



RLVHA *Review*

Newsletter of the Ravenswood Lake View Historical Association

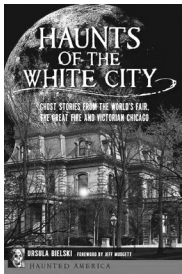
FALL PROGRAM

HAUNTS OF THE WHITE CITY

with Ursula Bielski

Wednesday, September 21
at 7 p.m.

Nineteenth-Century Chicago is remembered as one of the most fascinating and dynamic of all environments in history. From Indian Wars to electric light, Chicago found itself at the center of some of the darkest and brightest experiences of modern times. Newspapers of the day



carried the sensational stories of these epic days, including many appearances of ghosts, demons, birds of ill omen and other supernatural visitations on Chicago's citizenry. From the phantoms of the Fort Dearborn Massacre to the victims of H.H. Holmes, from the boy who drank holy water to undertakers who experimented with the dead, from Lincoln Park's "Suicide Bridge" to the ship captain who communicated with the dead, the ghostlore of the "City of the Century" tell the tale of a city haunted by its efforts to walk the line between a provincial past and a dazzling future.

Ursula Bielski is an historian, prolific author and paranormal researcher.

Program held at
Lerner Auditorium,
Conrad Sulzer
Regional Library
at 4455 N. Lincoln Ave.

Germans in Chicago and America

BY PATRICK BUTLER

Germans began pouring into the U.S. before this country was even born.

In fact a prominent German helped Gen. George Washington lead the new nation to win the Revolutionary War against England. And today, the German-American community holds an annual march in his honor.

Baron Frederick Wilhelm von Steuben was introduced to Gen. George Washington



by means of a letter from Ben Franklin as a "Lieutenant General in the King of Prussia's service." He was advanced travel

funds and left Europe from Marseille, France. On Sept. 26, 1777, he reached Portsmouth, New Hampshire and by Dec. 1, he was in Boston.

Congress was in York, PA, after being ousted from Philadelphia for the winter, and on Feb. 5, 1778, Steuben was with them. They accepted his offer to volunteer, without pay, and on Feb. 23, Steuben reported for duty to Gen. Washington at Valley Forge.

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FROM RICHES TO RAGS, THE STORY OF EDGEWATER HOSPITAL'S FALL

BY PATRICK BUTLER

It's been 21 years since they shut down Edgewater Hospital, but North Siders haven't completely forgotten.

In fact, podcasters Todd Ganz and Stephani Young of ifthewallscouldtalkpodcast.com, told all about everything to do with the former hospital from the stories of the famous who'd been born there – from Hillary Rodham Clinton to John Wayne Gacy to the days of Dr. Maurice Mazel.

Their program reviews Edgewater Hospital's early days as a glitzy medical center that served the North Side during Chicago's Jazz Age, to its last days, when heinous insurance fraud led to patients dying and hospital administrators and doctors doing jail time.

Dr. Mazel founded the Edgewater Hospital, 5700 N. Ashland Ave., at the outset of the Great Depression in 1929.

Back then, Edgewater Hos-



Edgewater Medical Center as it appeared in the '50s-'60s. The original building is to the left and Mazel House 1953 expansion to the right.

pital was considered one of the country's leading hospitals, complete with a helicopter landing, one of the area's best burn-care facilities, and even a luxury swimming pool. Later it became a community embarrassment when two physicians took it over and ran a racketeering operation out of the hospital, while driving it

into bankruptcy.

Back when the Mazals ran things one former orderly recalled how Mrs. Harriet Mazel-Szanto would wander through the halls, talking with patients. She functioned as chairman and CEO from 1980 to 1984. She later shed the CEO title, but

HOSPITAL SEE P. 4

Ward and Sears built a method of modern living never seen on earth before

BY THOMAS J. O'GORMAN

Do you relish paging through the photos and descriptions of exotic merchandise for sale, all assembled for you and bound together in easy to view order?

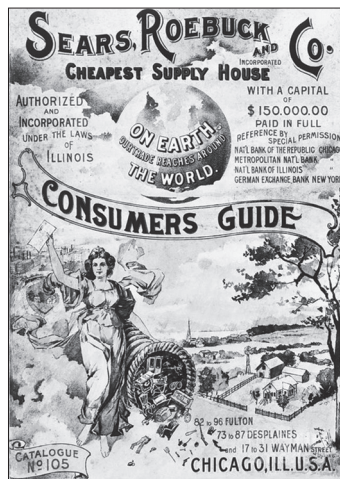
Do you still receive a lot of catalogues? Our family loved them. We always had the choicest ones. The most picturesque. Lots of eye appeal. Brooks Brothers was my favorite.

But so too were the ones from shops like Murray's Toggery Shop in Nantucket (for the original Nantucket Reds Collection), Vineyard Vines in Cape Cod, Ralph Lauren, Lily Pulitzer in Palm Beach and L.L. Bean in Freeport, Maine.

We actually looked on them as colorful magazines that never went out of style, never an expired freshness date. Just paging through them lifted your exposure to American fashion. Or new appliances. Sailboats. Foul weather gear. French cookware, Craftsmen tools and the latest Top-siders.

Catalogues weren't the great American novel. But they did, I believe, have a story to tell.

Chicago has always been a catalogue town. Catalogues were the very making of our



(L) Sears, Roebuck and Co. 1902 catalog. (R) By 1894 the page count of the Sears catalogue was 322 pages. Early Sears catalogues billed themselves as the "Cheapest Supply House on Earth" or "the Book of Bargains," and featured a mind-boggling array of products, including medical and veterinary supplies, musical instruments, firearms, bicycles and farming equipment.

modern city, helping to turn this city into the capital of the American heartland. From the beginning catalogue shopping was always enhanced by this city's center of the nation geography with its system of American railroads, all of which started in Chicago. Our central presence on the Prairie led to the enormous success of what catalogues were all about.

Thanks to Chicago's catalogue king, the department store baron, A. Montgomery Ward, who brought everyday necessities and luxury items to the front doors of Americans everywhere beginning in 1872. In the process he became one of Chicago's most authoritative and successful business leaders.

Sears & Roebuck Co., Ward's only catalogue competitor, was another Chicago merchandiser beginning in 1893. They grew to become a household name and a legend in the marketing of catalogue sales.

The well-known American department store was a transforming reality in America. Well-organized, capable of reaching across the plateaus and mountains of the U.S.A. to

help sustain the populations of Americans on the move. Especially with the expansion of the waves of immigrants seeking settlement.

These two dynamic giants in the catalogue sales industry were vast empires, jump-starting the business of shopping from a sales catalogue. They took advantage of the opportunity of having the inventive production of American manufacturing brought right to the doorsteps of small town Americans.

At the time, many rugged pioneers made use of the chance to resettle the nation. Land was vastly available and Americans needed to spread out. Such pioneers spent much of the late 19th century doing just that, spreading out across the roomy geography of the continent. Revitalizing the nation. Expanding the American dream. Farming. Ranching. Producing the nation's food supply. Creating new states. Fine-tuning the bounty of American harvests from "sea to shining sea." That wasn't just a patriotic slogan, but rather a description of what Americans were up to.

Much of it enhanced by the

new convenience of shopping from pages of merchandise for the necessities of life.

No matter where you lived. No matter how small or remote your town. The catalogue sales empire could get to you, changing lives with the availability of necessities and luxury items. From tractors to sofas. From bonnets to hobnailed boots. From dishware to perfume, from longjohn undies to hankies and canteens, the wish lists of Americans could be easily assembled, along with many kid's Christmas lists.

Real Chicagoans, of course, could visit their local emporiums. A visit to Sears & Roebuck, or Montgomery Ward, or the upscale showrooms of Marshall Field's. Elegance, there, was an everyday adventure. If you were a sod-buster in Nebraska or a rancher in Montana your local pickings were most likely slim. But with mail order shopping the catalogue was all you needed.

Sears even offered a wide variety of pre-fabricated homes among available merchandise. Guaranteeing easy assemblage.



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.

Plan Commission virtually approves destruction of historic church building

Architect's work linked to 1893 World's Fair design

PHOTO AND STORY BY PETER VON BUOL

In a virtual meeting held on May 26, the eight-member Chicago Plan Commission [CPC] approved a developer's plans which will allow the demolition of a 120-year-old Lincoln Park church building which incorporates design features from a building its architect had designed for the 1893 World's Columbian Exposition.

Located at 2700-2717 N. Pine Grove Ave., development company Ogden Partners will incorporate the south, east and west facades of the existing building of the 2nd Church of Christ [Christian Science] congregation into what will become a six-story residential building with 22 residential units

Among those who had been advocating for the preservation of the historic building had been the members of Preservation Chicago, a non-profit architectural preservation advocacy group which had sought re-use of the building.

"While it's notable that the façades of architect Solon S. Beman's Christian Science Church will remain standing, it is unfortunate that the entire orange rated building could not be preserved. The work of Beman is honored and revered on the South Side for what today is our Pullman National Monument Park, but obviously discounted in Lincoln Park, where only the exterior shell will be preserved and the larger building demolished. This is extremely unfortunate," said Ward Miller, the group's executive director.

The property will also include worship space in the existing foyer for the dwindling congregation of the Christian Science Church. The new building will



The 2nd Church of Christ Christian Science building at 2700-2717 N. Pine Grove Ave.

eliminate a surface parking lot but will add 31 underground parking spaces. These spaces will be accessed through an alley entrance, not through a curb cut.

"One would assume that the congregation would [have wanted] to preserve what many would consider as part of a national treasure in Chicago. However, it appears that monetizing the site may have been a priority, even over a community cultural center, which could have been the ultimate gift by this religious congregation to the Lincoln Park Community. So, it's a missed opportunity. We had found a major philanthropic Chicago-based foundation that was willing to sponsor this proposed Lincoln Park community center," said Miller.

Principal of Ogden Partners is Mark Ordower, who happens to serve as a board member on the Near South Planning Board [NSPB], a delegate agency of the city's neighborhood business development program which serves the city's South Loop neighborhood, and which has a stated purpose of attracting and retaining neighborhood businesses.

The agency includes some of the city's most prominent developers and architects, including Ernest Wong, chair of the city's

Commission on Landmarks. The CPC and the Commission on Chicago Landmarks both are within the Dept. of Planning and Development [DPD].

The CPC is responsible for the review of proposals that involve the Lakefront Protection Ordinance and the historic church property's proximity to the lakefront triggered the re-



A developer will incorporate the south, east and west facades of the existing 2nd Church of Christ Christian Science building into what will become a six-story residential building with 22 residential units.

view process.

Miller said his group is disheartened Ordower's plan will cause the destruction of a building which echoes Beman's award-winning Merchant's Tailor Building from the 1893 World's Columbian Exposition, which had also been built in an architectural style known as Classical Revival.

For decades afterward, Chris-

tian Science congregations around the country followed Beman's lead as they built their own church buildings in the same style.

"This plan could have been another major institution in Lincoln Park, but will now be a new residential building, springing from the shell of a former Landmark-quality temple, which should have been a Designated Chicago Landmark," said Miller.

Houses of worship are exempted from Chicago Landmark Status ostensibly to not cause an undue financial burden. Miller said too many of Chicago's historic churches have been lost and Preservation Chicago is urging the Chicago City Council to reconsider the city's religious buildings ordinance.

"Looking to the future, we need to repeal the 1987 Re-

ligious Buildings Ordinance, which exempts houses of worship from being given Chicago Landmark Status, without the consent of the owner. No other building type must conform to this special provision of the landmarks ordinance, except these houses of worship, which are also tax exempt to our city's

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remained on as chairman until 1988.

If she found a patient call light not being answered quickly enough, that staff worker would be fired immediately.

“The place was like a Navy ship,” the onetime orderly recalled.

And it wasn’t just Chicagoans who went out to Edgewater Hospital when they needed help, Ganz and Young reminded everyone during their recent talk sponsored by the Edgewater Library.

Even Frank Sinatra came in when he was in from wherever, Ganz noted.

Newsweek did a fantastic story in 1978, focusing especially on the Edgewater Hospital.

But things stated changing after Dr. Mazel died in 1980.

The management – and attitude – started changing overnight, Ganz noted. It all ended with its one time owner and manager, Peter Rogan, fleeing to Canada to avoid prosecution. Rogan was convicted in 2015 of lying about his assets to try to prevent paying \$188 million in civil judgments against him.

Longtime doctors started leaving as an entirely different group of doctors started making their way in, coaxing destitute men living on the street to come in for “free medical treatment,” which in many cases called for unnecessary surgery, even amputations.

The cost would then be passed on to the state and federal reimbursement. And the

“patients” ultimately sent back out on the street. Then two people died from unnecessary heart operations and that’s when the house of cards crumbled.

Rogan acquired Edgewater Medical Center in 1989 for \$1 million cash and assumed its \$10 million in liabilities. In 1994 Rogan sold it and the real estate to the Edgewater Property Company [EPC], which he also controlled. In the deal Edgewater Medical Center paid an exorbitant monthly rent to EPC. At the helm of both entities Rogan funneled profits directly into his own pockets.

Corruption rooted itself deeply into Edgewater’s staff. Rogan orchestrated a complex system of kickbacks for doctors and staff complicit with committing fraud against Medicare, Medicaid and private insurance companies. Vice president Roger Ehmen and medical director Dr. Ravi Barnabas were able to turn the nearly bankrupt hospital into a lucrative profit center. The pair tapped Dr. Sheshiqiri Rao Vavilikolanu and Dr. Kumar Kalia to recruit potential patients.

For years the doctors sent hospital employees into the Chicago community to find potential patients. It did not matter if they did not have heart conditions, were drug addicts, were unable to speak English or even had no health insurance coverage. Recruiters instructed the potential patients how to feign symptoms in order to mandate services rendered by Edgewater Medical Center. In return the patients were offered money, food, cigarettes and other amenities for their cooperation.

Another complicit Edgewater physician participated in the massive fraud scheme. Dr. Andrew Cubria tapped into the recruited patient pool for unnecessary angiogram and angioplasty operations.

Then a man named Albert Okaro underwent an invasive and unnecessary cardiac surgery that ultimately killed him. The patient’s death was regarded as collateral damage for

Dr. Cubria. Tax-payer funded healthcare programs and private insurers reimbursed the hospital for more than 750 invasive, and expensive, cardiac surgeries performed by Dr. Cubria alone.

One Edgewater physician, Dr. Krishnaswami Sriram, billed the government for seemingly impossible human feats. According to Dr. Sriram’s billing records on Nov. 12, 1997 he saw 187 patients... all of whom coincidentally had congestive heart failure.

In Jan. 1999 a severe snowstorm brought Chicago to a standstill. Despite the hazardous weather conditions Dr. Sriram was apparently able to visit 31 elderly patients at their homes and 18 more in medical facilities. Thirty-two of Dr. Sriram’s patients also managed to incur new medical costs long after their deaths. On paper it appeared as though Dr. Sriram was indefatigable. His records indicate that he met with patients every single day in 1997 and 1998, while missing only two days of work in 1999.

Things began to unravel in 1999 when the hospital payed out over \$1 million to stave off an impending federal lawsuit over Medicare billing irregularities. The ambitious Dr. Sriram was taken into custody in 2000. Feds exposed the rest of the fraud operation in 2001.

The unnecessary suffering and premature deaths they caused resulted in the shuttering of a historic Chicago neighborhood hospital. As time went by, the physical property degraded and was vandalized. It became a favorite target of urban explorers and the curious, some who did damage to the interiors, despite the fact there is around-the-clock security on-site.

Among the wreckage left behind in its closing, were medical records containing former patients’ names, birth dates (and in some cases death records) and other personal information which was all left open for the curious to pilfer through. They were just left in the building

despite laws requiring medical records remain secured for 10 years. In the end those medical records went out in construction waste dumpsters.

The upheaval brought on by the charges cut the hospital’s day-to-day operations off at the knees. In Nov. 2001 the US government, which accounted for 90% of Edgewater Medical Center income, ceased all Medicare payments. Unable to find a suitable financier the hospital shut down in Dec. 2001. The remaining 450 staff were suddenly out of a job or had to transfer to other area healthcare facilities. In addition to the displaced staff, 52 patients were transferred to other facilities for ongoing care.

In 2006 courts ruled that former owner and executive Peter Rogan was on the hook for \$64.2 million in damages and penalties.

The Justice Dept. [DOJ] charged Rogan in 2008 with obstruction of justice and perjury for his attempts to hide his assets. One of the trusts was set up in the Bahamas and was entitled the Peter Rogan Irrevocable Trust. Rogan insisted that he maintained no control whatsoever over the assets and could not access it.

In addition to the federal charges, French bank Dexia put the property into foreclosure, and worked with the DOJ to recover assets scattered throughout various bank accounts and front companies in the Caribbean. Some of the cases are still in litigation.

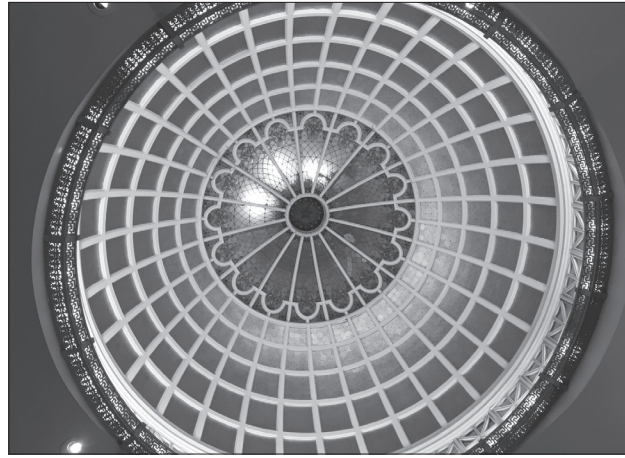
Senior vice president Roger Ehmen and Dr. Ravi Barnabas were convicted for their roles in the fraud operation. Ehmen received 6 1/2 years of prison time and was ordered to pay \$5 million in restitution.

As for the physical property, in the end, the property was put in the hands of the Edgewater Medical Center Bankruptcy Estate, which was comprised of 250 creditors who were owed in excess of \$110 million.

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“Keep in mind that these houses of worship were often constructed by members of our families and communities to stand as beautiful places of solitude and worship in perpetuity,” said Ward Miller.

CHURCH FROM P. 3

tax base,” said Miller.

For many, houses of worship provide a sense of permanence to their neighborhood and for generations, Miller added, they have been actual landmarks for residents.

“Keep in mind that these

houses of worship were often constructed by members of our families and communities to stand as beautiful places of solitude and worship in perpetuity. That has often been forgotten in recent years and this city ordinance needs a group of sponsoring alderpersons to repeal this ordinance,” Miller said.

While the congregation has been described as the “owner of the tabernacle” in its zoning application, a city official informed Inside Publications the congregation will actually be a tenant in the new building.

If the congregation does retain ownership of the foyer space, it may be financially

beneficial for the congregation to rent out its tabernacle for events. After all, Lincoln Park is located just east of the church. The congregation also owns the Christian Science Reading room at 2628 N. Clark St. and may shift its activities to that location on desirable dates for outside rentals.

According to Ogden Partners’ presentation to the CPC, the development will result in construction of one “affordable housing” four-bedroom unit within a two-mile radius of the Pine Grove property.

According to information posted on the website of the DPD, the purpose of the Lakefront Protection Ordinance includes maintaining and enhancing the “landscaped, spacious, and continuous character of the lakeshore parks” and to “preserve the cultural, historical, and recreational heritage of the lakeshore park.”

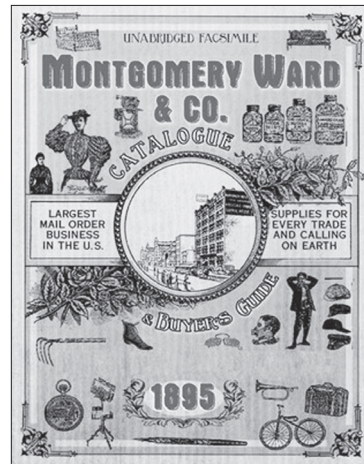
MODERN FROM P. 2

Work clothes or dress duds were a snap to get into your closet. On the Prairie, the Plains, in the Rockies, the Arizona Desert, or the mining towns of the ore rich west, the reliability of trains with shipments from Chicago brought sought after goods right to your parlor.

The catalogues themselves were important documents. They revealed the enormous variety of American ingenuity in the products produced for domestic use. They showed the needs and necessities of Americans coast to coast. What life was really like.

And when the new season’s catalogue arrived, last season’s may have been put to use in the outhouse.

There was no doubt about it. America was rich in resources that showcased the genius of the nation’s people. Best seen in the inventions and gadgets that greatly modernized the nation and settled the contours of the Great Experiment in Democracy. The muscular success of



(L) Montgomery Ward & Co. Catalogue and Buyers’ Guide 1895. (R) A Montgomery Ward catalogue from 1979 was 1199 pages long and included an order blank to order more catalogues.

American commerce was easy to see. Especially in Chicago.

The success of catalogues was good for Chicago. It added real power to the manner in which commerce was conducted. Fresh and reasoned intelligence was easy to see in its achievement. Creating an American culture at the same time.

Ironically, as A. Montgomery Ward grew more rich and powerful, he placed the political and legal energy of his success at the disposal of the city.

He became obsessed with the protection of Chicago’s most valuable natural resource, the 33 miles of lakefront beauty.

His life’s ambition from high above his Michigan Ave. HQ became ground zero for an endless series of legal challenges in the courts to protect the lakefront from industry and manufacturing. He led the struggle to set the lakefront’s majesty as “forever open, clear and free.”

That remained Ward’s mantra until he died in 1913. With

the vindication of the lakefront as his gift to fellow Chicagoans for all time.

We embrace, today, a cityscape panorama that has no equal in all of the nation. Just look at Cleveland, or Buffalo, whose shores the Carnegies and Rockefellers got ahold of first. It was hard fought.

Ward and Sears & Roebuck built a method of modern living never seen on earth before. There was nothing like it anywhere in the world.

The refined American way was both a challenge and a catalyst for the future of the nation.

Nothing held back the passion of Americans for invention. From Thomas Edison and the electric light to Henry Ford and the massive undertaking of the assembly line, the streamlining of living in all its modern glory unfolded in America. And in Chicago everything from the window envelope to meat packing seemed to become a part of everyday life.

GERMANS FROM P. 1

Steuben did not speak English, but his French was such that he could communicate with some of the officers. Washington's aide-de-camp, Alexander Hamilton, and Nathanael Greene assisted Steuben in drafting a training program for the soldiers which found approval with the Commander-in-Chief.

Steuben began with a "model company," a group of 100 chosen men and trained them himself... they in turn successively worked outward into each brigade. Steuben's eclectic personality greatly enhanced his mystique. He trained the soldiers, who at this point were generally lacking in proper clothing themselves, in full military dress uniform, swearing and yelling out orders to them in German and French.

His regulations for the order and discipline of the colonials became the army's standard drill manual, the Regulations for the Order and Discipline of U.S. Troops, which remained the official military manual until 1814.

At Yorktown his role was as commander of one of the three divisions of Washington's troops. You may recall learning in grade school how the Revolutionary War turned out...

Steuben became an American citizen by act of Pennsylvania legislature in March 1784 (and later by the New York legislature in July 1786). He was dis-

HOSPITAL FROM P. 4

After the once memorable hospital was shuttered forever, some of the buildings were demolished, and some of the buildings remain for other use. The old parking facility has been sold to developers where new housing has popped up. And the main buildings facing Ashland Ave. have now been converted into apartments.

Parts of this story are from Americanubrbex.com



Try authentic German food and traditional drinks and dance to the music of German bands.

charged from the military with honor on March 24, 1784.

In Chicago Steuben is memorialized by Von Steuben Metropolitan Science Center, 5039 N. Kimball Ave. The school has not always been known by that name. In fact, the facade of the building refers to the building as home to Von Steuben Senior High School. That was true from 1933 to 1982.

Von Steuben originally opened its doors at the corner of Kimball and Carmen avenues in the Albany Park community as a junior high school in Sept. 1930, with a capacity of 2,500 students. In Sept. 1933, it was designated as a senior high school with a portion of the building to be used as an elementary school.

According to some reports, there were enough Germans in the Colonies that a number of German-Americans were even suggesting that both English and German be the official languages.

The first Germans arrived in Chicago in the 1830s. Germans arrived here in large numbers as Chicago began to develop in the mid-19th century. Some 1,000 Germans were in Chicago in 1845. In 1848, the first large group of Germans immigrated due to failed revolts in German states. The peak of German immigration was 1890.

In 1900, there were 470,000 Chicago residents who had at least one parent born in Germany and/or who were born in Germany themselves. Those of German descent were the largest ethnic group of Chicago from 1850 until the turn of the

century.

Generally opposed to slavery, German-Americans signed up in large numbers when President Lincoln called for volunteers to help put down the 1861 insurrection.

By the time the rebels were sent back south with their loss four years later, a number of German-Americans had distinguished themselves such as Maj. Gen. Carl Schurtz (remembered today with the high school here on the North Side), and Gen. George Armstrong Custer (original family name Kuster.)

Around the same time, a number of Germans a few years later got into anarchist-radical politics, organized the 1886 Haymarket Riot and fought its own war in 1885 after Chicago Mayor Levi Boone closed all beer beer gardens and saloons.

As the migration from Europe to the USA progressed, many German's headed west and stopped in Chicago to earn some money before moving on to claim a homestead. Those with skills in demand in the city could—and often did—stay.

In Chicago, Germans were found in many neighborhoods. The oldest, originally settled by people from Bavaria and Württemberg, was on the North Side.

A newer, working-class neighborhood, settled by immigrants from the East Elbian provinces, was situated on the Northwest Side, between Chicago and Fullerton avenues on both sides of the river, with North Ave. often referred to as the "German Broadway."

Later North Center and Lincoln Square became strong German communities, while Lincoln Ave. was lined with dozens of German restaurants, retail stores, bars and social clubs.

Gymnastics and choir halls, beer gardens, and excursion sites were important parts of German American everyday culture. Whole families met in brightly lit and comfortable pubs, and on Sundays women and children joined the men on excursions to the beer gardens.

In 1850, Germans constituted one-sixth of Chicago's population. Until the turn of the century, people of German descent constituted the largest ethnic group in the city.

In 1900, 470,000 Chicagoans—one out of every four residents—had either been born in Germany or had a parent born there. By 1920 their numbers had dropped because of reduced emigration from Germany but also because it had become unpopular to acknowledge a German heritage, although 22% of Chicago's population still did so.

Toward the end of the 19th century, the origin of Chicago's German population reflected the overall pattern of German emigration. Originating in the southwestern part of the territory in the 1830s, mass emigration had moved toward the middle areas by the 1850s and '60s and tapped the agrarian northeast with its large estates in the 1880s and '90s. Approximately 35% of Chicago's Germans came from the northeast,

GERMANS FROM P. 6

25% from the southwest, 17% from the northwest, 11% from the west, and 12% from the southeast.

More familiar with German culture were those who had arrived in the great wave of German immigration in the 1880s. These young adults, less Americanized than the first two groups, reinvigorated the community's ties to German culture and formed the core of the turn-of-the-century ethnic community. Many established small businesses, often with an ethnic clientele. Raising their children in the ethnic community, these parents had spent their own youth in Germany and therefore might have been able to convey a sense of German "Heimat" (homeland culture) to these young Chicagoans.

Rebellion, of course, was nothing new to many of the Germans (and Irishmen for that matter) back at home. Many soon became involved in a number of labor parties shortly after their arrival here.

By then, German workers were meeting at beer gardens, picnics – anywhere they could – to push for better working conditions and decent pay.

Newspapers like the Illinois Statts-Zeitung, owned by former Cook County Sheriff A.C. Hessing, the Chicago Arbeiter-Zeitung, the Chicago Freie Presse, and the Abendpost each catered to its own audience.

Places like DANK Haus in Lincoln Square, and the Germania Club in Old Town became important meeting places. (Back in the early 1900s, the Kaiser's brother even paid a visit.)

Things changed, however, when the U.S. entered World War I after the sinking of the Lusitania. Many German organizations changed their names and grew more private.

The Germania Club became the Lincoln Club (later renamed back to the Germania) and even many pets with German-sounding names were given more



The centerpiece of the city's German-American Day celebration is the German Day Parade on Lincoln Ave. Traditional singing and dancing groups from Chicago perform

"American" names.

It got to the point in many homes and restaurants where suddenly they were serving "Liberty Cabbage" and "French Toast."

And it got even worse in the Second World War when people changed their names if they sounded even slightly Germanic.

Many of those with German names were among the busiest selling War Bonds, and a German guy from Kansas named Eisenhower was busy at work in Europe managing the allied effort in WWII.

Given their numbers and heterogeneity, Chicago's Germans never assembled an ethnic constituency behind one ethnic cultural broker promoting group interests. Rather, German men participated in 19th-century Chicago politics on all levels, in all parties, representing a diverse electorate.

During the 1840s to '60s Germans were well represented as aldermen and public office seekers. Michael Diversey, a popular brewery owner, was a generous supporter of St. Michael's Catholic Church in Old Town. In 1892 they shifted party allegiance to support German-born Democrat gubernatorial candidate John P. Altgeld. From the 1890s to the early 1930s, however, the German Americans tended to support Republican candidates, most prominently "Big Bill" Thompson, who sought their votes by standing behind them during the difficult World War I years. In the early 1930s, when

Chicago became Democratic, German Americans more or less followed suit with German Catholics in the lead supporting Cermak in the 1932-33 elections.

German women participated in many community events, while at the same time creating their own institutions. Beyond organizing women's choirs and gymnastics groups, they created a lively female public sphere of charity organizations and women's clubs; in newspapers directed toward female readers they debated "women's issues."

They also managed to support a large home for the elderly in Forest Park, which was still functioning at the opening of the 21st century, and organized fancy charity balls where the German American elite could present itself to Chicago society.

Their bazaars, fairs, and other fundraising activities broadened the base for community participation in addition to providing material support to ethnic institutional life. Although German women's activities paralleled those of other Chicago women's groups, these women had a strong sense of their own value system. They considered themselves to be the better housewives, and having a more professional grip on household management stood at the center of their ethnic identity.

Today, on occasions like the German-American Day or the May Festival, people of German descent continue to publicly demonstrate ethnic pride.

Upcoming German-American programming

No other ethnic group's thumbprint has been larger in helping establish Chicago as a major economic and cultural center nor has any group's influence been more erased by the passage and vicissitudes of time.

Two upcoming events will provide more information on the German community's place and part in building Chicago.

Entrusted as the caretaker of many archives, artifacts, and historical documents from many now defunct German organizations, the DANK-Haus German American Cultural Center, 4740 N. Western Ave., has been committed to preserving history, traditions, and contributions of Germans and German Americans for over 50 years.

On **Thursday, Sept. 22, at 7 p.m.**, the DANK Haus German Cultural Center will be hosting a community Open Haus Stammtisch in their Skyline Lounge. "Stammtisch" is a German word meaning "Regular's table." It refers to a friendly gathering of "regulars" where there might be friendly conversation, joking, card games, and philosophical discussion. For more information call 773-561-9181.

Then at **noon on Sunday, Sept. 25**, the Niedersachsen Club Chicago, 4548 N. Lincoln Ave., will be hosting an open house and lecture by Joseph C. Heinen, author of "Lost German Chicago," who will be speaking on the history of German Clubs in Chicago.

Heinen's book traces the mosaic of German life through the tumultuous events of the Beer Riots, Haymarket Affair, Prohibition, and America's entry into two world wars. The book is a companion piece to the Lost German Chicago exhibition debuting in the newly created DANK-Haus German American Cultural Center museum.

Tours of Lincoln Square will follow.

For over 150 years, generation after generation of German immigrants came to Chicago, constructing a multifaceted, vibrant ethnic community, while at the same time helping to build a modern Midwestern city.



Annual membership dues:

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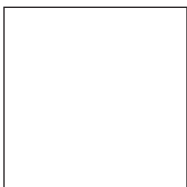
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