

Long Grove History

LONG GROVE LIVING
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Save The Pigs

By Aaron Underwood • Long Grove Historical Society

Area resident George Dorner recalls hosting a friend from England years ago during the visitors first trip to the United States. When the two met up again months later, George queried his friend about what the most memorable part of his visit had been. The friend replied, “That breakfast we had in Long Grove.”



COUNTRY SMOKEHOUSE PIG SIGNS

Recently donated to the Historical Society by Jane Tiffany-Hansen and her husband Ken (right).

Where in Long Grove did they go for such an epic breakfast? It was called The Smokehouse, and it was located on Route 83 and Gilmer, where Pub 83 is (formerly the Gridley Grill). Two large wooden pig shaped signs beckoned drivers from Route 83 to enjoy some smoked Ham, Bacon, and Sausage. Another friend of George’s ate breakfast there often. One time when they were dining together, George recalls his friend receiving a small paper bag from the cashier with the comment, "We’re giving these to our regular customers.", she said, “Merry Christmas.” The bag contained a half pint of vodka.



The Country Smokehouse was part of what was originally known as Ferry Hill Farm, a Dairy that began operating in 1933. The Dairy had a small retail space where they sold meat and cheese. That building was repurposed into The Country Smokehouse when the dairy closed circa 1950. The space featured seven tables, a tin ceiling and shelving, and was chock-full of grocery items much like an old-time general store. Many of owner Bernice Tiffany's customers shared their pig-collecting mania with her, resulting in hundreds of cute pink porkers on display in the restaurant along with the old-time memorabilia.

The Smokehouse closed in the late 1990's when Bernice retired. The restaurant building is gone, but the Smokehouse is still there adjacent to Pub 83. Those old pig shaped signs were recently donated to the historical society by Jane Tiffany-Hansen (pictured with her husband Ken), Bernice's daughter who still lives in the area. We're not sure what we'll do with them yet, but they seemed too cool to pass up.

As I hope you've heard, the Historical Society has joined with other groups in town to try and save Long Grove's Historic Covered Bridge. The most frequent question we get is, "Why on earth would anyone want to get rid of it? It's our icon and symbolic of what makes Long Grove special." We agree, it's hard to understand. Just for fun, I thought I would try to close each article with a limerick (or something close to a limerick) to remind everyone we need to save the bridge. For your amusement and my poetic embarrassment, here goes:

SAVE THE BRIDGE · NO. 1

*If it's smoked ham you were a cravin'
The Smokehouse was a place worth bravin'
Yeah it was quirky,
The coffee... umm... murky,
But those pig signs and our bridge are worth savin'*