

# Long Grove Times

Long Grove Historical Society's Quarterly Newsletter

September 2011

## Trivially Speaking...

Test your knowledge on some of Long Grove's better known structures, by guessing the date of the current (e.g. when rebuilt if it burned) structure:

- A. Timmy's Sandwiches (former Ritzenthaler Farmhouse)
- B. Village Tavern
- C. Farmside Country Store
- D. Red Oaks (former private residence)
- E. Weichert Realtors (former Zimmer residence)
- F. Covered Bridge

Choices:

1847  
1855  
1860  
1898  
1916  
1972

Answers are on page 7.

## Breakfast & Book



The Long Grove Historical Society's Annual Book Dramatization and Breakfast will be held on September 7th, at 9:00am at The Arboretum Club (401 South Half Day Road in Buffalo Grove). This year Barbara Rinella's performance will be based on the book – "Cleopatra: A Life" by author Stacy Schiff.

Meet the real Cleopatra as Barbara Rinella brings to life this formidable queen with a keen intellect, shrewd political instincts, appreciation for luxury and power, and her great loves and romantic involvements. Also meet Elizabeth Taylor who portrayed Cleopatra as the sexy, beguiling Egyptian queen.

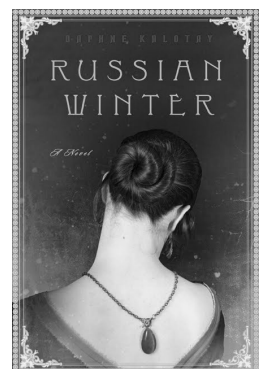
Reservations may be made by contacting Kathy Wiberg at (847) 634-5559. Your check (\$30 per person) payable to Long Grove Historical Society will hold your seat reservation. Send to (by August 31, 2011) Kathy Wiberg, 5559 RFD, Long Grove, IL 60047.

Include your name – contact phone and names of those attending.

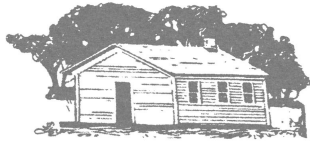
## Mark Your Calendars

- **Wednesday, September 7th, 9am**  
Cleopatra Book Dramatization featuring Barbara Rinella
- **Monday, September 12th, Noon**  
Historical Book Club at Long Grove Café

The Historical Book Club will be meeting again on **Monday, September 12th** at noon at the Long Grove Café for lunch and to discuss "Russian Winter", by Daphne Kalotay. Even if you've not attended before, feel free to show up and join in with any of our interest groups. Lunch is "Dutch Treat".



## All About Us...



The Long Grove Historical Society is a 501C3 non-profit organization whose purpose is to preserve and disseminate the history of the Long Grove area. Annual membership is available for a donation of \$30 (individual), \$50 (family), or \$100 (sustaining). Members receive our quarterly newsletter as well as access to a variety of events held throughout the year. To become a member, send your donation to Georgia Cawley, LGHS Membership, 4509 RFD, Long Grove, IL 60047, along with your name, address, telephone number, email. If you have any special interests, skills, or things you'd be interested in volunteering to help out with, be sure to let us know that as well.

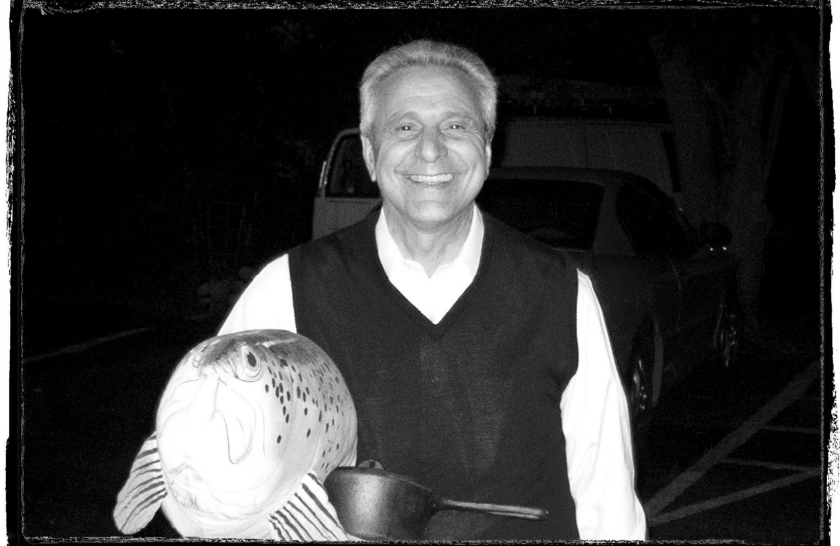
### 2011/2012 Board

Laurie Borawski, President  
Barbara English, Vice President  
Diane Trickey, Treasurer  
Myra Buettner, Recording Secretary  
Angie Underwood, Past Pres/Vilg Brd Liason  
Aaron Underwood, Communications  
Bob Borg, Buildings & Maintenance  
Georgia Cawley, Membership  
Caroline Liebl, Outreach/Archer School Pgm  
Kathy Wiberg, Programs/Ways & Means  
Tina Mall, Curator  
Marie Borg, Ways & Means/Programs  
Lori Lyman, Landscape/Curator  
Lee Bassett, Buildings/Maintenance

The Society was formed in March, 1974, to accept the Drexler Tavern building as a gift. A joint project with the Village Board made possible the relocation of the tavern to a site behind the current Kildeer Country-side School. Today we know the building not as Drexler Tavern, but simply as Village Hall. Two additional structures have also been relocated to this area—one of the area's one room schoolhouses, Archer School, and a mid-1800's barn, Ruth Barn. The school and the barn form the core of the program we run each year for our local schools, so that our children can experience first hand what life used to be like in Long Grove. Last, but not least, a mid-1800's farm house was relocated to an area bordering the southwest corner of the Stemple Parking lot. "The Farm-house", as we refer to it, houses our archives, a meeting room, and several restored "period" rooms that we open occasionally for tours. In addition to maintaining the above properties and our educational programs, we actively acquire items of local historic interest for our archives and conduct a variety of historical programs for current residents. We receive no tax dollars and exist solely from your contributions and our own fundraising efforts.

*Thank you for your support!*

**Historical Society News...** Pictorial highlights of our recent auction—top to bottom, left to right—Laurie Borawski/Barbara English, Ron Bernardi, and Angie Underwood/Tina Mall.



# From the President's Desk

Comments from Society President Laurie Borawski

On April 20th we held our Annual Meeting at The Village Tavern. We once again held our Board election, and Board members were elected for a 2 year term. We also used this occasion to recognize and thank our volunteers for their dedication and service to the Society. We honored Angie Underwood with The Presidents Volunteer Service Award for her outstanding work with the Society. Congrats and best of luck in your future pursuits. Thank you again to those who attended as well as those who have contributed but could not attend.

I count myself fortunate to have joined the Society's board of directors in 2004. Since taking office of President in April, we have had many exciting things happening.

On April 27th, we hosted the Lake Co./McHenry Co. Historical Alliance meeting and had a record crowd at the Village Hall. The topic of the meeting was one room school houses. They had



a guest speaker Bob Frenz that told of his extensive research on one room schools in the McHenry county area.

After the meeting they toured Archer School

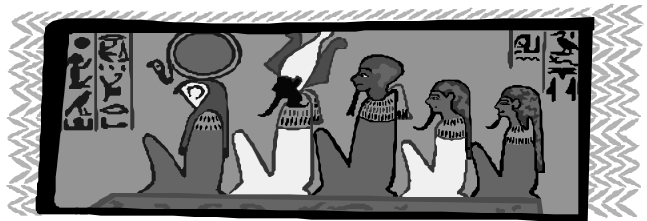
and Ruth Barn. The Alliance had many compliments for the docents and board. Also they were marveling at everything the Society has accomplished since it was formed in 1974, with the moving, restoration, and the maintenance of our three buildings, along with our many programs.

Our Archer School Program is designed to educate local 3rd graders to experience school life back in the 1800's. Volunteer docents dressed in period attire recreate a classroom lesson and recess, showing the children some of the challenges of life during pioneer times. We had 14 classes last May, and we also have a fall program in September and October. If you would like to volunteer for this rewarding program, please contact me at the Farmhouse at 847/634-6155.

On June 9th we had our 1st Benefit Auction at The Village Tavern. This auction was a great success! **I want to thank our members and local business owners for all your donations.**

**Your generosity helped make our goal, and without you it would not have been possible.**

The auction was held to raise funds to preserve and paint the outside of Archer School and its out buildings. The cost of this is over \$3000 as it contains lead paint and must be professionally done. We had an enjoyable evening and hope to do this again in the future. I also have a special thank you to Chip and Mary Ann Ulrich for hosting the event and as auctioneer.



On June 13th we had the Historical Book Club meeting at the Long Grove Cafe. The book we discussed was Cleopatra: A Life, by Stacy Schiff. This was a good kick off for Barbara Rinellas performance in September.

The Society's Genealogy Interest Group met on June 15th at Timmy's Sandwiches. The group had a great discussion on finding your ancestors from the Civil War era.

On September 7th we will be having our Annual Book Dramatization and Breakfast fundraiser at the Arboretum Club in Buffalo Grove. Barbara Rinella will once again bring history to life. Hope you can join us for an entertaining morning with Cleopatra!

Now is the time to join or renew your membership with the Historical Society. We have included a membership form in the newsletter. We are a 501c3 non-profit organization which relies solely on funds from memberships, fundraisers, and our Archer School program. We greatly appreciate your support in the past and hope that you are able to continue to support the Society this year. If you have any questions about our mission or activities of the Long Grove Historical Society, or would like to get involved, please contact me at 847/634-6155.

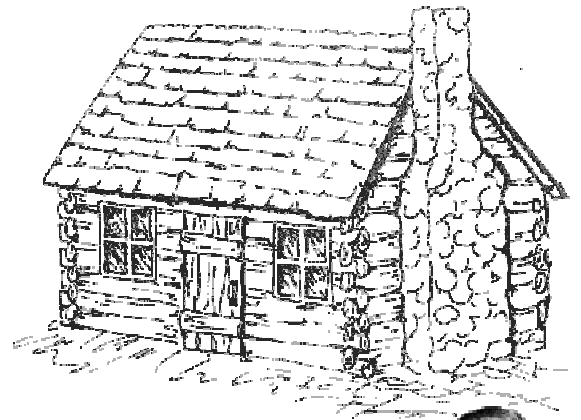


# ARTIFACT EXPLORED

If you've read anything previously about the

history of Long Grove, you no doubt have encountered the story of John Gridley and his wife, Nancy Seely. They uprooted their family in 1835 from the Syracuse, New York area to seek their fortune "out west"... which turned out be what we now know as Long Grove. The family remained in the area for many generations. A considerable amount of inter-family correspondence from the mid to late 1800's has survived and makes for some very interesting insight into how people communicated and what their life was like.

In 1835, the family consisted of John and Nancy, along with their six children – three boys, Elisha (age 18), George (age 14), and John T. (age 6); and three girls, Elizabeth (age 16), Mary (age 12), and Louisa (age 2). An older brother, Gideon, who was 24 at the time, stayed behind in New York.



John T Gridley  
(the youngest son)

It must have been very quiet around these parts back then – even by 1840, there were less than 3000 people in all of Lake County. Finding a spouse had to be difficult... as evidenced by Elisha's first attempt – a brief engagement with someone named Elizabeth Torbert. Elizabeth ended the engagement via a letter to Elisha in October of 1845:

*Dear Friend*

*Duty now calls upon me to perform the most painful task I have ever executed. It is that of asking to relinquish me from my engagement.*

*Never seek me for my affection has become estranged from you.*

*You have been supplanted by one for whom I have a predilection long before I saw you, which will gain the victory.*

*I insist upon your returning all the letters I have written you and I will do the same with you.*

Ouch.

The family established a local school for area children, near what is now Oakwood and Route 83. One can imagine advertising "back east" for a young, single, educated woman to come out to the frontier and seek her fortune. One could also playfully suggest that the lack of educated young girls, suitable for marriage to their sons, might have been a factor here somehow as well... and, in fact, the first school teacher, Charlotte Hunnewell, from Vermont, eventually married the previously scorned Elisha.

During 1849, news was filtering in to Long Grove about a huge gold strike in California. Young men's hearts were filled with the prospect of easy money and adventure. The following spring, the two Gridley bachelors, George and John, now ages 29 and 21 respectively, headed off to California. They left their farms and stock in Illinois to be tended to by the family. Unfortunately, by 1850 the easy gold was gone, and, whether it was their intention or not, the boys attempted to make money on the supply side of things – feeding and housing the miners. After a few years in California, their prospects are not looking up, as evidenced by this letter home from George:

## ARTIFACT EXPLORED

El Dorado, (At Feb 12, 1853

Dear Father and Elisha,

I expect to go home in the spring

John does not talk of going home

one of our boarders got \$150  
in one pan yesterday and  
about \$200 today

there is gold to be dug for years to come but I do not wish  
to dig it myself.

George Gridley

But George decides to remain a bit longer in California. In a letter from the younger brother John, a year later, things seemed to have gotten worse:

Dry Creek, (At Jan 20, 1854

Dear Elisha,

George talked of going home [ ] concluded to wait [ ] we could  
neither sell our hogs nor borrow money for him to go.

everyone here is complaining of hard times and scarcity  
of money

we must keep it till we can sell for a fair price or lose  
our time in California

nor could we ever be satisfied to go back and commiserate, but  
little or no better off than when we left four years ago.

We do not wish to settle permanently here

So, after four years, the boys seemed to be stuck in California. Rather than throw in the towel, they decide to “double down” on their investment. Their letter from January 1854 continues:

*If we had the value of our land in Illinois here to put into stock we could double it every year*

*we have been wishing for some time that our Illinois land was sold or mortgaged but expecting that this would not be approved by our friends there we were reluctant to take any measures*

*there is no way for us to make much now except by doing this. We send you enclosed instruments conveying power of attorney to sell our land or mortgage it if you can*

How the boys resolved their finances isn't known, but they did manage to retain their Illinois farms and returned from California in 1857.

Elisha, the brother that stayed home and didn't go to California, remained in the area and did well for himself here, farming until he passed away in 1881. During his life, he was active in politics, filling several offices, including a term in the State Legislature. His mansion, known as Endwood during his life, was turned into the “Oakwood Resort” at the turn of the century, and the resort survived into the 1940's. Elisha's wife, Charlotte, continued to teach at Gridley School for a few years after they were married, but eventually turned the job over to a younger sister, Harriet Hunnewell.

Following in her sister's footsteps, Harriet married a Gridley boy—George, upon his return from California. George remained a farmer in this area until his death in 1907.

Younger brother John sold out here as soon as he could get a decent price, and returned to New York, where, in 1862, he married a cousin, Nelly Seely. Elisha invited John and his new bride to come visit them in Illinois. The invitation for a visit was apparently not accepted or acknowledged for some time, and this prompted Elisha's wife Charlotte, to try and tactfully write to her younger brother-in-law John, and inquire, if perhaps their unwillingness to visit was due to the perception that their Long Grove residence might not be up to his new wife's standards. John responded to his sister-in-law's query:

*Nelly was quite surprised at the intimation that your comforts were too cheap for her. She says I must correct your erroneous impressions. Although she has always been in comfortable circumstances, she was never “addicted” to luxuries, had she been accustomed to a palace you would do her injustice to suppose that she considered any condescension involved in a visit to you or any of my friends.*

They settled in Michigan, but the entrepreneurial call was soon to strike the youngest Gridley boy again—the rebuilding of Chicago following the Great Fire of 1871 created an economic boom. John and Nelly moved to Chicago shortly after the fire, where he set up shop as a Commission Merchant. He plied that trade until he passed away in 1910.



# Pay Your Dues

It's that time of year—time to join up again for another year of membership. The Long Grove Historical Society is a 501C3 non-profit organization whose pur-

pose is to preserve and disseminate the history of the Long Grove area. If you have any special interests, skills, or talents, be sure to let us know that as well.

Please complete the form below, cut along the dotted line, enclose a check made payable to Long Grove Historical Society, and mail back to:

Long Grove Historical Society  
C/O Georgia Cawley  
4509 RFD  
Long Grove, IL 60047

- ☐ \$30 Individual Membership  
☐ \$100 Sustaining Membership  
☐ \$\_\_\_\_\_ Other Membership

- ☐ \$50 Family Membership  
☐ \$500 Patron Membership

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Thank You For Your Support!

## QUIZ ANSWERS (FROM FRONT PAGE)!

- A. Timmy's Sandwiches (1860). This house was originally built on the grounds of what is now Twin Orchard Country Club. It was moved in 1928 to it's current location.
- B. Village Tavern (1847). The oldest structure in town. It converted to selling ice cream during the prohibition years. Really. Seriously. It did. We're sure there was nothing stronger available in the back room.
- C. Farmside Country Store (1916). This one was sort of a trick question—the original structure at this site was built circa 1870, but burned in 1916. The current structure was built to replace it.
- D. Red Oaks (1855). There's a story (urban legend?) told about how the other crossroads inhabitants were so happy to have someone join them, that they all pitched in and built the house in a day.
- E. Weichert Realtors (1898) Built by the son of the original tavern keeper as a proper home for his new bride. He died "tragically" less than a year after it's construction. Sounds like there are the makings of a good ghost story here somewhere...
- F. Covered Bridge (1972) The early settlers created a bridge here in the mid-1800's. A steel one was put in place at the turn of the century (1902). When it deteriorated, the county wanted to simply replace it with a large culvert. The Village decided to use a design taken from a bridge in New Hampshire. The roof serves to protect the bridge's trusses.



Long Grove Historical Society  
Long Grove Times Quarterly Newsletter  
Aaron Underwood, Newsletter Editor  
338 Old McHenry Road  
Long Grove, IL 60047  
(847) 634-6155  
admin@LongGroveHistory.org  
www.LongGroveHistory.org



## Back in the Day...



With Halloween just around the corner, here's a couple of unusual Long Grove expirations to get you in a ghostly mood:

**SALESMAN MAKES LAST CALL** Waukegan, Ill. - A gruesome discovery was made at Long Grove when someone peeped into a buggy standing at the roadside and found a dead man holding the reins. The buggy was the property of the Singer Sewing Machine company but the man was not known in Waukegan.

Chicago Republic, January 10, 1916



**DIES BY DAUGHTER'S CASKET** Waukegan, Ill. - Jan 6, 1929 (AP)  
Standing by the casket containing the body of his only child, Mr. Mildred Gossweiler, 30, Herman L. Krueger, 59, real estate dealer of Long Grove, suddenly collapsed and died.