13
Grants		
Worth Township	\$5,000.00	-
Oak Lawn Park District	\$850.00	-
Oak Lawn Kiwanis	\$1,212.80	-
Dues from Memberships	\$674.00	\$168.50
Sales	\$109.35	-
Interest	-	\$75.17
	<hr/>	<hr/>
Transfers between funds	\$75.17	(\$75.17)
TOTAL INCOME	\$8,491.75	\$946.80
Less Expenses	(\$8,423.12)	-
NET INCOME	\$68.63	\$946.80

OAK LAWN HISTORICAL SOCIETY

EXPENSES

FOR THE YEAR ENDED DECEMBER 31, 1980

	Operating Fund
Cleaning and Decorating	\$15.28
Dues and Memberships	\$50.00
Educational Programs	\$887.94
Exhibits	\$75.67
FICA	\$441.36
FUTA	\$60.00
IUTA	\$195.00
Office Supplies	\$12.54
Postage	\$37.50
Printing	\$56.90
Research Collection	\$63.60
Salaries and Wages	\$6,369.91
Telephone	\$157.42
	<hr/>
TOTAL EXPENSES	\$8,423.12

CONTRIBUTORS TO THE OAK LAWN HISTORICAL SOCIETY-1980

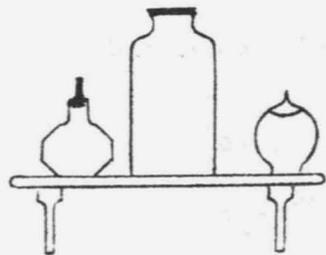
On behalf of the Board of Trustees, we thank each person and organization who has contributed to the continuing advancement of the Oak Lawn Historical Society during the past year. Gifts listed were received prior to January 1, 1981:

W. Raymond Adams Family  
Alliance Savings & Loan Association  
American Association of University Women  
American Legion, Green Oak Post #757  
Lester E. Anderson Family  
Kay Barz Family  
Wayne Baxtrom Family  
Bell Federal Savings  
Blake-Lamb Funeral Homes  
Lois M. Boley  
The Borwsatorium  
Mrs. E. Cline  
Concordia Federal Savings  
Josephine DeAngelis  
Jerry DeLap Family  
Philip Dilger Family  
Mrs. Annette Dixon  
Reba Elvidge  
First National Bank of Oak Lawn  
Frances C. Foote  
William & Karen Goodfellow  
Joseph T. Hapak  
Elmore Harker Family  
Heritage Bank of Oak Lawn  
Nick & Pat Hewitt  
Mrs. Carol James  
Jerry's Furs of Elegance  
Edwin Kasper  
John R. Klein  
Kole Pontiac  
Ken & Dee Kopf  
Angeline M. Kurtz  
Mrs. Robert Lagerstrom  
Lillian McAninch

CONTRIBUTORS (CONTINUED):

Frank McGee Family  
Majestic Builders  
Emmett Meyer  
Mrs. Betty Murphy  
Peggy Ryan Nevins  
Oak Lawn Chamber of Commerce  
Oak Lawn Garden Club  
Oak Lawn Kiwanis Club  
Oak Lawn Lions Club  
Oak Lawn Park District  
Oak Lawn Public Library  
Oak Lawn Rotary Club  
Oak Lawn Trust & Savings Bank  
Oak Lawn Women's Club  
Mrs. Shirley Paterson  
Peter L. Pollack Family  
Peter Pollack Custom Tiling  
Joseph Putz Family  
Jay A. Rzechula  
Michael Rzechula Family  
Donald Smith Family  
Edwin Stryszak Family  
E. Gordon Stubbe Family  
Hazel P. Sullivan  
William J. Sullivan  
Talman Federal Savings  
Pauline Thomas  
Fay E. Tohill  
David E. Trimble Family  
Robert Ulatoski Family  
Richard J. Vavrek  
V.F.W. Johnson-Phelps Post #5220 Auxiliary  
Helmuth Waedt Family  
John A. Weber  
Jacob & Joyce Wildfield  
Floyd Woods Family  
Yvonne Woulfe  
Worth Township Board of Trustees

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### PEACH PICKLES

7 pounds peeled cling peaches  
1 pint vinegar  
3 pounds sugar  
Whole cloves

Bring vinegar and sugar to a boil and boil a few minutes. Drop peaches into the syrup. Cook peaches until you can pierce them with a broom straw. Drop a few sticks of whole cloves in each jar.

### UNCOOKED TOMATO RELISH

1 peck ripe tomatoes, chopped and let juice drain off. (Must be perfect fruit)  
6 stalks celery, chopped  
2 sweet peppers, chopped  
3/4 cup grated or ground horseradish  
4 large onions, chopped  
2 1/2 cups brown sugar  
1 cup salt  
5 cups vinegar  
2 tablespoons mustard seeds

Mix, put in sterile jars and store in a cool place.

### WANTS

The Society is looking for the following items to add to its permanent collections. Assistance from our members in the acquisition would be greatly appreciated.

1. Military medals and decorations
2. Agricultural implements of all types
3. "Type" examples of American currency and coins
4. Pioneer household items
5. Relics related to a general store c. 1900
6. Christmas ornaments made prior to 1930
7. Textbooks used in Oak Lawn schools
8. Presidential and local campaign items
9. World War II uniforms and equipment
10. Victorian and jet jewelry
11. Tin plate toys
12. Kitchen items made prior to 1930
13. Books written by Oak Lawn authors
14. Legal or letter size metal file cabinets
15. Pipe Clothes racks
16. Vintage clothing before 1940

OAK LAWN HISTORICAL SOCIETY  
9526 South Cook Avenue  
Oak Lawn, Illinois 60453



Save Woodland Habitats

DO NOT DESTROY

If you do not wish to keep this copy of ACORNS in your files, pass it along to a friend who may be interested in becoming a member of the Oak Lawn Historical Society.

Nick & Pat Hewitt  
5405 West Edison Avenue  
Oak Lawn, Illinois 60453



# acorns

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OAK LAWN HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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VOLUME V

DECEMBER 1981

NUMBER 11

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PUBLISHED QUARTERLY

BOARD OF TRUSTEES  
1981-1982

Mr. William J. Sullivan            **Director**  
Mr. Michael Rzechula            **Secretary**  
Mr. Peter L. Pollack            **Treasurer**  
Mr. Jame Merrill  
Mr. Emmett Meyer  
Dr. Floyd W. Woods

THE OAK LAWN HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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William J. Sullivan, Editor

THE CENTURY TURNS—WHO WAS WHO IN OAK LAWN

Oak Lawn was a bustling village in 1900 and the following people were well-known to Oak Lawners. Just for fun, try to match the person with his occupation by filling in the letter in the blank.

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. Alfred H. Singleton
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. Helwin Hammondstein
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. Frederick Schultz
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. William Toole
- \_\_\_\_\_ 5. Daniel Crandall
- \_\_\_\_\_ 6. William H. Gaddis
- \_\_\_\_\_ 7. William Krueger

- A. GROCER
- B. RAILROAD TICKET AGENT
- C. RAILROAD TELEGRAPHER
- D. SCHOOL TEACHER
- E. BUTCHER
- F. MERCHANDISE MANAGER
- G. EDITOR

Answers on Page 5.

## WHAT'S GOING ON

Your help is needed for our centennial exhibit. We are in need of maps of Oak Lawn (all periods); photographs of stores, homes, special events; early histories and "Know Your Town" booklets; local election memorabilia; and early newspapers. You can help the many visitors to our town see its history. Please call 425-3424, if you have these items.

Our office hours have been somewhat erratic due to the illness of Director Bill Sullivan. ACORNS have also been delayed. Everything is back on the track now. You may call or visit Monday through Friday in the afternoon.

Speaking of things "on the track", our Wabash Centennial celebration in co-operation with the Oak Lawn Park District was a great success. Thanks are due to the Oak Lawn Kiwanis Club and the "Y" Indian Princesses who ran the games and concessions; the Oak Lawn Senior Citizens Council who provided refreshments and entertainment; the VFW who gave such a nice performance at the ceremony; and to our members Mike Rzechula, Bud Meyer, Pete Pollack and Floyd Woods. Bud Meyer was the winner of the horseshoe tournament.

The Worth Township Board of Trustees has approved a grant to the Society for our operations of \$2,500. This will be received in monthly payments through February of 1982. We will use the money for our general support and to pick up some of the expense of our school program.

History Fair time will be shortly upon us. We are once again helping with the Southwest Regional Fair. If you would like to judge, we will be happy to give you full details as we get them. Oak Lawn will be well-represented by several entries from our local public and private high schools. The

categories include: exhibits, written papers and performances.

The Society has received a gift of the files and records of former State Representative (now Judge) Romie Palmer. Our current Representative Herbert Huskey and Judge Palmer combined in the gift. The files cover the early 1970s including the formation of the RTA, the tiling of Stony Creek and many others.

Election memorabilia from 1956 and 1960 was received from Terrel Clark, the former Second District State Representative (our district during the 1950s and 1960s) of himself and Rep. Hoover—they were called the "Gold Dust Twins" in the State House of Representatives.

We have received state and national election materials from Dr. Donald Smith, a society member. Members Bud Meyer has donated books, papers from his service on the Development Board and a tailed fancy dress coat. Member Mike Rzechula has donated a gas stove. Oak Lawn Trustee and Mrs. Charles Meloun have donated a golfing costume worn by Mr. Dick Tweedie and used in the 1959 jubilee celebration.

Now is the time for most members to renew their membership in the Society. If your membership is expiring, you will be getting a statement in the next few days. We hope that you will also mention the Society to your friends. A handsome membership brochure is available on request.

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1B, 2G, 3A, 4D, 5F, 6C, 7E

"The Century Turns" Answers:

## HOW OUR STREETS WERE NAMED

On July 6, 1882, a plat of the Village of Oak Lawn was filed with the County Clerk. This summer we will be celebrating our centennial.

### NORTH STREET

This street is one of the streets in the original plat which has kept its original name. North Street was the northernmost street in the plat; hence its name. The northern portion of the original village can easily be identified on an Oak Lawn map by locating North Street and the four short streets to the south slightly out of line with the regular street grid between 52nd Avenue and Raymond Avenue (also slightly out of line).

### OAK STREET

Another original street with an obvious name. Oak Street was named for the oak trees which gave Black Oaks Grove and Oak Lawn their name.

### MEADE AVENUE

One of the Chicago grid streets, Meade Avenue is named for Major General George Gordon Meade. Meade served in the Civil War with Pennsylvania, rising to command the Union Army of the Potomac at the battle of Gettysburg. He continued to hold this command until the end of the war. Meade is credited with halting Confederate General Robert E. Lee's 1863 invasion of the north, and with being one of the handful of generals who had beaten Lee in open battle.

## THIRTY YEARS AGO

### THE SECOND VILLAGE

Thirty years ago, a group of residents of the unincorporated areas of Columbus Manor, Grandview Park and Dearborn Heights voted in a referendum. They were voting on whether a new village would be created from their areas. Civic feeling had existed in the unincorporated areas for some time. All supported volunteer fire departments, the Columbus Manor Fire Department was a consistent winner of insurance awards for efficiency.

In 1945, the residents investigated formation of a park district in the three areas. A study group was formed, but the formation of a taxing body was not acceptable to the majority of the residents. However in 1951, a number of residents petitioned to incorporate a village stretching from 97th Street on the north to 103rd Street on the south. The western boundary was to be Roberts Road. On the east, the new village was to abut Oak Lawn.

There is no reliable count of the number of residents of the new village. We do know that on December 22, 1951, there was one vote less than a thousand cast. The incorporation of the western area was defeated by a vote of 699 against; 252 for; and 48 ballots spoiled.

Eleven years later, Mayor Fred M. Dumke tried to annex the Columbus Manor area. A motion was made to annex the area from 95th Street to 101st Street, to the Wabash Railroad at Austin and Ridgeland Avenues. Trustees Yourell, Randall and Dwyer of Mayor Dumke's party and Dumke himself voted for the annexation. Opposition Trustees Munch, Cole and Frankland voted against in 1962. The annexation failed as 4/5ths years were needed. Annexation would wait two years.

OAK LAWN VILLAGE CLERKS

William Aulwurm	1909	1
Charles F. Schultz	1909-1912	
William B. Gaddis	1912-1914	
Walter A. Hopkins	1914-1916	
Archie V. Utt	1916-1928	
Fred T. Schmidt	1928-1934	
Alfred J. Smutney	1934-1944	2
Elmer L. Hanegan	1944-1949	
William B. Gaddis	1949-1953	
Robert G. Parke	1953-1964	3
Ernest F. Kolb	1964-1977	
A. Jayne Powers	1977-	

NOTES:

1. Served as first Village Clerk from March 9, 1909 to April 20, 1909.
2. Smutney resigned effective January 1, 1944 to move to Wisconsin. Hanegan signed the meeting minutes of December 28, 1943 as Clerk, but was not officially sworn in until January 11, 1944.
3. Parke resigned as of June 10, 1964 on the basis of ill health. Mary L. Ahner served as acting Village Clerk for the special meeting of June

THE CLERK OF OAK LAWN

In the seventy-two years since Oak Lawn became an incorporated village, only eleven persons have been elected to the office of Village Clerk. Ten of these have been men. Two have begun their terms by appointment, two resigned their office in mid-term.

The honor of being Oak Lawn's first Village Clerk goes to William Aulwurm. He ran unopposed in the interim election of March 9, 1909, but William B. Gaddis garnered four write-in votes. He served until the first regular election held on April 20th. Harry Phillips, one of the interim election judges, indicated in 1959 that Aulwurm and the other interim village officials were just "rounded up" to serve because they would serve only for one month.

In any case, Aulwurm stepped aside for Charles F. Schultz, a clerk in his father's grocery store, on the April ballot for regular terms of office. Thus he holds the record for the shortest term of office-43 days. The other candidate in that interim election, William B. Gaddis, ran and was defeated in the April election. He remained in politics, being the only man to serve twice as Clerk in non-continuous terms. He also served as a Trustee and Village President.

The only other Village Clerk to become President is the current Mayor, Ernest F. Kolb. He also holds the record for the longest term as Clerk, 12 1/2 years. Kolb was initially appointed to fill the

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16th and the regular meeting of June 23rd at which Kolb was appointed to fill the vacancy.

un expired term of Robert G. Parke's term. Kolb ran both with the ticket of Fred M. Dumke and against his ticket in 1973.

The next longest term was that of Archie V. Utt who served twelve years from 1916 to 1928. Utt was one of the judges in the Interim election of 1909. The average continuous term of office for a Village Clerk is six years and one month, five served less (both of Gaddis' terms were less) than the average. However, there have been only three holders of the office since 1953.

Oak Lawn Clerks seem to have been drawn from the ranks of the politically inexperienced. Only Fred T. Schmidt (and Gaddis' second term) had been on the Village Board previous to being elected Clerk. Only Gaddis, Aulwurm and Kolb served in another office after being Clerk. It would seem that most Clerks had no wish for further service.

The current Clerk, A. Jayne Powers, is the only woman to ever be elected to that office. While a woman has been acting Clerk during the time the office was vacant, most women in Oak Lawn's first sixty years of incorporation were appointed to the office of Collector. Only two other women have held elective village office since incorporation.

For most of Oak Lawn's history, the office of Clerk, like that of Trustee, was considered to be part-time. Since the mid 1960s, the Clerk has been serving in a full-time position with a commensurate salary. The Clerk is the keeper of the records of the Village and all ordinances. The Clerk attends all Village Board meetings and keeps the minutes of their actions. The Clerk's office registers all citizens of the Village to vote, signs all licenses issued by the Village and publishes any documents which require it.

## THIRTY-SEVEN YEARS AGO

### THE GREAT UNWASHED

In December of 1944, the Mayor of Oak Lawn, Al Brandt, proudly admitted that he had not taken a bath for five days in the interest of the citizens of Oak Lawn. In fact, he urged the residents of Oak Lawn to follow his example and refrain from bathing for an entire month!

The cause for this outbreak of dirtiness was the failure of the major water supply of the village, well #2 near 103rd Street and Crawford Avenue. The well usually supplied 300 gallons of water per minute, but the extreme cold of the winter had lowered that to a mere 70 gallons. Although unknown at the time, there was also an obstruction in the well which prevented a good flow.

Mayor Brandt first banned the use of water except between the hours of 5 a.m. and 11 a.m. and between the hours of 4 p.m. and 11 p.m. and asked for voluntary compliance on December the 23rd. The previous Friday, he had asked each resident of the village to borrow five gallons of water from Chicago friends every day. It was hoped that this conservation would allow the reservoir to fill until the pump could be let down to the new water level.

The village government had decided by Christmas to both dig out the well and connect to the Chicago water system by laying 7,500 feet of pipe to the village. But both could only begin when the weather moderated. In the midst of World War II shortages, priority status for the pipe had to be obtained from the War Production Board. This was readily granted.

Mayor Kelly of Chicago was tireless in getting the city council to approve an emergency contract to sell water to Oak Lawn. However, even with a priority status, it would take months to divert enough pipe to Oak Lawn to complete a permanent connection to Chicago watermains and the crisis was worsening.

On December 28th, approval came from Mayor Kelly, but there was still no pipeline to Oak Lawn. Fire Chief Harker, however, had a plan. He visited the Office of Civil Defense that same afternoon. He returned with 5,000 feet of 2 1/2 inch fire hose and five pumping units. The police and volunteer firemen, with the assistance of Mayor Brandt and Trustees Larson and Skalski, laid the hose from Crawford to Cicero along 95th Street under straw to keep it from freezing.

A committee of the city council had met on December 20th. They decided that a 6 inch main could be connected to their water system at 103rd Street and Crawford Avenue for the emergency. Any permanent connection was to be made near the intersection of Southwest Highway and Crawford Avenue. By the 28th, three carloads of pipe had arrived, and 300 feet had already been laid. One final road block remained.

The connection for the fire hoses was at 95th and Crawford in Evergreen Park. The Evergreen Park village board agreed the connection could be made for 30 days. Oak Lawn would pay \$465.00 to the City of Chicago. Evergreen Park would not get any money, but would receive a credit for the water drawn by Oak Lawn. Water was flowing to Oak Lawn again. The weather remained below zero and Chief Harker and his volunteer firemen had to maintain a round-the-clock watch on the hoses for weeks in the cold. The temperature did not moderate

until the third week in January.

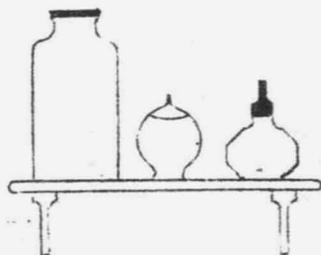
By January 25th, the pipeline was over half completed. The contractors hoped for completion by February 1st. The investigation of the well had been completed and a sandstone bridge was removed at 1100 feet. In the process of lowering the pump, holes were found in several of the cast iron internal parts.

Shutting off the pump would leave the village without water for 10 hours. Well #1 was of no use because its pump could not be lowered and the freeze had driven the water table down. In any case, it had no water softener and was abandoned originally due to the foul taste of its water. The hose line could be abandoned, even though the pump could not deliver at its previous efficiency, it was delivering water.

With conservation measures in force, Oak Lawn limped along until the completion of the pipeline. With an emergency supply of water assured and the reservoir filling again, the winter freeze passed. New brass parts were ordered for the pump which were on hand in April when the Thompson Engineering Company repaired the pump for good and all. On May 3rd, they certified that the pump could be used safely at full capacity.

Oak Lawn could continue to use Chicago water until May 31, 1945. The stopgaps worked as the repairs were made to the pump and the wellhole cleared of its obstructions. The other water connection to Chicago was completed in late 1945. The Mayor and Trustees decided they could not rely on the wells. During the emergency, they had applied for and received the necessary permits for using Lake Michigan water. Today the Harker pumping station still brings us Chicago water.

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#### A HOLIDAY RECIPE

#### CANDIED GRAPEFRUIT PEEL

- 3 grapefruit
- 2 tablespoons corn syrup
- 1 quart cold water
- 1 tablespoon salt

Wipe grapefruit and remove peel in four sections. Soak overnight in cold water in which salt has been dissolved. Drain and cover with cold water and bring to a boil for 20 minutes. Repeat the process three times and cook in the last water until soft-about four hours. Drain and cut peels in strips 1/8 inch wide. Weigh peel and put in an equal weight of sugar in a saucepan with half as much water. Add corn syrup. Bring to a boil, and add peel, cover and cook until peel is clear and almost dry. Remove to plate, taking up as little syrup as possible. Cool, roll each piece in granulated sugar and spread on a sheet of waxed paper to dry. Store in a glass jar.

#### WANTS

The Society is looking for the following items to add to its permanent collections. Assistance from our members in the acquisition would be greatly appreciated.

1. Textbooks used in Oak Lawn schools
2. Military Medals and decorations
3. Relics related to a general store c. 1900
4. Agricultural implements of all types
5. "Type" examples of American currency and coins
6. Pioneer household items
7. Christmas ornaments made prior to 1950
8. Presidential and local campaign items
9. World War II uniforms and equipment
10. Victorian and jet jewelry
11. Tin plate toys
12. Kitchen items made prior to 1930
13. Books written by Oak Lawn authors
14. Legal or letter size metal file cabinets
15. Pipe clothes racks
16. Cloth or plastic clothes storage bags

OAK LAWN HISTORICAL SOCIETY  
9526 South Cook Avenue  
Oak Lawn, Illinois 60453



Save Woodland Habitats

DO NOT DESTROY

If you do not wish to keep this copy of ACORNS in your files, pass it along to a friend who may be interested in becoming a member of the Oak Lawn Historical Society.

Nick & Pat Hewitt  
5405 West Edison Avenue  
Oak Lawn, Illinois 60453

Remember: FDR Centennial, January 30th

**OAK LAWN**



**A CENTURY OF GROWTH**

**acorns**

A PUBLICATION OF THE

**OAK LAWN HISTORICAL SOCIETY**

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VOLUME V

OCTOBER 1982

NUMBER 111

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PUBLISHED QUARTERLY

BOARD OF TRUSTEES  
1981-1982

Mr. William J. Sullivan	Director
Mr. Michael Rzechula	Secretary
Mr. Peter L. Pollack	Treasurer
Mr. James Merrill	
Mr. Emmett Meyer	
Dr. Floyd W. Woods	

THE OAK LAWN HISTORICAL SOCIETY

*The purposes of the Oak Lawn Historical Society are the collection and preservation of the materials and relics concerning the history of the Village of Oak Lawn and its vicinity; the dissemination of and public access to such historical information; and the promotion of knowledge and pride in the accomplishments of the people of Oak Lawn.*

*ACORNS is published quarterly by the Oak Lawn Historical Society. Back issues may be obtained from the Society. All rights are reserved. No portion of this publication may be reproduced without permission.*

*William J. Sullivan, Editor*

MORE ABOUT RALPH PLUMB  
by John D. Steenwyk

*Member John Steenwyk has researched the Wabash Railroad as a college project. In this excerpt, we learn more about the man who is credited with bringing the Wabash Railroad to Oak Lawn, Colonel Ralph Plumb.*

Colonel Ralph Plumb was a major shareholder in the Chicago and Paducah Railroad, which had built a line from Streator, Illinois to Effingham and Altamont, Illinois. Colonel Plumb and his partners were the owners of the construction company which built these lines and also constructed the Decatur and State Line Railroad, which became the Wabash between Decatur and the Indiana state line.

Plumb and his associate, David Strawn, formed the D. Strawn and Company to build the Fairbury, Pontiac, and North Western Railroad. The company built this 30-mile line and then formed Ralph Plumb and Company in 1871, to build the Bloomington and Ohio River Railroad. They were unable to complete more than 30 miles of this line until they merged both companies and railroads to form the Chicago and Paducah Railroad. The line then was completed to Effingham and a line branched off to Altamont, Illinois.

The line, typical of many railroads of the era, was overcapitalized and underwent a reorganization. The Wabash was looking for an entry into Chicago, and saw the potential for the Chicago and Paducah to fill this need. With the financial help of the Wabash, Plumb and associates agreed to build the line and upon completion, sell it to the Wabash. The Chicago and Strawn was then chartered, and work on the line commenced to extend the railroad to the stockyards and Chicago

## RAFFLE RAFFLE RAFFLE

THE OAK LAWN HISTORICAL SOCIETY  
IS RAFFLING OFF AN ORIGINAL OIL PAINTING



DRAWING NOVEMBER 4TH

TICKETS 3 FOR \$1.00

The painting may be seen at the Historical Society office. It is an original oil of a winter scene by "Eliza", measures 16" by 30" and has been framed.

Tickets can be had by calling 425-3424 or 423-2500. Tickets may also be obtained by mail. We will mail your stubs to you.

## AROUND THE VILLAGE

### THE NAME GAME

"How did my street get its name?" is one of the questions most frequently asked of the Society. Usually the answer is that a Chicago street name was adopted. In rare cases, a street has a name selected locally. In Oak Lawn, many government facilities and most parks are also named.

#### HILTON DRIVE

The Board of Trustees of the Village were recently asked to rename that portion of Keating Avenue which runs from 95th Street to 94th Street. It fit the criteria for the renaming of streets previously used, except in one respect, the street was to be named for a business and not a person. The Board of Trustees voted affirmatively to change the name to Hilton Drive in an effort to aid the previously unsuccessful hotel.

#### CENTENNIAL PARK

With the completion of the new pool at Simmons Park, the Board of Park Commissioners decided that a new name was in order for the park. As 1982 was the centennial of the platting of the village, Centennial Park was chosen. The park and pool were dedicated on July 10, 1982 during our centennial celebration. The park was never officially named previously, but was called Simmons from the school.

#### MEMORIAL PARK

Dedicated at the same time, Southwest Park was renamed Memorial Park. Southwest Park also was not named officially before. The park is set aside for the planting of memorial trees.

## WHAT'S GOING ON IN MEMORIAM

On Thursday, September 16th, the society lost a valued member and friend, Carol C. Adams. Carol was a primemover in the village both as reporter and activist. Many remember her newspaper columns and reports for the Economist. Carol was active in the Oak Lawn League of Women Voters and served in various capacities at the library since 1973. Carol was a charter member of the society and a founding trustee. Carol died of cancer and leaves her husband, six children and two grandchildren. She will be missed.

### YOUR HELP IS REQUESTED

The society is raffling off an original oil painting on November 4th. If you would be able to help sell raffle tickets, fund raising chairman Floyd Woods wants to hear from you. You may call him at 423-2500 during the day and we will get a kit to you. Tickets are priced at 3 for \$1.00. If you would like tickets for yourself, send in your donation and we will mail your stubs to you. Please call 423-2500 or 425-3424 if you can help or wish further information.

### CENTENNIAL BOOKS

Centennial history books are available from your society by mail for \$2.00 postpaid. You may also get them at our office. Each book contains a history of Oak Lawn written by your Director Bill Sullivan with the assistance of your society. Also the society files furnished many photographs for the text. A brief history of our Oak Lawn houses of worship and community organizations is included in the book. If you missed your chance to get a

### SHOP AND SHARE DAY SCHEDULED

Your society will have a "shop and Share" Day at all Jewel food stores and Jewel Grand Bazaar stores on November 15, 16 & 17th. All you have to do is shop at any Jewel store on any of the three days and turn in a special yellow ticket to the cashier. The society will receive 5% of your purchase. Tickets are good at any Jewel store, not just in Oak Lawn. Each member will receive three tickets with our next newsletter. Stock up for Thanksgiving and help your society.

copy during our centennial celebration, there is still time to get a centennial souvenir.

### COSTUME CAVALCADE

A new selection of costumes from our collection is now on display. One of the new figures depicts a gentleman golfer of the 1920s. The "plus fours" were worn by Dick Tweedie and were presented to the society by Village Trustee and Mrs. Charles Meloun. Also on display are military uniforms from both World Wars and period women's clothing and accessories.

### A SIGN OF THE TIMES

Visitors to the Cook Avenue School have been commenting most favorably on our new sign over the entrance arch. Made entirely of wood and hand-carved by Society Trustee Jim Merrill, the sign incorporates our familiar acorns and oak leaves insignia. Materials for the sign were furnished by a generous donation by Dr. Floyd Woods. Stop by and take a peek at Jim's handiwork and give us your opinion. You'll like it!

## THE HISTORY OF THE OAK LAWN PARK DISTRICT

### PART 1: IN THE BEGINNING

The idea of a park system was not a new one at the formation of the Park District. In the first report of the Village Zoning Commission in 1927, there was land set aside for a municipal park in the then center of town. A private recreation area in the lake shore area and this public park were deemed adequate for a population larger than the 60,590 now resident. The idea of forming a park district came up several times in the thirties, but was not acted upon. The report of the Zoning Commission of 1938 does not specifically mention any change in the recreational arrangements.

During World War II, it was deemed essential that the children of the village be given some opportunity for organized sports and recreation beyond the baseball teams offered by the Oak Lawn Athletic Association. The PTA of School District # 123 inaugurated an after-school recreational program in June of 1944 at the urging of Lucille C. Gaddis. This program of supervised activity took place on the grounds of Covington School.

Mrs. Gaddis wanted an expansion of the program beyond the abilities of the PTA to provide. She went to the only service club then extant in Oak Lawn, the Lions Club. Seeing the success of the Gaddis project at the Covington School, they decided to make the formation of a park district a special project. They sent a letter to all interested parties to attend a meeting on September 14, 1944 to study the idea of whether a park district should be formed. Businessmen and the members of five major organizations declared themselves in favor of the formation of the park district if the voters of the village approved.

Since the majority of those present were in favor of the formation of a park district, they went to Cook County Judge Jarecki for permission to conduct a referendum. The Lions Club reported to the Village Board that the judge had set an election date of November 28, 1944. The referendum would, if passed, also elect five park commissioners who would serve without pay and have regularly rotating terms of office. The single polling place was the village hall and was open from 6 A.M. to 5 P.M. for the election. Judge Jarecki ordered the petitioners to pay the election costs.

The candidates for park commissioner were chosen from the five most important organizations in the village. Lucille Gaddis herself was chosen from the District # 123 PTA, the single public school district then serving the village. (District # 122 served the western areas of Oak Lawn not yet annexed to the village.) Representing St. Gerald's, the single parochial school in the village at the time was, Albert Ver Shave. John C. Utz represented the Oak Lawn Homeowners on the slate. The Green Oak Post of the American Legion added Harvey Bergeson. Rounding out the slate was Roland J. Beckley, the representative of the Lions Club.

When the votes were tallied, 114 had voted in favor of establishing a park district and electing the five as commissioners, 53 voted against. Judge Jarecki declared the district officially organized with taxing authority on December 8, 1944 and the commissioners seated. However, under Illinois law, all tax levies were required to be filed with the County Clerk by December 1st. The fledgling park district would be without tax funds for all of 1945. The Lions Club formulated a plan for raising enough money to operate the district. Fortunately, operations were contemplated to begin in warmer weather.

March 2, 1945 saw the appointment of Joseph J. Zajac as parks director. Also appointed were Dick Tweedie as District Treasurer and John Philbin as Secretary to the Board. Board meetings began to be held regularly at the village hall on the first Thursday of the month. The district was without its own facilities at this time. Programs such as Easter egg hunts were organized and held on the grounds of Covington School.

Operating funds were still needed. The Lions Club and the Youth Commission determined to go door-to-door asking for donations. From May 10th through May 20th, the volunteers canvassed the village. The newspapers even carried a telephone number (Oak Lawn 301) to call, if perchance your house were to be missed. From the sum of \$987.00 collected, at the height of World War II, it is obvious that few homes were. The first year's budget of \$1,000.00 was thus assured.

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*The next installment of the history of the Oak Lawn Park District will cover the years of early acquisitions.*

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#### FIFTY YEARS AGO

Oak Lawners as well as everyone else in the country were talking about George Herman "Babe" Ruth. The third game of the 1932 World Series was played in Wrigley Field. Charlie Root was on the mound and Gabby Hartnett was behind the plate as Ruth strode up to bat. Although fifty-one thousand fans were in the park, there is no agreement as to what happened next. Some say that Ruth pointed to the center field bleachers under the scoreboard. Root and Hartnett said Ruth gestured to the Chicago bench he had one swing left. A home run streaked to the bleachers and a legend was born. But did Ruth call his shot?

#### ON THE SQUARE AND LEVEL

On August 31, 1920, Wiley Simmons accepted the principalship of the Cook Avenue School. His move to Oak Lawn from southern Illinois started a chain of events that would lead to an Oak Lawn Masonic Lodge. Living near Simmons was Dick Tweedie, also a mason in another Lodge. Soon their friendship and mutual interest in the masonic craft led them to recognize that a number of others had similarly moved away from their home Lodges.

In 1926, the Southwest Craftsmans Club was formed to get the masonic community together. The first club meeting was held on November 11th at the Oak Lawn Community Club (now the Green Oak Post of the American Legion). The first instructor of the class was Fred A. Gorman. The next step was to obtain the paraphenalia necessary for meeting rites. The jewels for officers were cut from sheet aluminum. Rods were cut from two by twos. Simmons carved a masonic emblem on a gavel made from a piece of a hickory wagon wheel spoke from his father's blacksmith shop to which he had applied a handle.

Within a few years, 87 masons petitioned the Grand Lodge for establishment of a Lodge in Oak Lawn. The petition was held back from approval due to a technicality. But the Lodge was allowed to meet on a temporary basis. Finally on July 11, 1930, Oak Lawn Lodge No. 1166 was chartered although by the exemption of the Grand Lodge. Meetings were held at the present Legion Hall with the approval of the Grand Lodge.

From this beginning, the Masonic Temple was built. Three other Lodges joined with the Oak Lawn Lodge as the city lost members to the suburbs. The current temple building was erected in 1954 and 1955, and was opened in May of 1955.

## WHICH WAY TO HARKER PARK?

On March 28, 1965, the Oak Lawn Park District Board dedicated the park and pool located at 94th Street and Knox Avenue in honor of Fire Chief Elmore J. Harker, Sr. This park had originally been the facility of the Southwest YMCA which had built the pool complex.

The YMCA had sold the complex to the district after insufficient redemption of the construction pledges. Parks Commissioner Jerome Lewandowski had been instrumental in the purchase. Fire Chief Harker had died in office on April 6, 1962 after service as Chief for 25 years. The Park District was not alone, the village government had passed a resolution to commemorate Harker's service on the first available street or structure by board action on April 11, 1962.

Normally, this is where the situation might have lain. However, the name of Harker was transferred to the six acres of park at 5300 West 105th Street. It is unclear at this writing exactly when and why this change was made. Apparently, when the village built the Harker pumping station, the park next to the station was commonly called "Harker". The original "Harker Park" was then left without a name and began to be called "Central Park".

What is clear is that an official change and rededication was never made for either park. Even now, no identification sign is to be found at the park near the pumping station. When the Park Board decided to rename two non-dedicated parks for our centennial celebration, the Society took advantage of the opportunity to bring the confusion over "Harker Park" to the attention of the district. However, no action has as yet been taken and so we are left with two Harker Parks.

## HOW OUR STREETS WERE NAMED

Many of our streets were named for Chicago's streets which are in an alphabetical grid. Oak Lawn's streets begin in the "K" grid and end with the "N" grid. Here are two "M" grid streets.

### MERRIMAC AVENUE

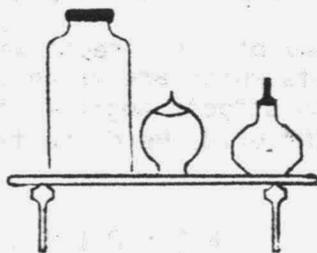
Merrimac Avenue is named for one of the two most famous ships in American history. In 1862, the Confederates raised the remains of the U.S. warship *Merrimac* from the bottom of Norfolk harbor. John M. Brooke and John L. Porter had converted the ship into an ironclad which they renamed the *C.S.S. Virginia*. She carried a battering ram plus ten guns. On March 8th, the *Virginia* steamed into Hampton Roads. She easily destroyed two wooden U.S. warships and ran a third aground.

### MONITOR AVENUE

Monitor Avenue is named for the other. The *Monitor* was the invention of John Ericsson and was so weirdly designed, she was called a "tin can on a shingle." On March 9th, she steamed out to meet the *Virginia*. Their epic three-hour battle was a draw as neither ship could pierce the iron armor of the other. The *Virginia* had the worst of the battle, losing her funnel and having many structural weaknesses. The *Monitor's* commander was temporarily blinded by a shell and the *Virginia* escaped to her safe harbor.

The battle between the *Monitor* and the *Merrimac* was the beginning of the end for wooden fighting ships. Various modern classes of monitors served the United States Navy until 1937.

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### STRAWBERRY ICE

2 quarts strawberries  
Juice of 2 lemons  
3 cups sugar  
1 quart water  
1 pint cream

Crush strawberries thoroughly with a fruit squeezer. Add water, then lemon juice, then sugar, then cream, just before putting into freezer. Freeze the same as ice cream.

### OLD-FASHIONED BUCKWHEAT CAKES

1 1/2 cups buckwheat  
1/2 cup white flour  
5 teaspoons baking powder  
1 tablespoon molasses  
1/2 teaspoon salt  
1 tablespoon melted shortening  
2 cups milk

Just mix as given and spoon on the griddle.

### WANTS

The Society is looking for the following items to add to its permanent collections. Assistance from our members in the acquisition would be greatly appreciated.

1. Military medals and decorations
2. Agricultural implements of all types
3. "Type" examples of American currency and coins
4. Pioneer household items
5. Relics related to a general store c. 1900
6. Christmas ornaments made prior to 1930
7. Textbooks used in Oak Lawn schools
8. Presidential and local campaign items
9. World War II uniforms and equipment
10. Victorian and jet jewelry
11. Tin plate toys
12. Kitchen items made prior to 1930
13. Books written by Oak Lawn authors
14. Legal or letter size metal file cabinets
15. Pipe clothes racks
16. Vintage clothing made before 1940

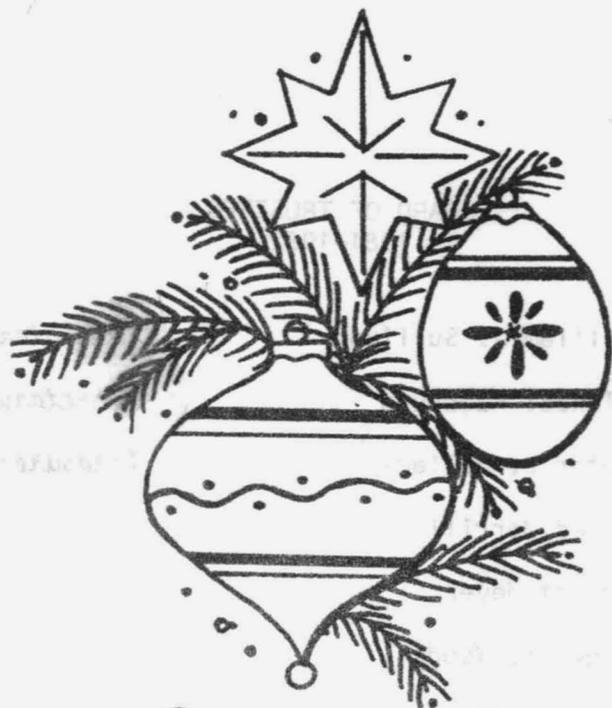
OAK LAWN HISTORICAL SOCIETY  
9526 South Cook Avenue  
Oak Lawn, Illinois 60453

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Nick & Pat Hewitt  
5405 West Edison Avenue  
Oak Lawn, Illinois 60453



# acorns

A PUBLICATION OF THE

OAK LAWN HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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VOLUME V

DECEMBER 1982

NUMBER 4

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PUBLISHED QUARTERLY

BOARD OF TRUSTEES  
1981-1982

Mr. William J. Sullivan	Director
Mr. Michael Rzechula	Secretary
Mr. Peter L. Pollack	Treasurer
Mr. James Merrill	
Mr. Emmett Meyer	
Dr. Floyd W. Woods	

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William J. Sullivan, Editor

SIDELIGHTS ON OAK LAWN HISTORY:

JUDGE EDMUND KASPER JARECKI

In our last issue we detailed the formation of the Park District. One of the key participants in the referendum was Judge Jarecki. Edmund Kasper Jarecki, a former Chicago alderman and municipal judge, had held the office of County Judge since 1922.

The office of County Judge was a politically sensitive one. The County Judge handled delinquent tax units, special assessments, adoptions and insanity hearings. However, the County Judge also oversaw the election machinery in the county. By turning a blind eye to vote fraud the judge could dictate the outcome of a close election.

A native of Posen in German Poland, Jarecki moved to America at age 5. After working at the Crane Company as a designer of plumbing fixtures, he received his degree from Northwestern Law School in 1908. As a member of the Polish National Alliance and the Polish Roman Catholic Union, advancement was fast for Jarecki with the help of Polish political boss and Congressman Stanley Kunz.

George Brennan, Cook County Democratic Party Chairman, chose Jarecki to run against incumbent County Judge Frank "Two Booths" Righeimer in 1922. Righeimer was known as "Two Booths" because he habitually sent only two voting booths to precincts hostile to Mayor William "Big Bill" Thompson, which discouraged voting. Brennan thought Jarecki would look honest while condoning the same kind of vote fraud for the Democratic Party that Righeimer did for the Republicans.

Brennan should have looked more closely at

Jarecki's record as a municipal judge. After his election by nearly 34,000 votes, Jarecki proved resolutely honest and serious about his duties. He was responsible in 1926 in getting a veterans' treatment center at the Great Lakes Naval Base due to his presiding over sanity hearings. He presided at adoptions in person. To the distinct displeasure of the Democratic Party, he designed a new ballot box which was harder to tamper with and championed permanent voter registration which cost the party 200,000 votes according to political boss Patrick A. Nash.

In 1936, the Democrats had enough of political independents. They decided to dump Governor Henry Horner. State's Attorney Thomas V. Courtney and County Judge Jarecki backed Horner against the Kelly-Nash machine and won. In 1938, Pat Nash engineered the slating of Circuit Court Judge John Prystalski, head of the Polish-American Democratic Organization, over Jarecki. After a bitter primary campaign (including phoney pamphlets trying to link Jarecki with American Nazis), Jarecki won by over 40,000 votes. After 1938, no other Democrat challenged Jarecki seriously.

In 1954, at age seventy-five, Judge Jarecki retired after eight terms. Jarecki was partly responsible for the expansion of the Great Lakes veteran's treatment center and the construction of the West Side Veterans Administration Hospital in 1945. He also rewrote the state mental health code in the same year. 1946 found him presiding over the installation of voting machines in Chicago. He averaged nearly one hundred indictments and half as many convictions for vote fraud each year.

Oak Lawn could have had no better watchdog for its Park District formation referendum than the bow-tied, prince nezed Judge Edmund Kasper Jarecki.

## WHAT'S GOING ON

\*\*\*\*\*  
\*  
\* FEBRUARY GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING \*  
\* \*  
\* Wednesday, February 16th \*  
\* at 8:00 P.M. \*  
\* Cook Avenue School \*  
\* \*  
\*\*\*\*\*

Members are reminded that nominations are now being taken for Trustees of the Society. The Board of Trustees is the governing body of the Society and meets monthly. Duties of a Trustee include setting policies for the operation of the Society and its financial management. Two Trustees will be elected for full three year terms and one vacant term of a single year will be filled this year. The sole requirement for consideration as a Trustee is membership in good standing. Contact our office if interested in serving yourself or to nominate another member of the Society.

The Society is offering to its members an 8" by 10" print of the Cook Avenue School for \$1.50 post paid. The print was prepared by the Graphics Staff of the Suburban Tribune and is suitable for framing. Quantities are limited.

Village Clerk Jayne Powers has announced that some centennial souvenirs are still available. Specially cancelled envelopes, both large and small, can still be purchased at the Oak Lawn Village Hall. Centennial medallions are also still being sold at the Clerk's office.

The Society's educational programs are again in full operation. Our "Artifact of the Month" program

is currently being offered at five schools to a total of 244 students. This program is offered in the fourth and fifth grades (according to the individual school). There are a few openings left in this program. In co-operation with the Oak Lawn Park District, the Society presented an eighteenth century German Christmas to three kindergarten classes on December 13th. It is hoped that this program will be offered on a yearly basis.

Centennial souvenir booklets are available from your Society for \$2.00 post paid. The booklet is available for \$1.00 at the Society office. Booklets contain a history of Oak Lawn from early explorers to the present day. There are photographs and an historical sketch of most Oak Lawn churches and community organizations. Another booklet on Abraham Lincoln and Ulysses S. Grant in the Illinois State Militia is also available for \$1.75 post paid or 75¢ in person.

Fund Raising Committee Chairman Dr. Floyd Woods would like any member of the Society who would like to serve on his committee to contact him at 423-2500 or telephone our office at 425-3424. The committee will be meeting soon to discuss ways of increasing Society services by raising additional funds.

The Marine Corps may be looking for a few good men, but your Society is looking for anyone with an interest in history to join us in preserving Oak Lawn's unique local history. If you have a friend who has a birthday coming up, have you considered giving them a gift membership in the Society? The gift will be announced by a decorative card listing your name as the donor. Attractive membership brochures are available from the Society office for you to distribute or they can be mailed from our office to the person you designate.

## FINANCIAL REPORT 1981

One of the duties of the Board of Trustees is to report to the membership on the affairs of the Oak Lawn Historical Society. Due to our delayed publication schedule, the report for 1981 has not yet been presented.

In the pages that follow will be found the statements of our funds and accounts for the 1981 fiscal year, and our expenditures in running the Society. Any member may obtain a further breakdown from the Director on written request.

WILLIAM J. SULLIVAN  
DIRECTOR

\*\*\*\*\*

### RESTRICTED FUNDS INCOME

#### BLUNT MEMORIAL FUND

Cash on hand - 1/1/81	\$381.83
Interest	<u>21.55</u>
Total Income	\$403.38

#### SIGN FUND

Donation	<u>\$100.00</u>
Total Income	\$100.00

OAK LAWN HISTORICAL SOCIETY

INCOME

FOR THE YEAR ENDED DECEMBER 31, 1981

OAK LAWN HISTORICAL SOCIETY

EXPENSES

FOR THE YEAR ENDED DECEMBER 31, 1981

	OPERATING FUND	ENDOWMENT FUND
Cash on hand-Jan. 1, 1981	\$68.63	\$946.80
Donations	\$170.06	\$8.34
Grants	\$534.24	-
Oak Lawn Kiwanis Club	\$2,083.34	-
Worth Township	\$6,972.41	-
Oak Lawn Park District	\$668.00	\$167.00
Membership Dues	\$34.24	\$8.56
Sales	-	\$97.57
Interest	-	-
	<u>\$97.57</u>	<u>(\$97.57)</u>
Transfers between funds	\$10,625.49	\$1,130.70
TOTAL INCOME	<u>(\$10,488.09)</u>	<u>-</u>
Less Expenses	\$137.40	\$1,130.70
NET INCOME		

	Operating Fund
Dues & Memberships	\$15.00
Education Programs	\$1,048.85
Exhibits	\$12.49
FICA	\$599.49
FUTA	\$78.00
IUTA	\$26.00
Office Supplies	\$14.33
Postage	\$71.40
Printing	\$64.90
Salary	\$8,017.50
Telephone	\$180.13
Wabash Centennial	<u>\$360.00</u>
TOTAL EXPENSES	\$10,488.09

## HOW OUR STREETS WERE NAMED

Although many Oak Lawn streets are named for their counterparts in Chicago, a few have their origin in other places. The first two streets owe their names to real estate developer Henry W. Austin.

### AUSTIN AVENUE

Austin Avenue was the first street in Austin's subdivision. The area was subdivided primarily in the 1850's, but growth had to wait for the coming of commuter trains in the 1880's. The town was incorporated and later annexed into the City of Chicago in the late 1880's. By 1890, Austin had about 4,000 people. In the next few years, being a part of the city brought further transportation development- the Lake Street Elevated, the Garfield Park Branch Elevated to Cicero and the Chicago Avenue Line. By 1920, Austin contained 74,000 mostly Polish residents. In a decade, the Austin community was home to 131,000.

### CENTRAL AVENUE

Central Avenue also owes its name to the town of Austin. Central was the street which passed through the center of the original subdivision. The established commercial district around the train station and town hall necessitated keeping the names Central and Austin even though they did not fit Chicago's alphabetical grid.

### NASHVILLE AVENUE

This "N" grid Chicago street was named from the state capitol of Tennessee. Nashville was the scene of a pivotal battle of the Civil War.

## JAMES CHAMBERLAIN'S MAIL POUCH

*After the last Acorns was published, your history editor was able to talk to Charter Member E. Gordon Stubbe. As old Oak Lawn hands know, Gordon has been involved in our business community for over 30 years. We thought his comments on the Masonic Order and Oak Lawn life would interest you.*

Gordon lived near Wiley Simmons and Dick Tweedie in 1929. According to Gordon, a location was figured from 54th Avenue which was paved from 95th Street to 93rd Street. On the "second street east of the paved street", was the Oak Lawn Community House which was only half finished. Another similar building was to have been built and joined by a hall to make an "H" shaped building. This was the scene of many early masonic activities.

As we mentioned in our last issue, around this time a charter was being sought for an Oak Lawn Masonic Lodge. One of the requirements was to document a certain number of prospective members as well as established brethren. Gordon was one of these new candidates. In Gordon's words, the "third degree was on a Saturday", and numbers were arranged face down on a table. Each neophyte was to choose a number and proceed through the ceremony in turn.

Gordon drew #4. The honor of being the first man approved for membership should have gone to Arthur Hilgendorf who was in the ice business as well as being postmaster and drew #1. As Hilgendorf was concerned about going first, Gordon traded numbers with him. He adds that passing the initiation was not at all difficult. Gordon also has the distinction of being a charter member of two Oak Lawn Kiwanis Clubs. In 1951, he joined the Kiwanis Club of Oak Lawn. Thirty years later, Gordon joined the Oak Lawn Area Golden K Kiwanis Club for Kiwanians over 55.

At the time Gordon joined his first Oak Lawn Kiwanis Club, he had been in business for two years. Gordon and wife Lillian were the founders of Oak Lawn's earliest Federal Savings and Loan Association, Oak Lawn Federal, in 1949. Oak Lawn Federal was only the third federally-chartered savings and loan in Illinois and Wisconsin in ten years, according to Gordon.

Very few were chartered due to a requirement of \$10,000 of insurance, a considerable sum in 1949. The Stubbes were able to satisfy all the requirements, but even then their charter took eighteen months to obtain. In order to secure the success of the venture, Oak Lawn Federal was given a protected territory from 55th Street and Kedzie Avenue to Lockport.

Thus it was that Gordon and Lillian Stubbe with a single girl opened Oak Lawn Federal at 5017 West 95th Street, right on the corner. In later years, Oak Lawn Federal moved to its present building at 5555 West 95th Street. The fountain splashing in front of the parking area is a sure sign of spring in Oak Lawn. A few years ago, Bell Federal merged with Oak Lawn Federal, but the Stubbes are still associated with the new firm.

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#### LAW AND DISORDER

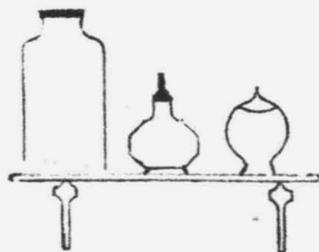
In late October of 1909, the first recorded shooting by an Oak Lawn law officer occurred and it was unjustified. Oak Lawn's first Village Marshall, Frank O'Brien shot grocery store owner Fred Schultz in front of his store for reasons that have never become clear. Schultz eventually received \$300.00 from the Village and O'Brien lost his job but was reinstated on November 8, 1910.

#### SOME BACKWARD GLANCES

FIFTY YEARS AGO  
1933

- January 9 The Oak Lawn Business Men's Association holds its regular meeting. Only 8 of the 32 members attend which provokes an angry editorial in the Oak Lawn Independent.
- January 10 The village votes to shut off 52 street lights as of January 15th. 14 street lights are located on Cicero Avenue between 95th Street and 111th Street. The remainder are scattered throughout the village. Residents are assured that only those lights which will not be a safety hazard are being darkened.
- January 16 The volunteer fire department elects officers one year after reorganizing. Francis O'Brien was re-elected Chief; Fred Behrend, Assistant Chief; Arthur Pauls, Lieutenant; Art Eichler, Jr., Secretary and Treasurer; and Louis Gunther, Chaplain.
- January 22 Mayor Frank A. Harnew and his entire household were quarantined. His son, George, contracted diphtheria after a bout with the flu. He later recovered.
- January 28 Tragedy was only averted by the quick action of police officer Art Eichler with an assist from the village fire truck and Al Piper's tow truck. Two children had fallen through the ice on Oak Lawn Lake while playing and were rescued unharmed.

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### DEVILLED TOMATOES

3 tomatoes	1 teaspoon mustard
Salt and pepper	$\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon salt
Flour	Few grains cayenne
Butter for sauteing	1 hard boiled egg yolk
4 tablespoons butter	1 egg
2 teaspoons powdered sugar	2 tablespoons vinegar

Wipe, peel and cut tomatoes in slices. Sprinkle with salt and pepper, dredge with flour, and saute in butter. Place on a hot platter and pour the dressing made by creaming the butter, adding dry ingredients, yolk of egg rubbed to a paste, egg beaten slightly, and vinegar, then cooking over hot water, stirring constantly until it thickens.

### POTATO OMELET

Prepare mashed potatoes, turn in a hot omelet pan greased with one tablespoon butter, spread evenly, cook slowly until browned underneath, and fold as an omelet.

### WANTS

The Society is looking for the following items to add to its permanent collections. Assistance from our members in the acquisition would be greatly appreciated.

1. Letter size metal file cabinets
2. Legal size metal file cabinet
3. Metal blueprint file cabinet
4. Pipe clothes racks
5. Indian head cent
6. Standing Liberty quarter
7. World War II Campaign medals
8. World War II woolen uniform shirt
9. Corn Knife
10. Corn planter
11. Scythe
12. Froe
13. Horse collar
14. Enterprise cherry stoner
15. Enterprise apple parer
16. Graniteware kitchen utensils

OAK LAWN HISTORICAL SOCIETY  
9526 South Cook Avenue  
Oak Lawn, Illinois 60453

DO NOT DESTROY

If you do not wish to keep  
this copy of ACORNS in your  
files, pass it along to a  
friend who may be interested  
in becoming a member of the  
Oak Lawn Historical Society.

The Harker Family  
9201 South Monitor Avenue  
Oak Lawn, Illinois 60453