

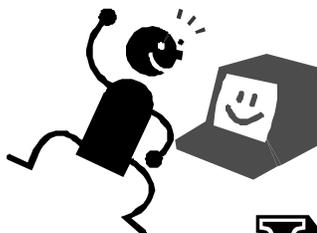
Long Grove Times

Long Grove Historical Society's Quarterly Newsletter

December 2013

Trivially Speaking...

Did you know the oldest tree in Lake County is smack dab in the middle of Long Grove? It's located in Twin Orchards Country Club and it's a Bur Oak that is estimated to be over 350 years old. 200 to 300 years of age isn't uncommon, though a Bur Oak typically doesn't live past 400. It's unique amongst oak's due to its massive acorns. Every few years it puts out an extraordinary number of acorns – evolutions way of overwhelming things that eat acorns. Incidentally, there's only supposed to be one R in Bur... though you'll see two in some places around town.



BACK ISSUES

Hard to believe this is the 22nd issue of Long Grove Times. If you missed a few, you'll find them all on our website:

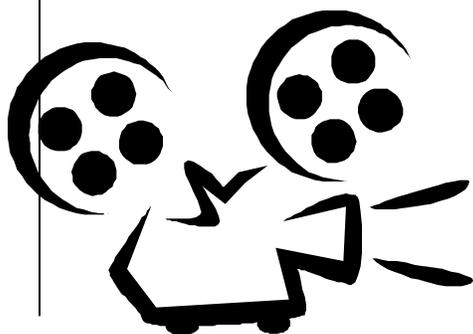
www.LongGroveHistory.org

A good site to pass along to your neighbors that haven't yet discovered us.



UPCOMING PROGRAMS

The schedule and content of our 2014 programs is currently forming... if you have a request of something you'd like to see or a resource that you think would make a good program—let us know about it! Send an email to admin@LongGroveHistory.org



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 Margie Federer, LGHS Membership, 4423 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.

2013/2014 Board

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 At large—
 Lee Bassett, Georgia Cawley, Gerri Campbell

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 Farmhouse", 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.

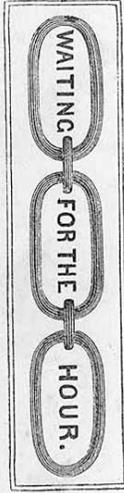
Thank you for your support!

Historical Society Pictures...from the ghost walk, the annual docent appreciation tea, and our auction fundraiser.



Watch Night

The Emancipation Proclamation freed slaves on January 1, 1863. Ever hear about a New Year's Eve event called "watch night" and how it got started on New Year's Eve in 1862, with slaves eagerly anticipating their freedom? The truth is, the custom is much older than that.



Watch Night is traditionally a church service that begins in the evening and continues until midnight. Attendees reflect and give thanks for the past year and pray for the upcoming year. It is thought to have originated with the Moravians, one of the oldest Protestant denominations. Their first Watch Night is said to date to a service performed in Germany in 1733. There is a theory that its motivation was to provide a religious alternative to the somewhat pagan "party tonight because we may die tomorrow" festivities that typically accompany the celebration of a new year.

There is no doubt some truth to the Watch Night in late 1862 being very special – slavery most certainly would have been on everyone's mind that night. Even today, in predominantly African American congregations, at least anecdotally, it seems the custom has somewhat of a dual identity (traditional Watch Night/Emancipation Day) and is observed in greater numbers than the Christian community as a whole.

What does this have to do with Long Grove? Well, you may have guessed at this point that Watch Night was also celebrated in old Long Grove. Here's how Emma Keiler described it in an article she wrote for the Daily Herald in January of 1962:

Church Bell Revives "Watch Night" Custom

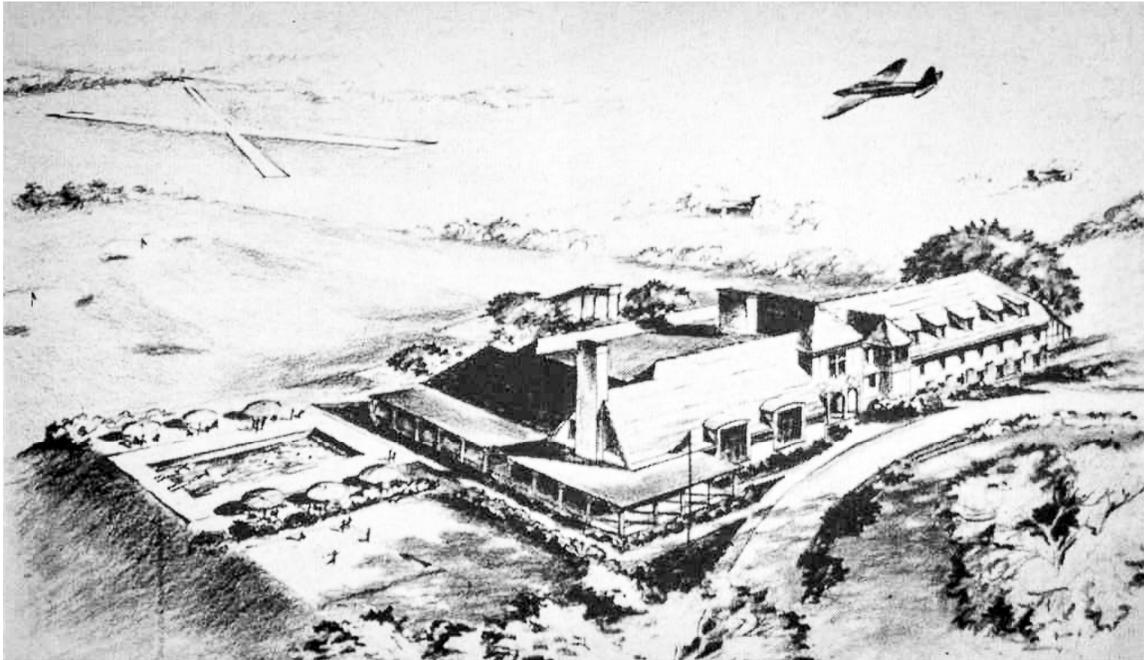
Breaking a long interval of midnight silence, the Long Grove Church bell rang in the New Year, climaxing a family night of recreation in the church social room.

The pastor tolled the bell. Close to 30 adults and children, alive with the significance of the moment, surrounded him in the balcony as, with the little children helping, he pulled the rope, sending the sounds over the countryside.

The ceremony was followed by a "Watch Night" service in the sanctuary, led by Rev. Alfred Williams.

The ringing of the bell interrupted a 22 year silence, the last "Watch Night" service being held in 1940. Old settlers recall the only other times the church bell had pealed on New Year's eve was in the years from 1899 to 1906 during the pastorship of the Rev. Hans Schmidt, when "Watch Night" services were the usual custom.

SKYCREST FIELD



Long time newsletter readers may recall a bit of a mystery about an old airport around Rt. 83 and Rt. 22 that was associated with what is now Twin Orchards Country Club. Recently an old artists rendering of the airport and club house was uncovered in a 1946 golfing magazine. Here's some excerpts from that article:

In rolling country northwest of Chicago, the Skycrest Club is rapidly taking form along interesting new lines. Skycrest formerly was the Kildeer Country Club with two excellent 18-hole courses and a large and attractive clubhouse, constructed during the boom days of the 20's. When the depression hit, Kildeer, being one of the later private clubs of the Chicago district, naturally was one of the first to feel the pressure. With Gasoline rationing and the necessity of quickly converting into cash some estate holdings that included the Kildeer paper, the club disbanded. Thus ended the life of a well-appointed club that had begun with a bright promise and enthusiasm and which had suffered financial vicissitudes not uncommon to the prewar golf clubs. It appeared that Kildeer was doomed to its previous status as farmland when along came Gene Dyer, one of the nation's most successful independent radio station owners. Dyer bought the property as an investment and contemplated making it his country home. The club is situated on the highest land between Chicago and Milwaukee. As altitude is rated in some parts of the US this club property doesn't qualify for the Skycrest title it now bears, but in the prairieland around Chicago it sticks up and commands lovely vistas of well-maintained investments of gentlemen farmers.

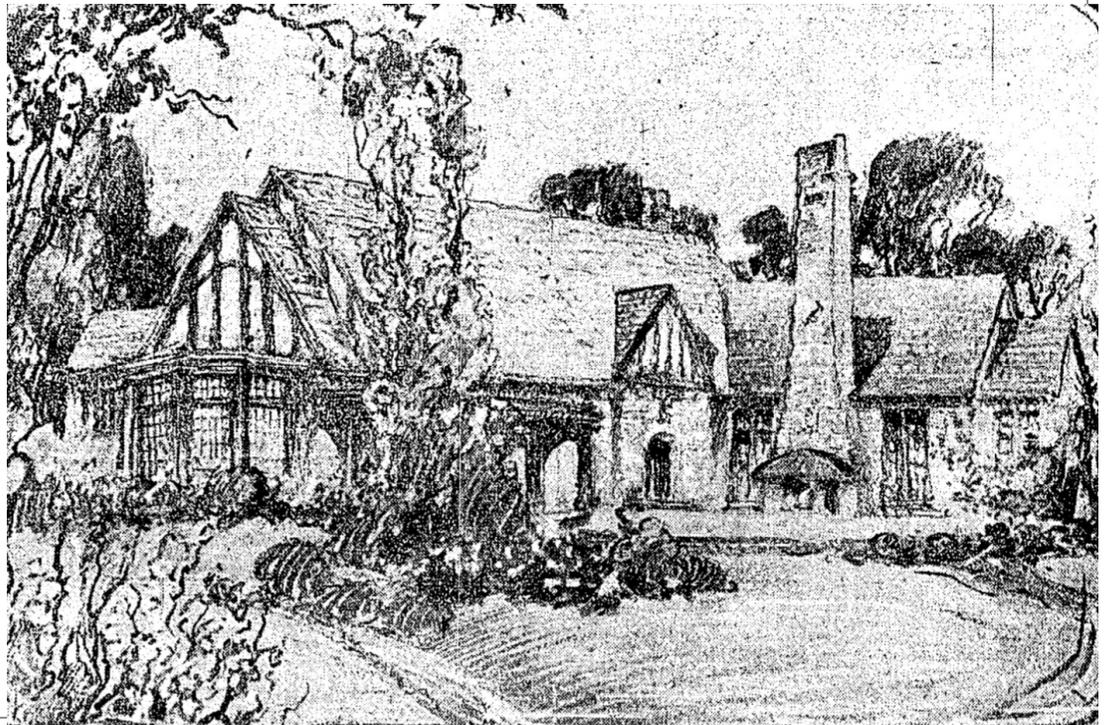
SKYCREST (continued)

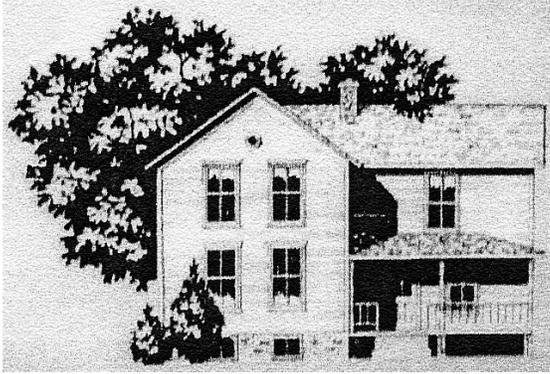
Dyer is a genius at marketing and a canny man with figures. His market analysis disclosed that in Chicago's north and northwest suburban territory many highly desirable private club potential members were virtually excluded from membership by the prevailing initiation and due costs. He found that approximately 60 percent of representative private club memberships in the Chicago district were older than 45 years. Wartime conditions in the type of private country clubs a younger man with a growing family would like to join had been freezing out this class of candidate for membership. Special shower and locker-rooms are provided for youngsters of members who'll be using the pool. The members' children's angle also is cared for by a spacious and well-equipped playground. At one end of the men's locker-room is a large "picture" window overlooking part of the courses, lakes that make exciting waterholes, and a section of the airfield which has been built to care for the small plane use that's inevitable at a club with younger members. Clubhouse layout and heating has been arranged to provide unusually good facilities for winter sports, and Skycrest intends to make the most of its natural advantages for skating, skiing, tobogganing and trap and skeet shooting. There'll be an initiation fee of \$100 and annual dues of \$180.

For reference, in today's dollars, those fees would be \$1200 for initiation and \$2200 annually. A quick look at a topography map doesn't show any basis for the "highest ground" claim... perhaps that was some of Mr. Dyer's marketing genius showing through. And, yes, for those keeping score, that's the first time the word "vicissitudes" has been seen around here in a very long time.

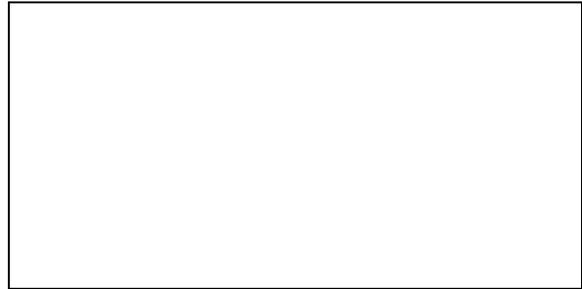


From an even older publication, when the original Kildeer Country Club was being proposed to investors, here's an artist rendering of how the clubhouse was to look:





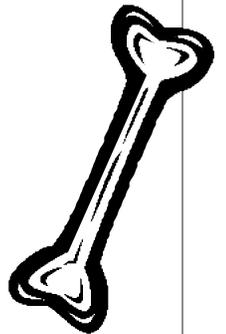
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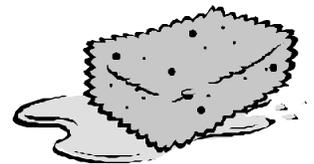
Ye Olde Phrases

Phrases that we use or hear occasionally, and we know exactly what they mean... but never really thought about why we use those specific words for that purpose.

“Long Grove is a cute little town - make no bones about it” – means “without question or without difficulty”. The origin is a comparison to soup or maybe meat that doesn’t have any bones – you don’t have to worry when you eat it.



“The Bears have had it this year – they should throw in the towel” – means to “give up or quit in the face of overwhelming odds”. I’m guessing many of you know that this is a boxing reference – when a towel is thrown in the ring to signify the fighter is unable or unwilling to continue. But I bet you didn’t know that when this phrase got started it was “throw in the sponge” because in the 1860’s they used sponges, not towels in prize fights. When towels became more prevalent, the expression changed. This year... the Bears really should throw in the sponge.



“She shed crocodile tears when her rich uncle passed away.” – means “insincere grieving” and originates from fables about how crocodiles eyes tear up when they eat. This expression is really old – mid 1500’s and is actually true. Little is known about the poor fellow that discovered this phenomena...

