



Esther Barlow

CHILDHOOD MEMORIES

BY DAYLE MURPHY

Childhood memories, we all have them and this story is about a well-loved person from the Chicago Public Library. Her name was Esther Barlow. Miss Barlow was hired by Chicago Public Library in 1927 and served the first four years at Holstein, Albany Park and Rogers Park branches. In 1931 she was appointed to the children's department

Ms. Barlow served three generations of North Siders. The story-telling room of the Sulzer Regional Library was named in her honor.

at the newly opened Hild Regional Library and worked there until 1942. From 1942 to 1955 Miss Barlow was the children's librarian at the Lake View Branch (now the John Merlo Branch).

In 1955 she returned to head children's services at Hild Regional Library and remained there until her retirement in 1976.

Ms. Barlow served three generations of North Siders. She had weekly story hours and children were enchanted by her gift of story-telling, which she extended to patients at Children's Memorial Hospital. She also held story-telling at Wells

MEMORIES SEE P. 2

Learn Family History at Sulzer Library

BY JULIE LYNCH

Are you interested in learning about your family history? Sulzer Regional Library has great lineup of genealogy programs to help you. Librarians at Sulzer will also help you get started with your research. To book a research appointment, please email northsidehistory@chipublib.org.

In June, librarian Roslyn Mabry will share tips on how to use the library's online databases to research your family history. She will also offer advice on how to record and preserve your family stories.

In July, genealogist Steve Szabados will offer an outline to help you organize the information you have found so you can write stories about your family. Please note this is not a workshop on how to publish your

Capturing the Smile; Preserving Your Family History: Sat., June 8 at 10 am Speaker: **Roslyn Mabry**

Write Your Family History: Sat., July 20 at 10 am Speaker: **Steve Szabados**

Adoption Records: Mon., Aug. 19 at 7 pm Speaker: **Matt Rutherford**

DNA Test Kit Showdown: Sat., Sept 14 at 10 am Speakers: **Kate Mills** and **Melissa Potoczek-Fiskin**

Internet Archive: The Amazing Genealogical Resource You're Not Using! Sat., Oct 19 at 10 am Speaker: **Debra Dudek**

family history or organize your files.

Matthew Rutherford, Curator of Genealogy and Local History at the Newberry Library, will speak in

LEARN SEE P. 2

FALL PROGRAMS 2019



Dr. Kevin Kaufmann

History of Baseball in Chicago

Wed., Sept. 18th at 7:00 PM

Presented Dr. Kevin Kaufmann of Loyola University



Beth Sair

Chicago's Talking Statues

Thurs., Oct. 17th at 7:00 PM

Wed., Oct. 23rd at 1:00 PM
Presented by Beth Sair



Greg Borzo

Lost Restaurants of Chicago

Wed., Nov. 6th at 7:00 PM

Presented by Author Greg Borzo

Ravenswood Lake View Historical Association

A Brief History

In the late 1920s and early 1930s Chicago still had a remnant of “settler communities” scattered around the city. People from all over the world had immigrated and made Chicago their new home. The Ravenswood and Lakeview communities were no exception, welcoming people from Germany, Ireland, Sweden, and many other countries.

The Chief Librarian of the Chicago Public Library, Carl Roden, saw a need to record, collect, and preserve the early histories of the neighborhoods and felt that a partnership between the local library and the community was a natural one. Roden asked his branch librarians across the city to reach out to community leaders to form

local historical societies.

By the early 1940s close to a dozen such societies were in existence.

The Ravenswood Lake View Historical Association was started by the Hild Regional Librarian Helen Zatterberg and held its first meeting in 1935. Today, as far as we know, it is the only remaining library founded historical society.

Our mission today is basically the same as it was in 1935 - to collect, record, preserve, and promote an interest in our neighborhood history. One of the treasures of the collection, housed at the Regional Library, is the photographic collection, donated by members and residents of the community. The Chicago Public Library has now digitized the collection and it is available for downloading from

You can help support the Association financially by considering becoming a member (application on the back of newsletter). When shopping on Amazon, please consider making us the nonprofit of choice. Go to smile.amazon.com and select the Ravenswood Lake View Historical Association; every time you shop at smile.amazon.com Amazon will donate a portion of your purchase to the Association. We thank you for your support.

their website.

We hope to continue growing this collection, recording more recent history and changes to the community. We are looking for pictures from the past as well as recent photos, documenting parks, schools, festivals, playgrounds, places of worship, buildings and houses, businesses and more.

If you have any photos you would be willing to let us scan or, if it is already in a digital format ready to donate, please con-

tact us. You can retain the original and will be asked to sign a Deed of Gift to the Association. We will post the photos on our website and donate the digital copy to the Sulzer Regional Library’s historical collection to be posted on their website.

We hope to launch this project sometime in 2020. If you are interested in this project, please contact: leahsteele@ravenswoodhistorical.com or dorenawenger@ravenswoodhistorical.com.



Do you have memories of Miss Barlow and her story-telling hour?

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Park.

The story-telling room of the Sulzer Regional Library was named in her honor.

So that being said, does anyone out there remember attending her story hours? Visiting with her at the Library? Do you remember her stories while a patient at Children’s Memorial Hospital?

If you do we would love to hear your memories of those times which, with your permission, we will share in our next newsletter. You may send to daylemurphy@ravenswoodhistorical.com. Please keep your memory to a maximum of 250 words and send before November 1. We may also have to edit to fit in space available.



Significant women who overcame great obstacles.



Interpretive Exhibit in Chicago Women’s Park and Gardens.
Photo courtesy of Jell Creative

Her Story: Women’s Contributions to Chicago History

On Thursday, March 7, 2019, historian Julia Bachrach gave a presentation to the Lakeview Ravenswood Historical Association in honor of Women’s History Month. Bachrach, author of *The City in a Garden: A History of Chicago’s Parks*, served as the historian to the Chicago Park District for over 28 years. While there, she had the opportunity to undertake a series of projects to honor significant women in Chicago history. These included developing an interpretive interior display at Chicago Women’s Park and Gardens, 1801 S. Indiana Avenue, in 2017.

Bachrach’s initial “deep dive” into women’s history began fifteen years ago, when she received a note from Maria Saldana, the CPD’s first female Board President, and Commissioner Cindy Mitchell (a founder of Friends of the Parks). The note directed Bachrach to create a list of all Chicago parks named in honor of women. When the list was compiled, she found the results somewhat surprising. At that time, there were 555 parks in Chicago—and while approximately 350 of them were named for individuals—only

27 honored women. This paltry list included two parks named for Chicago’s internationally renowned social reformer, Jane Addams, several for developers’ wives or daughters, and a few for girls who had died tragically.

After Bachrach turned in the list, President Saldana and Commissioner Mitchell asked her to develop a program to name or rename parks for significant Chicago women. Bachrach was quite excited by this assignment. She wanted to bring as many naming proposals to the CPD Board as quickly as possible. In April of 2004, she proposed renaming nine parks for signifi-

When Julia Bachrach discovered there were 555 parks in Chicago—and while approximately 350 of them were named for individuals—only 27 honored women.

cant Chicago women including radical labor leader Lucy Parsons; musicians Lillian Hardin Armstrong and Mahalia Jackson; playwright Lorraine Hansberry; physician Margaret Hie



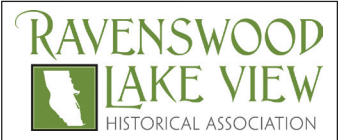
Julia Bachrach

Ding Lin; and scientist Chi Che Wang. But, the procedure didn’t go as easily or as smoothly as she had hoped. The Fraternal Order of Police objected to naming a park for Lucy Parsons, whom the Chicago Police had once described as “more dangerous than a thousand rioters.” Despite the objection, the Chicago Park District Board of Commissioners officially named a park at 4712 W. Belmont Avenue in honor of Lucy Parsons.

The Chicago Park District’s initiative to name parks for significant Chicago women has continued over the years. Since 2004, more than 40 parks have

been named for noteworthy local women. In addition to describing this program, Bachrach reported on current projects to honor Chicago women with monuments. She described the few early efforts to pay tribute to accomplished women such as a 1932 Memorial Bench on the Midway Plaisance that honors early Illinois legislators Flora S. Cheney and Katherine Goode. Bachrach also highlighted recent installations such as the new Gwendolyn Brooks portrait bust in Gwendolyn Brooks Park. The artist of that monument, Margot McMahon, attended the lecture. With Bachrach’s encouragement, she came to the front of the room to share some insights on creating the monument. McMahon also advocated for additional monuments to Chicago women.

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Dedicated to preserving and disseminating the history of Chicago, Illinois’s north side, particularly the neighborhoods of Ravenswood and Lake View.

In conjunction with the Chicago Public Library, the Association maintains an extensive collection of books, photos, newspaper articles, and audio and video recordings at the Conrad Sulzer Regional Library.

The Association frequently presents programs with authors and historians touching on matters of historical importance to the Ravenswood and Lake View neighborhoods.

The official boundaries of Ravenswood/ Lake View Historical Association are North Avenue, the Chicago River, Devon Avenue, and Lake Michigan. While the official area takes in many neighborhoods, Ravenswood and Lakeview are the primary focus of the Association.

LEARN from p. 1

August about techniques and sources for researching records of American adoptions in all time periods.

Curious about DNA testing for genealogy, health or fun? Not sure which test is right for you? Dare to compare! Kate Mills and Melissa Potoczek-Fiskin, librarians from the Barrington Area Library, explain your options in the September program.

Can’t find it on Ancestry? Learn all about Internet Archive and its amazing collection of city directories, county histories, gazetteers, yearbooks and family genealogies. If you haven’t been on this site yet, join us in October because you’re missing out on a lot of fantastic resources. Librarian Debra Dudek from the Fountaintdale Public Library District will be the guest speaker.

Were there Indian burial mounds by your house?

By Patrick Butler

You probably already know about the Cahokian burial mounds in downstate Illinois.

What you may not know is that for decades, archeologists – amateur and otherwise – have been poking around Lakeview and the area around Rosehill Cemetery looking for traces of ancient Indian burial mounds.

According to an item in December’s edition of the Illinois History Journal, “Ancient Artifacts From an Enormous Indian Settlement,” artifacts were uncovered along a gravel and sand ridge bought from Rosehill Cemetery in 2011 for use as a city-owned nature preserve.

Phil Millhouse of the Illinois Archeological Survey recalled how he and some colleagues did “shovel tests” in 2018 and found arrow fragments, knives, pottery and possibly cooking utensils.

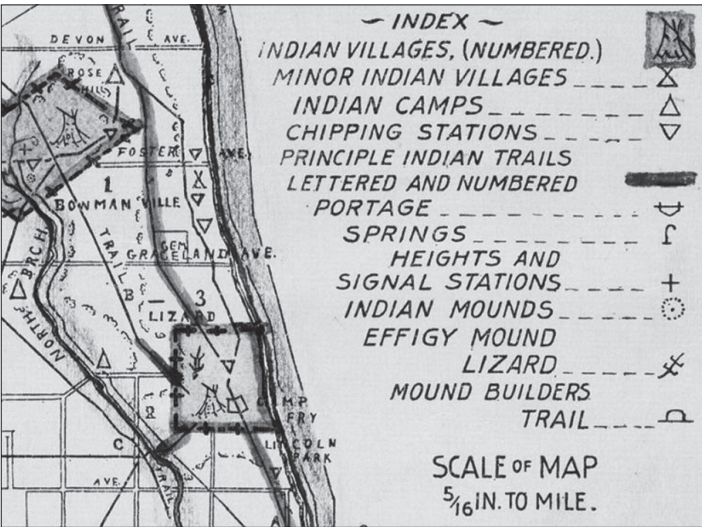
“It turned out to be a very large prehistoric village on that ridge of sand and gravel,” Millhouse said, noting the “enormous” site was surrounded by wetlands that had been occupied possibly thousands of years before Europeans settled the area.

According to a map drawn up by Albert Scharf in the early 1900s, a lizard-shaped mound was found around Oakdale and Wellington streets, right near the present CTA station. Those mounds were probably destroyed by the construction of the elevated train line that eventually became the CTA’s Brown Line.

The Chicago History Museum has a large collection of papers from an artist and amateur archaeologist named Charles Dilig that include notes he made from dozens of excursions to ar-



Digging into effigy mounds was a popular pastime during the late 19th century. Photo courtesy State Historical Society of Wisconsin



Albert Scharf’s map shows a reptilian-shaped mound, called the “Effigy Mound Lizard,” located in the Lakeview neighborhood. Effigy mounds are large earthworks made from soil, usually about 3 to 7 feet high, that form shapes that can be seen from overhead.

Courtesy Chicago History Museum and Albert F. Schar

chaeological sites around Chicago in the 1880s and 1890s. They contain multiple references to a mound in Lakeview, which he referred to as a “lizard” or as a “serpent.” Dilig sketched out a map of the area now known as Lakeview, showing the exact location of the mound [see map].

While traces of that mound have long since disappeared, a handful of curious seekers are still wondering about who built those mysterious mounds – and why.

Over the years, “experts”

of all kinds poked around the Lakeview site looking for clues to the mound’s purpose and perhaps some still undiscovered mounds.

Back around the turn of the 19th Century, “mounding” was a favorite recreation among early North Side residents. That is, to dig for Indian artifacts, often destroying any evidence of value. “You’d take the family out on a picnic, give the kids a shovel and bucket, and they’d dig into a mound and see what was there,” Wisconsin archaeologist Amy

Rosenbrough said.

Some believe these mysterious mounds could have been a burial site similar to those found as far away as Wisconsin and downstate Cahokia. A 1942 Chicago Tribune story told of an especially interesting find – an ancient grave containing 14 skeletons arranged “like spokes in a wheel, with feet together and heads forming a wide circle.”

Back around the turn of the 19th Century, “mounding” was a favorite recreation among early North Side residents. That is, to dig for Indian artifacts, often destroying any evidence of value.

According to another Tribune story, a retired local florist had collected a number of artifacts including spear tips, arrowheads, knives, pottery and assorted trinkets.

That collection, incidentally, has long since vanished, says Albert Scharf, who wrote a history of Chicago area Indian tribes around the turn of the 19th century. George Strack, a Miami tribal historian, believes some of those items could have been left by Miami Indians traveling through Chicago as far back as the 1700s.

Even then, Strack said, “Chicago was a very cosmopolitan area. It’s always been a place where it was an intersection of trade for hundreds – perhaps thousands – of years.” In the early years that Chicago was being settled by European trappers,

MOUNDS SEE P. 6

PORTAL TO THE PAST

Privy pits provide treasure trove of information about Chicago’s past

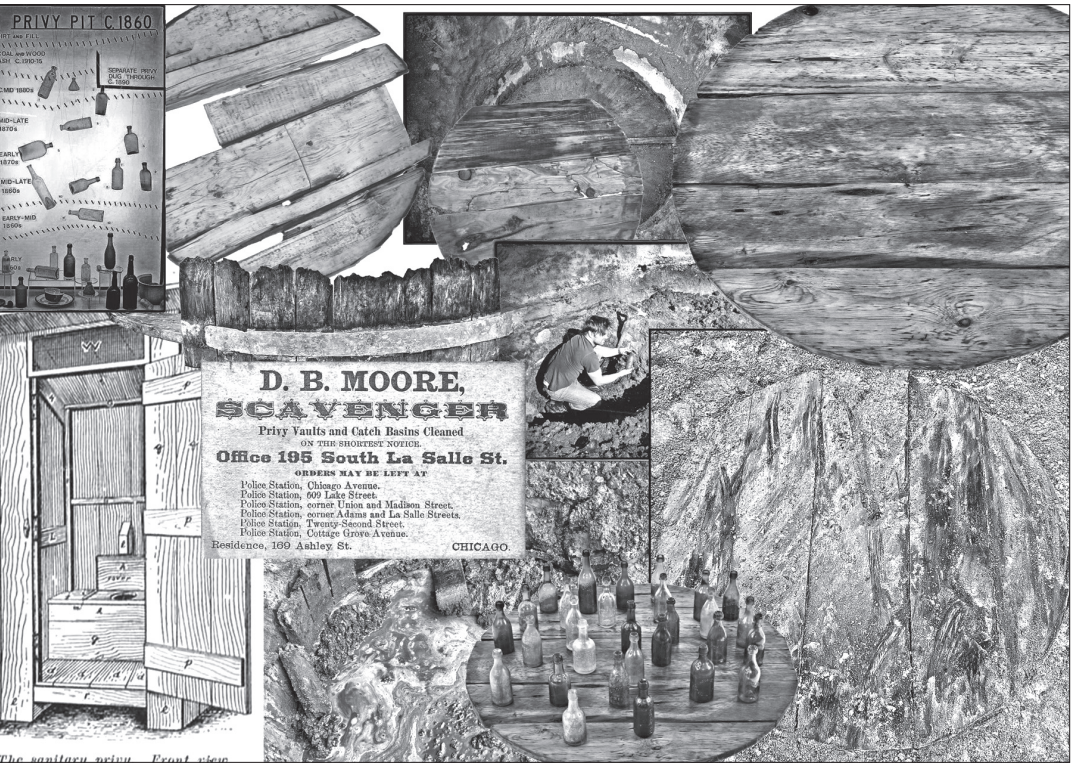
by Peter von Buol

Those home and business owners now grumbling over the city’s dramatically higher water and sewer taxes might want to think about some 19th century technology to lessen the load.

For the past four years, architectural salvager Eric J. Nordstrom has spent countless hours excavating intriguing sites throughout Chicago, most of which were used as outhouses in 19th century. Prior to the advent of indoor plumbing, all homes used outdoor outhouses. And for the most part they worked pretty good during three of Chicago’s four seasons. Winter trips to the outdoor pits were no fun!

While some pits were brick-lined, many were simply a hole in the ground. In the 19th century, outhouses were not just used as bathrooms. The privy pits of outhouses were usually the most convenient place for 19th century Chicago residents to dispose of non-bio-degradable trash and it is for that reason, they now serve as portals to the past.

Nordstrom has named the ongoing project “Unearthing Chicago” and often, he will drop everything at a moment’s notice to head to a site. While Nordstrom is sometimes aware of the location of an unexcavated privy pit, a team of professional excavators will often discover the remains of an outhouse and contact him. Building professionals operate on a tight schedule and once



For the past four years, local architectural salvager Eric J. Nordstrom [photo center] has spent countless hours excavating intriguing sites throughout Chicago, some sites which were used as outhouses in 19th century. Prior to the advent of indoor plumbing, all homes used outdoor outhouses. Surrounding him in this collage are some of the items he’s found while digging in the ground.

contacted, Nordstrom must work quickly to not impede the work of the excavators.

Among the discoveries made by Nordstrom have been ornate mid-19th century bottles, an Irish Nationalist clay pipe and

is very little doubt that I have come across the oldest known/ documented Chicago urban privy pit. Artifacts from various “pockets” [of the site] have been dated to the late 1830’s-1850’s,” Nordstrom said.

According to Nordstrom, the use of outdoor toilets as an on-site garbage dump resulted in the creation of a new profession known back then as night scavengers. Privy pits were a limited resource and scavengers, who had to disregard the unpleasant smell, were employed to empty them.

“Privy pits owners would have them emptied by ‘night scavengers,’ which was an occupation that can be found in the early city directories. These professionals would purchase a license and travel around neighborhoods emptying backyard

“There is very little doubt that I have come across the oldest known/ documented Chicago urban privy pit,” said Eric Nordstrom.

a ceramic doll. He believes the bottles, which were excavated in 2015, date to the late 1830s and which would make them the city’s oldest known privy pits.

“After discussing my urban privy find with several people in the field (including historians, archaeologists, Chicago bottle collectors), there

‘vaults.’ Today, when we find a privy that’s empty, we refer to it as being ‘dipped.’ That is, the contents were cleaned out long ago and the vault was filled. All that remains are wooden floors and staves with hoops,” Nordstrom said.

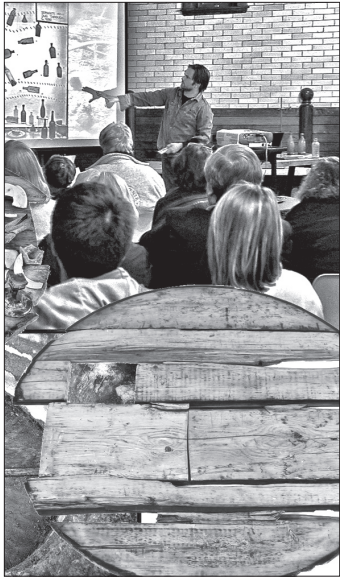
Among the most intact sites excavated by Nordstrom has been one which belonged to John Kent Russell, a successful mid-19th century carpenter and sawmiller owner.

“He was a very large supplier of millwork (such as brackets, trim-work and doors) for some of the earliest Chicago balloon-frame structures being built before and after the Great Chicago Fire of 1871,” Nordstrom said. Built in 1855, Russell’s home had been located at 456 N. Carpenter Str.

PORTAL SEE P. 6



While some privy pits were brick-lined, many were simply a hole in the ground. In the 19th century, out-houses were not just used as bathrooms, they were also the most convenient place for 19th century Chicago residents to dispose of non-bio-degradable trash and it is for that reason, they now serve as portals to the past. Above is a pit that was discovered after a garage was torn down.



on, that had not seen the light of day since tossed beginning into the pits in the 1860’s were still there. It was sealed in the 1880’s and covered over in the 1920s when the garage, with a concrete slab, was built. We found it had been undisturbed! When the house was demolished and the slab was broken apart, we found a sunken area that was soft. When I probed it, I knew I had discovered an undisturbed pit. I had no idea how much I would unearth, including the pine wood privy vault itself!” Nordstrom said.

Besides the artifacts themselves, by continuing to study newly-discovered pits, Nordstrom can get a better understanding about the materials and methods used to build privy pits in the 19th century. In the 19th century, while everyone used privy pits, they have been an underutilized asset.

“I find the systematic extraction and reconstruction of mid-19th century wood privy ‘vaults’ incredibly important, since the ‘architecture’ or materials and methods used to build these underground vessels designed to store trash have never been carefully studied above ground. It’s one thing to read the lengthy city ordinances written during that time, but to actually see what’s described in one form or another is truly amazing,” Nordstrom said.

mineral water bottle dating to the late 1850’s or early 1860’s, Nordstrom said.

Having been protected from the elements, Nordstrom found the privy vault and its contents to have been well-preserved.

“It was amazingly intact and moist, which allowed the staves and floor to survive in such good condition. Newspapers, eggshells, glassware, bottles, and so

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According to a 2014 report commissioned by Preservation Chicago, a non-profit dedicated to architectural preservation, the house was designed by one of Chicago’s earliest architects, William Belden Olmsted. Most of the houses and buildings erected during Chicago’s great growth in the 1850s were simply hastily raised by builders.

Recently demolished, the wooden balloon-frame building had survived the Great Chicago Fire of 1871. Its privy vault had also been located on Russell’s house lot.

“A garage was constructed on top of the pit in the 1920’s

Over the years, assorted “experts” have speculated the Chicago area mounds – including the one under the CTA tracks – could have been built by some unknown “Lost Race.” A few enthusiasts even speculated the work could even have been done by one of the wandering “Lost Tribes of Israel,” or perhaps a band of Egyptians or Phoenicians.

and protected it for decades. In fact, upon discovery, all of the contents were still very wet and intact, likely from being protected or ‘capped’ when the cement floor sealed the ground where the privy was located. The earliest artifacts discovered at the bottom of the privy floor were two cod liver oil medicinal bottles and a cobalt blue William H. Hutchinson soda or

some unknown “Lost Race.” A few enthusiasts even speculated the work could even have been done by one of the wandering “Lost Tribes of Israel,” or perhaps a band of Egyptians or Phoenicians.

In 2011, Bill Quackenbush, cultural resources officer for the Wisconsin-based Ho-Chunk Indians, declined to speculate on

the mounds’ origin, preferring instead to encourage the curious to just enjoy the mounds and not try to divine their meaning.

“The culture we live in today and the society of 100 years ago tried to do that. They dug through (the mounds and other grave sites), they shook the dirt and looked for every little piece of information they could find.

MOUNDS FROM P. 4

traders and explorers, several indian camps were set up along the North and South branches of the Chicago River.

Over the years, assorted “experts” have speculated the Chicago area mounds – including the one under the CTA tracks – could have been built by

Two-flats going, going... gone?



The fate of this greystone two-flat at 1436 W. Berwyn become a symbol of the fight to try and protect two-flats on the North Side.

Unique Chicago housing stock being targeted by moneied-set for extinction

BY PATRICK BUTLER

According to more than one local real estate expert, the once omnipresent two-flat apartment building could be on the way out.

“In many Chicago neighborhoods with strong real estate markets, we’ve seen a growing demand for single-family homes” which are in short supply in many “hot” neighborhoods, according to Geoff Smith of DePaul University’s Institute of Housing Studies [IHS].

In fact, DePaul’s IHS, WBEZ radio, and Chicago Magazine have all done recent reports on how the disappearance of two-flats in many formerly working-class neighborhoods is part of

what has been killing the supply of affordable housing on the North Side.

Like the bungalow, the once-ubiquitous two-flat had long been “Chicago’s answer to the Brooklyn Brownstone and the Georgetown Row House,” states Chicago Magazine. Since the early 20th century it has been “performing the duty to which it was first called – that is serving as both shelter and source of rental income for striving families.”

But according to IHS’ Smith, that future could be in question, at least in some “hot” North Side neighborhoods with a big demand for single-family housing and precious little vacant land.

As a result, according to the Chicago Tribune’s Mary Schmich, Chicago has lost 20,000 two- and four-flats just between 2010 and 2016.

The average monthly rents in those often once affordable buildings had been about \$760 compared to \$860 and up, urban planner Michael Babcock, who has been tracking housing trends since 2015, told the Curbed Chicago. That’s meant a loss of at least 5,600 units, especially in neighborhoods like Lincoln Park, Lakeview, Lincoln Square and North Center where the impact has been “astronomical.”

But at least some Edgewater residents aren’t ready to lose their two-flats lying down, said Dan Luna, chief of staff at the 48th Ward aldermanic office.

“We recently more-or-less downzoned a community bounded by Foster, Glenwood, Bryn Mawr and Clark street from RT-4 to RS-3” to make it impossible to build much larger buildings, Luna explained.

“And we weren’t the first,” he said, noting that part of the adjoining 40th Ward did something similar about 10 years ago,” adding that some of that area’s residents came to several 48th Ward community meetings to show how it could be done.

Downzoning gave the community control over future development in the area and helped to prevent the future demolition of two-flats.

Indeed for many in Edgewater, a fight over a handsome and historic greystone two-flat at 1436 W. Berwyn become a symbol of East Andersonville’s fight to control future developments in the area and draw a

line of defense in the sand. Ald. Harry Osterman was swayed to downzone the area based on the neighbors strong concerns. The downzoning change went into affect Sept. 20, 2018. “I agree

DePaul’s IHS, WBEZ radio, and Chicago Magazine have all done recent reports on how the disappearance of two-flats in many formerly working-class neighborhoods is part of what has been killing the supply of affordable housing on the North Side.

with those in support of this rezoning and believe it is in the best interest of the community,” Osterman said at the time.

“We did it last year, but the process started about two years before. There was a lot of hard work and due diligence going on,” Luna said, adding that while there was some resistance, there was a petition signed by 400 residents supporting the concept.

“And I’m hearing others are interested in looking into this, trying to get all the facts,” then make a decision, he added.

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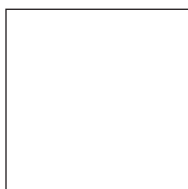
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RAVENSWOOD LAKE VIEW
HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION
c/o Conrad Sulzer Regional Library
4455 N. Lincoln Ave.
Chicago, IL 60625