



# THE SPIRIT

Preserving the life of America's unique community

A publication of  
the  
Park Forest  
Historical  
Society

Vol. 17 No. 1

September 2021

## Annual Meeting and Election of Board, In-person, September 26, 2:30 p.m. Program: "The Dixie Highway" with Jim Wright



House rendering ACB.

Join us In-person, Sunday, September 27, 2:30 p.m. for our Annual Meeting and Election of Board Members. We must hold the meeting by law and must have an election per our by-laws. Planned program will be "The Dixie Highway" by author, Jim Wright who has written an Arcadia Press book on it. We will also be posting a program on our YouTube channel which is a past program on "50 Years of the Park Forest Aqua Center." Barb Pennington, Arta Dickerson, John Joyce and a film clip of the late Kris Martin made up the panel discussion from 2005. This panel offered different perspectives than the oral history we aired in May 2021, which was done in 1988.

Masks covering nose and mouth required.

### Interested in helping preserve YOUR History?

We are looking for new board members, docents and Archive volunteers. Contact Jane Nicoll, 708-481-4252, or via email on the website, [parkforesthstory.org](http://parkforesthstory.org).

### Connect with the Society

#### On Twitter:

@1950smuseum

@parkforeststory



#### On Facebook:

-1950s Park Forest House Museum

-Park Forest Historical Society



We have had a great response to the programs aired last year. Even the 2020 and 2021 Halls of Fame were recorded and aired on YouTube. See the list on page 2. All will run indefinitely. We apologize for relying on our emailed newsletter and Facebook to distribute news of our programs. We realize some of you, who are not signed up for email, or who do not use smartphones or computers weren't hearing about our programs. If you have email, please list your address on the membership form, so we can include you. The membership and annual fund appeals still go out by snail mail, too.



This year, we hope to do better notifying those of you who don't get notices through social media.

Ken Hopkins, a former resident, visited from Las Vegas and brought us some treasures he secured years ago under the Clocktower Inn, which he used to own. One was the original architect's rendering of the Park Forest Shopping Center. You may recognize it as the cover of a set of postcards. Now to find a place to display it!

## In My Own Little Corner

By Jane Nicoll

Step Back into a 1950s Halloween" Exhibit will be on display September 15, 2021 to November 6, 2021 **The museum, located at 227 Monee Road (inside St. Mary's) is open Wednesday and Saturday 1-3:30 p.m..** The exhibit shows Vintage Halloween decorations including die-cuts and Halloween Gurley Candles. **Masks covering nose and mouth are required along with 6 feet of distance between people.**



Call Jane at 708-481-4252, or email us through our website for appointments on other days. **At this writing, the phone is not working, so email, please.** **We are seeking more volunteers willing to take on shifts to cover all open hours, and to open for visitors by appointment. You are scheduled at your convenience. Please consider.**

**Check out the "Park Forest Historical Society" YouTube channel to view the programs we aired over the past year:** September 2020 , "Four Women Pioneers", Jane Nicoll interviewing women who arrived in 1948-1949; October 2020 , "Hall of Fame 2020"; November 2020, "Edwin Fizer" an audio-only interview done for Pritzker Military Museum on the Montfort Point Marines. In February 2020 we aired two programs, one was a past program on, "The Role of the Commission on Human Relations in Early Integration." The other was a video interview with Robert A. Dinerstein, shown at that program. Mr. Dinerstein was Village President during the first African American family move-in in December 1959. In April 2021 we presented the 2021 Hall of Fame, recognizing a number of people who were instrumental in the early, successful direction Park Forest took. Our May 2021 program was a video oral history done by Tom McDade and Jane Nicoll with Kris Martin and John Joyce talking about "The Park Forest Aqua Center, 1954-1988." Other than the in-person Annual Meeting, our program year will be more programs from our past. They tell the history we work so hard to preserve and share, and deserve to be seen by a new audience. The new audience seems to agree. Please go watch these.

### **\*\*\*\*September is Membership Recruitment and Renewal Month!\*\*\*\***

**Look for the membership brochure with form in this newsletter.**

**Use this form or, you can opt to join via PayPal on the website (include a message, "Membership") or print out and mail in your form. Just Join!!**

**Active Volunteers and Members:** In order to remain in operation as a Society, we must have more Active Volunteers and more Members. We have added some new names to our mailing list in hopes you will join us.

**Thank you to those who do volunteer to help with mailings, typing, work with the collection, docent, empty dehumidifiers and more.**

**Our thanks to the Village of Park Forest for renewing our Matching Challenge of \$5,000. We appreciate their support!**

Deepest condolences to the families of longtime members and supporters Claire Zaret , William Houston, Edwin Fizer , and Diana Effner. All remain in our hearts and memories.

# **Park Forest Historical Society Projects**

## **1950s Park Forest House Museum**

**In St. Mary's Catholic Church  
227 Monee Road**

Open Wednesday & Saturday  
1-3:30 p.m.; or by appointment

Donation: Adults \$5;

12 & under free, with adult.

School and group tours available.

## **Park Forest Local History**

### **Collection and Archive**

**227 Monee Road, and PFPL**

**Archive Open Friday 10-12**

Oral History Transcripts

Photographs, Slides

Videotapes, DVD's

Audiotapes, CD's

Manuscript Collections

Select Village Government

Documents

Scrapbooks

Architectural History

Biography Files

Maps

Shopping Center History

**Your membership preserves history.**

## **Programs**

**We hold programs 5-6 times a year on Park Forest and regional history**, with occasional speakers on topics of general historical interest or on preserving family photographs and resources. **Each spring we hold the Park Forest Hall of Fame Induction**, recognizing people nominated by the public for consistent, beneficial service to the community over a long span of time. Nomination forms, sent to members each fall and available on our website, are accepted between October 1 and December 30 each year.

## **Speakers available**

We can talk to schools or groups, including to scouts working on local history.

## **Volunteer Opportunities**

Museum Tour guides during regular hours;  
and for arranged tours

Assisting at programs and public events

Graphics, website design, and

Social Media Fundraising

Cataloging, describing, numbering collections

Researching and photographing architecture

Transcribing veterans' oral histories

Job descriptions at parkforesthistor.org.

**\*\*Take our Time and Talent Survey\*\***

**\*\*\*Help us record and preserve our history\*\*\***

**"If not you, who? If not now, when?"**

**Yes! I want to be a member.**  
**Members receive four newsletters,**  
**invitations, and one free museum visit.**

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

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

City, State, Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone \_\_\_\_\_

E-Mail \_\_\_\_\_

☐ Send newsletters, etc. via my email.

Membership and annual fund will be mailed.

## **Membership Category**

Student, with I.D. \$ 10.00

Individual \$ 20.00

Family \$ 40.00

Contributor \$ 75.00

Benefactor 1 (One month museum rent) \$400.00

Benefactor 2 (One month Archive rent) \$250.00

Corporate (Ask about sponsorships) \$ 50.00

Other \$ \_\_\_\_\_

For Endowment/Memorial options contact us.

**Our membership year begins in September.**

☐ Enclosed is a check made payable to:

"Park Forest Historical Society"

Mail to: Park Forest Historical Society

227 Monee Road

Park Forest, IL 60466

☐ Or use website-PayPal, message, "Membership"

**Please contact me about volunteer opportunities.**

Park Forest Historical Society is an independent 501 (c) (3) corporation. Your donation is tax-deductible to the extent allowed by law.

## Who we are:

The Park Forest Historical Society was founded in 1985, and became an independent 501 (c) (3) corporation in 1989. Its mission was to support the Local History Collection and Archive of the Park Forest Public Library, which had been started by the Reference Staff in 1981. In 1998, the Society helped form the 50th Anniversary House Museum at 397 Forest Blvd. In January 2007, the Archive was moved to remote storage by the library. In the same month, the museum changed its name to 1950s Park Forest House Museum. In May 2007, the museum at 395-397 Forest Blvd lost its lease and was put into storage. In October 2007, Central Park Townhomes and AIMCO offered the museum a unit at 141 Forest Blvd, allowing the Society to pull the basic house museum out of storage. As of May 2015, the museum is at St. Mary's Catholic Church. In January 2012, the Archive and our office moved into St. Mary's, 227 Monee Road. The Local History Collection is now available in the Museum. The photograph collection is in the Archive. At present, the Society is seeking a permanent home for the museum, the archival collection, office and the digital computer lab. For more information on our story, what our past and current programs are, and how you can help, visit

[www.parkforesthstory.org](http://www.parkforesthstory.org).

## The specific mission of this society shall be:

To preserve, interpret, and celebrate the unique history, diversity and achievements of the Village of Park Forest, Illinois through exhibits, publications, and special programs;

To educate residents, students and visitors, in all aspects of the village history;

To promote and support historical research;

To encourage donations, and enlist volunteers for the Park Forest Local History Collection and Archive and the 1950s Park Forest House Museum;

To honor those who have contributed to our community over a long period of time.



**Park Forest Historical Society**  
**Mail: 227 Monee Road**  
**Park Forest, IL 60466**  
**parkforesthstory1 at yahoo.com**  
**708-481-4252**  
**[www.parkforesthstory.org](http://www.parkforesthstory.org)**

## Membership Form



**Preserving  
Park Forest's  
Unique History,  
Diversity and  
Achievements**

**It's Halloween**  
**at the**  
**1950s Park Forest House Museum!**



**"Step Back into a 1950s Halloween" with Us!**

**September 15, 2021 to November 6, 2021**

**Located at 227 Monee Road, Park Forest, IL 60466**

(in St. Mary's Catholic Church, Park in small lot. Last two classrooms)

**Open Wednesday & Saturday, 1-3:30 p.m.;**

**or, at other times by appointment**

**Masks and Social Distancing Required**

**Admission donation Adults \$5; children 12 & under free with adult**

**Contact Jane Nicoll, via email on website; Mike Gans, 708-305-3308; or use Facebook to message for more information or to schedule a tour.**

**Display items include a collection of Gurley Halloween candles, die-cut decorations, boxed costume with mask & early Halloween bag.**

**We always tell the story of how Park Forest began and what life was like here.**

**[www.parkforesthistory.org](http://www.parkforesthistory.org)**

**On Facebook "1950s Park Forest House Museum" & "Park Forest Historical Society"**

**On Twitter @1950smuseum; @parkforeststory**