

Long Grove Times

Long Grove Historical Society's Quarterly Newsletter

March 2010

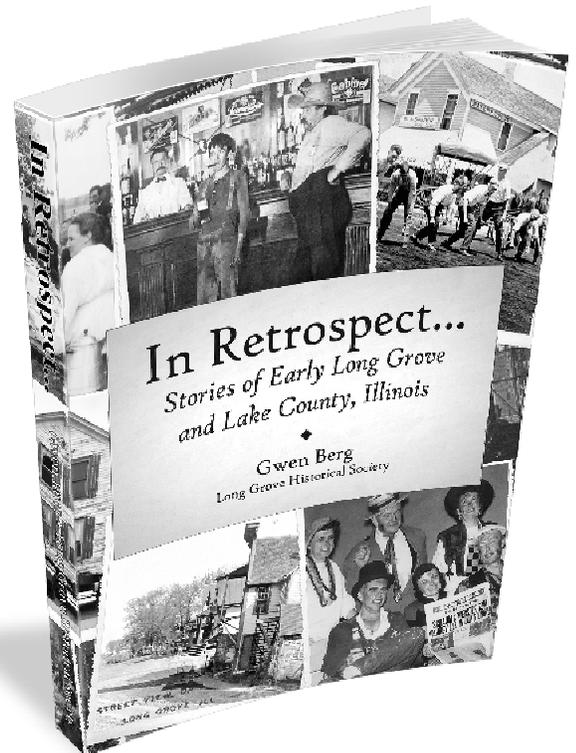
You're Invited To A Book Launch!

Join us Friday evening, April 23rd to celebrate our latest book, *In Retrospect... Stories of Early Long Grove and Lake County, Illinois*.

From 1986 through 2004, Gwen Berg wrote a column on local history for Long Grove's village newsletter, *The Bridge*. We have now assembled the original manuscripts for these stories into a paperback book. Our hope is that, in book form, the stories will be more accessible to residents, and be around for many years to come.

To add a little spice, over 30 freshly restored photographs have been sprinkled throughout the book. Many of these photos have never been published.

We're excited about the book and hope you can join us at the Long Grove Cafe on April 23rd. While the event is primarily a chance for you to pick up your book and share a drink with fellow villagers, we will have a very brief presentation at 6:30 pm to acknowledge Gwen and those that have volunteered their time to make this book happen. See the enclosed flyer for more details on the event and how to get your very own copy of the book.



There were a lot of cows in Long Grove in the early 20th century. And where there were cows, there was manure, and where there was manure there were flies. One of the stories in our new book mentions a type of gun that was used to get rid of flies. Care to guess the name? It was featured in many a cartoon—a horizontal pump attached to a liquid filled cylinder that sprayed mist out the end when pumped. It was called a Flit Gun, named for an insecticide called Flit. Ads for Flit were very popular, owing to their creative artwork. That art was drawn by a talented, young “soon to be famous” illustrator named Theodor Seuss Geisel. You probably know him better by his pen name—Dr. Seuss (of Green Eggs and Ham Fame).

Mark Your Calendars

- Friday, April 23rd, 5:30pm,
In Retrospect... at Long Grove Cafe
- Saturdays, May 8 & 15, 10am-2pm
Farmhouse Museum Open!

Welcome New Members!

A special welcome to our newest members—Rita and Don Gagliano, Kathleen & Bill Draper, Jenni and Amanda Baudin, and Tobin Fraley and Rachel Perkal.

ARTIFACT EXPLORED

Old photo postcards, known as "Real Photo Postcards" back in the day, were popular in the early 1900's. Kodak even produced a special camera from 1903 to 1943 (the model #3A) and added a special postcard developing and printing service in

1907. This made it easy for anyone to make their own photo postcard. Mailing a postcard was only a penny and the photo postcard itself cost between one and two cents. They became an immensely popular and personal way of keeping in touch with friends and relatives. Remember that around 1907, most people didn't have electricity, or a phone or car – but they did have mail service to their farms and homes, so the postal service was the internet of the day. In 1913 alone more than one billion postcards were mailed in the country – that's more than 10 cards for every living person in the country! Professional photographers got into the act as well, making up postcards of local scenes and distributing them through local businesses.

Many of the photos we have in our archives of "old Long Grove" are photo postcards, such as the one shown on page 3. Note the identifying lettering "STREET VIEW OF LONG GROVE ILL" – that would imply it was probably printed in quantity and not a "one off" personal photo card. There's no mark identifying the photographer – rural photographers considered that a bit "showy". For fun, I've included a picture from the same spot taken this past month. Well... almost the same spot. One thing I discovered when trying to duplicate the photo was that it appeared to have been taken from about 12 feet in the air. And while I don't mind standing in the middle of the street in downtown Long Grove to snap a picture for you all, doing that on a ladder is a bit above and beyond the call of my newsletter job! Actually, the apparent height of where the picture was taken is probably another clue that it was taken by a professional - they were occasionally known to drive around in a specially outfitted car that had a raised platform on the back for their camera. I can imagine a enterprising young chap in his photo car, venturing out on a sunny day in 1909. He would make his way around Long Grove, Prairie View, Half Day, and Aptakisic, snapping pictures of local scenes, and then return a few days later with prints he would try and sell the local merchants for resale.

Now for the fun part... investigating and comparing the two photos. Here's some quick observations:

- Wires! The crossroads now has electricity and phone service.
- No more mud—those old dirt roads must have been a real mess this time of year.
- The blacksmith shop building moved across RPC road (out of the picture).
- Today's Farmside Country Store has a smaller frontage—it's been rebuilt a few times over the years.



Also, if you look closely, you'll see that the side of the old blacksmith shop functioned as a makeshift advertising billboard. A little photo restoration work reveals the contents of those ads—see the last page of the newsletter for a close-up.

ARTIFACT EXPLORED

(article continued from Page 2)

The old postcard is dated Tuesday, January 12, 1909 and it was addressed to a Mr. J. L. Hanz in Des Plaines. It reads:

Dear Bro.

I will come visit Sunday if the weather will permit. I suppose you are a waiting.

*have passion:
Henry L Hans*

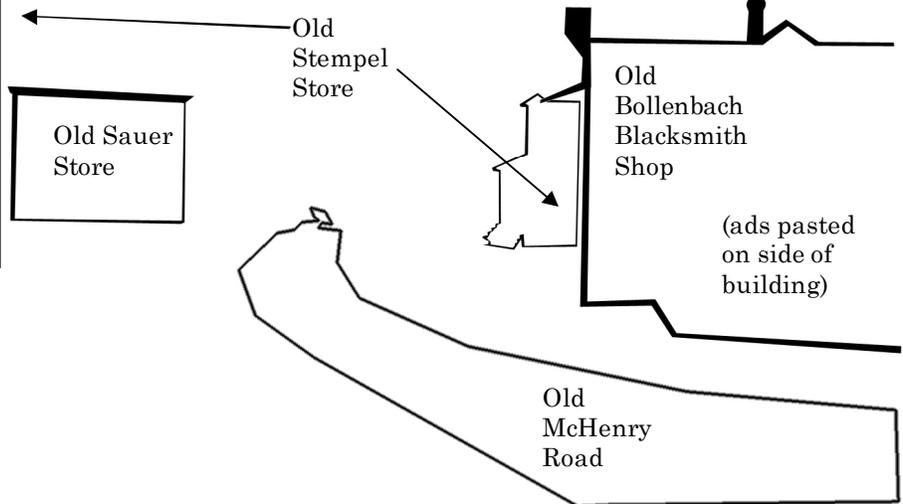
That was a pretty typical use for a postcard - a quick message to a relative a week ahead of time to coordinate a visit.

While at first glance the blank space on the left side of the old card might look like some sort of printing glitch... no, it was intentional. That was a place where the buyer could add their own comments on the front of the postcard.



It's a bit hard to tell, but under magnification, the one thing that's remarkably the same in the two photos is the porch on the old Stempel store.

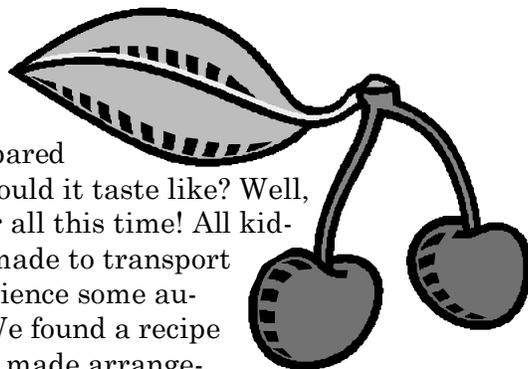
Here's some labels to help you figure out what you're looking at...



Domestic Past



If you could sample some dessert prepared in Long Grove fifty years ago, what would it taste like? Well, it would probably be pretty stale after all this time! All kidding aside, arrangements have been made to transport your taste buds back in time, to experience some authentic Long Grove Cherry Rounds. We found a recipe from an old Long Grove cookbook and made arrangements with a local pastry chef to make up a fresh batch of these. Come taste some yourself! You'll find Chef Josh and his pastry shop, Sweet Whimsy, at 251 Robert Parker Coffin road, in the Mill Pond area of downtown Long Grove. A portion of the proceeds from sales of the Long Grove Cherry Rounds goes to support the Long Grove Historical Society. Pictured at right is Lynn Rymarz, who portrayed Martha Washington in our February program. She reported that they were much more decadent than the cherry dessert she used to fix George!



If you missed our wonderful February program on Martha Washington... shame on you! By all reports it was one of our best programs yet. The date hasn't been finalized, but another "Fireside Chat" program is in the works. This one will be in the evening, perhaps outside by a bonfire. Who knows, maybe we'll even throw in some hot dogs and marshmallows? Stay tuned for more details.



S N A P S H O T S



The Fine Print

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.

THE HOME FRONT

In April of 1945, if you ventured north into Wisconsin, you could have encountered 20,000 German and Japanese troops. That's a huge number—there were only 120,000 people total living in Lake County at the time. But you didn't even have to go to Wisconsin to

encounter the enemy – travel only 10 miles down Milwaukee Avenue and one could encounter German troops at Camp Pine in Des Plaines. How did so many of our enemy find their way to our backyard? It's a matter of logistics...

During the first few wars (Revolutionary & 1812), our armies kept relatively few prisoners. Once captured, if you were willing to sign an oath that you would sit out the remainder of the war, we let you go and asked simply that you remain in our country until the war was over. As you might expect, most prisoners of war did just that, and many stayed here permanently, eventually becoming US citizens.

While we might like to think our motive for this was purely benevolent, the reality is that POW's consume a lot of resources (food, shelter, confinement, etc.) Our young country simply didn't have the organization and resources to provide for many POW's.

By World War II, we were much better organized and resources were more plentiful. However, we had a logistics problem – our prisoners were on a different continent than our resources.

There is a term in the trucking industry called "back hauling". It derives from the fact that, after you've delivered a shipment, your truck is empty all the way back home. To avoid having your equipment utilized only half the time, you like to "backhaul" – pick up some cargo at your destination that needs to be returned back to your home location.

Equipment and supplies for allied troops maxed out every available bit of cargo space going out of the United States. However, those same ships were not so full when they returned back to the US. So it made more sense to ship the prisoners here on the (relatively) empty returning boats, rather than to find space to ship their food and supplies to Europe and the Pacific.

Fort Sheridan, 10 miles east of Long Grove, had responsibility for a large number of those prisoners and where they would be housed upon arrival. Many "satellite" camps were set up around the area, including the one in Des Plaines.

Our government kept news of the camps quiet, to avoid revenge attacks by area citizens who had lost loved ones in the war. Betty Cowley, a Wisconsin historian, has authored a book on the subject of POW camps in Wisconsin—

Stalag Wisconsin: Inside WWII prisoner-of-war camps. She observed that about a third of Wisconsin's population was German and there was actually quite a bit of socialization between the prisoners and the townsfolk. Escape attempts were few.

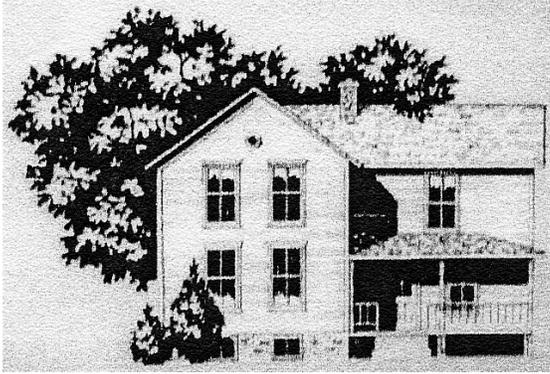
A Portage, Wisconsin newspaper reporter, Craig Spychalla, managed to track down and interview a former POW. "Everybody was happy," said former German POW Kurt Pechmann, who was imprisoned at Camp Lodi, Wisconsin. "We were happy to be out of the war, a roof over our head and all the beer we could drink. There were no problems."

What did the prisoners do to occupy the time? Many of them did agricultural work—filling in for the many Wisconsin men who were away fighting the war. The prisoner of war labor force was an important part of Wisconsin's wartime agricultural economy.

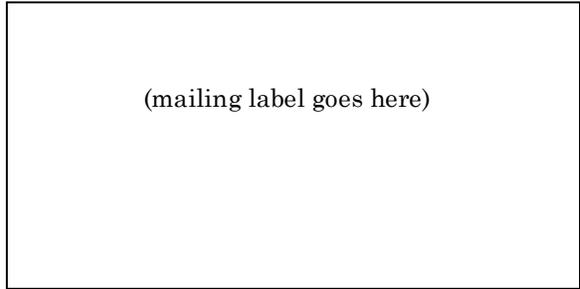
At wars end, many of the prisoners requested to remain in the country rather than return home. This was in part due to their realization that America wasn't as bad a place as they had been lead to believe. It was also, in part, due to the fact that they knew their own countries had been devastated by the war. Unfortunately for them, their requests were always denied—it was strictly forbidden for them to stay, according to the agreements that officially ended the war. However, many of the prisoners remained working in this country well into 1946 to assist with harvest—a testament to how important their labor was to the farm economy. Once returned to their homeland, former prisoners could apply like anyone else for US citizenship. If they had an American sponsor who promised to employ them (e.g. the farmer they had worked for while imprisoned), admittance back into the United States was generally pretty easy. In the years following the end of the war, quite a few prisoners returned in this way.



A photo from Cowley's book showing POWs bringing in a load of hay from a Wisconsin farm.



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Back in the Day...

If you manufactured a product in 1900 that was targeted at rural America, how would anyone know about it? Farmers in that day were a tough crowd to reach. They didn't have mail delivery, they didn't subscribe to newspapers, and of course there was no radio or TV. But they did need supplies... so sometimes

simple billboards posted in areas they frequented did the trick. The attached photo to the left is a blow up of what can be

seen on the side of the Long Grove blacksmith shop around that time (see article on Page 2 for more details). Once rural free delivery got going, more farmers took newspaper subscriptions via the mail, so farm ads in newspapers became more prevalent. Check out the Flit newspaper ad above from around 1930, and be sure to read the related trivia about it on the front page.

