

Photo by Patrick Butler

WHERE DO YOU THINK YOU ARE?

See page 3 for the answer

JUDGES NEEDED for Chicago Metro History Fair

The Chicago History Museum invites you to be a judge in the 2017 Chicago Metro History Fair contest. As a judge, you will evaluate historical research projects – documentaries, performances, exhibits, websites, or papers on topics related to Chicago history, produced by local students in grades 6-8 or high school.

Judging is a great volunteer experience. As one volunteer said, “I fell in love with the kids. They were so excited about their topics. And I learned something new from each of the projects I judged. I had a wonderful time.”

No previous experience or specialized knowledge is necessary. All you need is an appreciation of the student effort, an interest in history, and a commitment to quality education.

On the day of the History Fair event, you will receive a full orientation, and each new history fair judge will be paired with an experienced judge. For more information, visit the History Fair page (www.chicagohistoryfair.org) and click the button to JUDGE.

Ravenswood/Lake View Historical Association History Fair Award

Are you a high school student interested in local history?

Are you interested in participating in the Chicago Metro History Fair?

If so, the Ravenswood/Lake View Historical Association is sponsoring a cash award for outstanding History Fair projects. All projects must meet the standards set by the History Fair and your project topic must be on some historical aspect of the Ravenswood/Lake View community.

The Ravenswood/Lake View community boundaries are Devon Avenue on the north, Fullerton Avenue on the south, Lake Michigan on the

east and the Chicago River on the west.

The projects will be judged at the Chicago Metro History Fair and the prizes will be awarded through the History Fair.

For more information about the Chicago Metro History Fair, go to: <https://www.chicagohistory.org/education/history-fair/>

For information about Ravenswood/Lake View Community History, go to: <https://www.chipublib.org/northside-neighborhood-history-collection/>

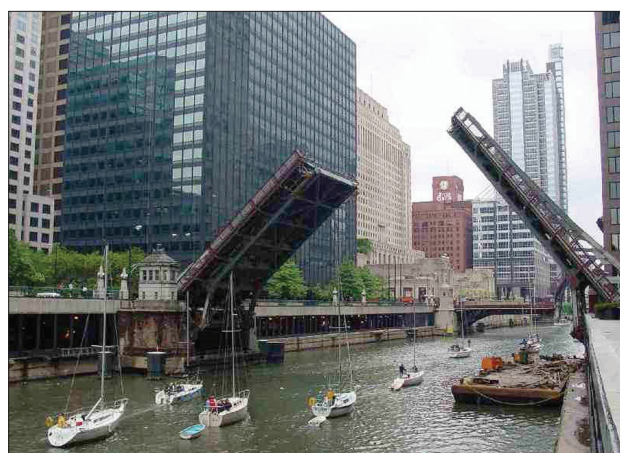
In the beginning, our town's waters had their share of really troubled bridges

BY PATRICK BUTLER

Chicago may not have the most drawbridges on earth (Amsterdam does), but it's still the drawbridge capital of the world, according to North Sider Patrick McBriarty.

“We have the world's greatest variety of drawbridges and had more moveable bridge designs tested here than anywhere else,” the author of *Chicago River Bridges* (U of I Press, 344 pages) recently told the Ravenswood/Lake View Historical Association.

While nobody planned it that way, it all started in 1832 when a tavern



“We have the world's greatest variety of drawbridges and had more moveable bridge designs tested here than anywhere else,” McBriarty said.

owner who started out putting canoes on each side of the river eventually built a wooden footbridge at what is now Kinzie Avenue and the Chicago River's North Branch,

McBriarty said.

“So they figured if they could stop a bridge from being built, they could keep all that business for

WATERS *see p. 2*

Spring 2017 Programs

MARCH 8

**The History of the Irish
in Chicago**

with Thomas O’Gorman

7 p.m. at Sulzer Regional Library

MARCH 16

**Wrigley Field’s Last World Series:
The Wartime Chicago Cubs
& the Pennant of 1945**

with Charles Billington

7 p.m. at Sulzer Regional Library

APRIL 5

**Draining Chicago:
The Early City and the North Area**
with Richard Lanyon

7 p.m. at Sulzer Regional Library

APRIL 12

The Germans in Chicago
with Joseph C. Heinen

7 p.m. at Sulzer Regional Library

APRIL 19

**Chicago Transformed:
World War I and the Windy City**
with Joseph Gustaitis

7 p.m. at Sulzer Regional Library

APRIL 22

**Giants in the Park:
A Guide to Portrait Statues
in Chicago’s Lincoln Park**
with Krista August

1 p.m. at Budlong Woods Branch
Library, 5630 N. Lincoln Ave.

MAY 3

Chicago’s Fabulous Fountains
with Greg Borzo

7 p.m. at Sulzer Regional Library

MAY 10

**The History of the Japanese
in Chicago in World War II**
with Jean Mishima

7 p.m. at Sulzer Regional Library

JUNE 8

The History of Lake View’s Boystown
with Art Johnson & Tim Drake

7 p.m. at Ann Sather’s Restaurant
909 W. Belmont Ave.

For further information,
please check our website at
ravenswoodhistorical.com



Patrick McBriarty, a North Side author who calls himself “an engineer at heart,” said he ended up majoring in economics and started studying old bridges after taking up photography as a hobby. *Photo by Patrick Butler*

WATERS from p. 1

themselves,” McBriarty said.

The impasse ended when two early businessmen, Walter Newberry (remembered today for the research library named in his honor) and William Butler Ogden (Chicago’s first mayor) donated two city blocks to build a pontoon footbridge at Dearborn Street, he added.

“In the end, it helped people on both sides of the river,” said McBriarty, who describes himself as an “engineer at heart” who ended up getting a master’s degree in economics and started taking pictures of old bridges before deciding to take up photography as a hobby.

Of course, in an age of experimentation, not all those early bridges survived for long, McBriarty said.

“In 1849, all five of the city’s bridges were destroyed in a major flood,” he said, noting that Chicago’s first railroad had started to use one of those bridges only a year earlier.

Not exactly an auspicious beginning for America’s future railroad capital, McBriarty shrugged.

Some of the bridges that eventually followed got identities of their own – like the folding awning contraption built in the 1880s and remembered by some as the “Jackknife Bridge.”

One of the engineers at the time conceded that it “needed work.”

Or the bridge on Kedzie now called the “Viagra Bridge” because it stands upright when not in use, McBriarty chuckled.

CHICAGO RIVER BRIDGES



Patrick T. McBriarty

He added there were still more drawbridges until the 1960s, when the U.S. Navy finally allowed fixed bridges after the Grebe Shipyards at Belmont and the Chicago River had long since stopped making World War II PT boats and minesweepers.

For the foreseeable future, McBriarty added, “we’re going to continue having some drawbridges along the river because repair is cheaper than replacement.”

*All Chicago drawbridges will
continue to be powered by small
motors almost the same size
as the engine in a VW Beetle,
McBriarty said.*



In an age of experimentation, not all those early bridges survived for long, McBriarty said.

And all Chicago drawbridges will continue to be powered by small motors almost the same size as the engine in a VW Beetle, he said.

As in many things, size isn’t everything.

Chicago was always Home-Sweet-Home to nation's candy makers, local historian says

BY PATRICK BUTLER

Chicago may be the City of the Big Shoulders or Hog Butcher to the World, but it's also been America's candy maker, historian, author and actress Leslie Goddard reminded a packed auditorium at the Sulzer Library recently.

In fact, our town's first candy factory opened the same year - 1837 - that Chicago officially became a city, Goddard told the Ravenswood/Lake View Historical Association's members and guests.



More than 23 billion prizes have been given out in Cracker Jack packages since the company started.

It was a topic her audience had no problem sinking their teeth into, with samples of locally produced treats on a back table in the Louis Lerner Auditorium.

"For much of its history, Chicago made a third of all the candy eaten in the United States. In 1963, Chicago's candy output was double that of its' biggest rival at the time - New York," Goddard noted.

As late as 2000, there were 13,000 Chicagoans working in the candy industry. And that was actually down from an all-time high of 25,000 in

the early 20th century, she said.

Why Chicago?

Like everything else, it was location and resources. The candy makers came here because that was where both their customers and suppliers lived, Goddard explained.

Even more remarkable are the number of candy brands from the 1920s and '30s that are still with us, she said, adding the still-popular Cracker Jack goes back even further - to the 1893 Columbian Exposition.

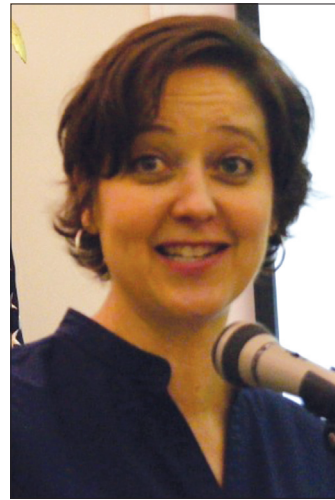
As of 2010, more than 23 billion prizes have been given out in Cracker Jack packages since the company started

And by the way, the Cracker Jack sailor boy was the grandson of the company's founder. He's buried in the Old St. Henry's Cemetery on Devon Avenue near Ridge.

"And if you want to lump chewing gum in the same category as candy, just look at Wrigley's success story," said Goddard, describing how onetime traveling salesman William Wrigley started out selling soap and giving his customers a package of baking powder with each order

"The baking powder proved more popular than the soap, so he started selling that and giving out free packages of gum," Goddard recounted, adding "the gum became so popular he eventually bought the gum company, which became the Wrigley Chewing Gum Company."

Over the next 60 years, Goddard added, Wrigley made a fortune selling his flagship brands - Double-



Candy consumption by World War II American soldiers was about 50 pounds a year compared to today's civilians, who eat about 15 to 22 pounds, author/historian Leslie Goddard told the Ravenswood/Lake View Historical Assoc.

mint, Spearmint and Juicy Fruit - at five cents a pack.

It was enough to allow him to put up the Wrigley Building and "buy a major league baseball team that was in the news recently," Goddard smiled.

When it comes to candy or gum, she said, consumers like to stick with the familiar

- which is why so many of today's popular brands have been around for decades.

Snickers, for example, was created here in Chicago in the 1930s and "from the latest statistics I saw, 45 percent of Americans are still eating at least one Snickers bar a month," she said.

Unfortunately, while Snickers, Cracker Jack, Wrigley gum, Baby Ruth, Mars Bars and the Three Musketeers are still with us, not all local candy makers fared so well, Goddard noted.

Remember Peerless Confectioners at Lakewood and Southport Avenues? The once-popular makers of peppermint, and other hard candies went belly up in early 2007 when they could not longer afford to buy sugar and didn't want to relocate their business overseas, she said.

After nearly 180 years, Goddard said, it's still a matter of "location, location, location."

Answer to WHERE DO YOU THINK YOU ARE?

Workers repair ceiling during the first major overhaul of the century-old Davis Theater, 4614 N. Lincoln Ave. The nearly year-long job cost \$4 million.

Look for more places in future issues





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