

THE SPIRIT

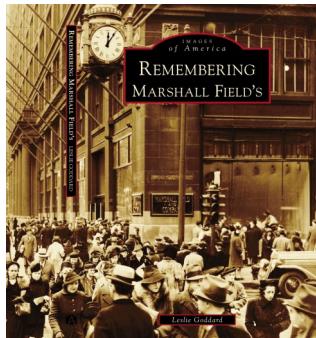
Preserving the life of America's unique community

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Society

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We Remember Field's in November



Remembering Marshall Field's, published by Arcadia Publishing in 2011

For more than 150 years Marshall Field and Co. reigned as Chicago's leading department store. **At 2:30 p.m. on Saturday, November 19, in the Park Forest Village Hall**, Leslie Goddard, author of the book *Remembering Marshall Field's* will talk about the history of the store and sign books at a free public program of the Park Forest Historical Society.

Her lavishly illustrated talk will trace the store's history from its beginning as a dry goods store in 1852 into a world-class fashion and service trendsetter. Photographs, ads, postcards and memorabilia trace the store's cherished traditions — the Walnut Room Christmas tree, the State Street store's legendary window displays, and, of course, Frango Mints.

Leslie Goddard, 42, is lifelong Chicago-area resident. Her family has more than fifty years experience working for Marshall Field and Company. Although she herself worked only about a year as a sales associate in the men's department in the Oakbrook Center store, her grandfather worked at the State Street Store for more than 30 years, working his way up from holiday sales clerk to buyer for the company's celebrated linens department. Five other members of her family worked for the store at various times.

Trained as a historian, Goddard earned a Ph.D. from Northwestern University specializing in American studies, theater history, and U.S. history. She also holds a master's degree in museum studies and has worked as a museum educator and exhibit developer for ten years.

"I've been giving talks on the history of this store for nearly two years now, and I'm always impressed by the emotional bond people had with this store," she explains. "Every time I speak, it's hard to leave because there are so many stories. People in Chicago just had deep connections to this store. Nearly everyone who grew up in Chicago has a Marshall Field's story."



Photo by Karen Kring

Bricks salvaged from the demolition of the Field's store in Park Forest make a memorable Christmas gift. Thanks to a generous donation from the contractor, the Historical Society will have bricks available for sale at the November meeting at \$15 per brick, two for \$25.

Membership Supports the Society

Your membership in the Park Forest Historical Society helps support the work of preserving the history of this unique community. Become a member or renew your membership today by filling out the enclosed membership brochure or by visiting our website: parkforesthistory.org and clicking the "Join Us" tab.

Yes! I want to be a member.

As a Member I receive the newsletter and program notices.

Name: _____

Address: _____

City, State _____

Zip _____

Telephone _____

E-Mail _____

Please send newsletters and announcements via my email.

Membership Category

Individual	\$ 20.00
Family	\$ 40.00
Contributor	\$ 75.00
Benefactor	\$315.00*

(*One month Museum rent)

Corporate	\$50.00
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Our membership year begins in September.

Enclosed is a check made payable to:

"Park Forest Historical Society"

Mail to: **Park Forest Historical Society**

400 Lakewood Blvd.

Park Forest, IL 60466-1619

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.

1950s Thanksgiving Decorations on display through November.

For the past several years, we have decorated the museum for Halloween, Thanksgiving, Christmas and Easter. The main decorations for Thanksgiving are Gurley Novelty Candles of turkeys, Pilgrim couples and Indians. These colorful candles instantly bring back vivid memories of the holidays for those whose homes used to be decorated with them.



In the late 1920s a chemist named Franklin C. Gurley, in Buffalo, New York, was operating the Gurley Novelty Company, manufacturing chocolate candy figures. Some articles say that Mr. Gurley's company was known as W & F Manufacturing Company.

In 1939, the Socony-Vacuum Oil Company of Los Angeles (now ExxonMobile) hired or began a partnership with Franklin Gurley to make a line of candles to use up paraffin, an otherwise discarded substance from oil refining. During the late 1930s and 1940s, these candles were sold under the brand name "Tavern Novelty Company", referred to as "Tavern Candles". Made in a variety of molds with holiday themes, these candles were sold at Woolworth's, Macy's, Grant's, dime stores, drug stores, and gas stations across America. They were produced for several holidays. Tavern Candles are different in appearance from Gurley Candles of the 1950s.

In 1949, Tavern was bought out and the name was changed to "Gurley Novelty". The earliest candles sold for 10 cents. Around 1959, the candles went to 15 cents. Most of the candles were never burned. Some sets, like the Tavern Novelty Nativity set, were made without wicks.

They are now popular with collectors. Martha Stewart is said to have bought many of the original molds. Replicas have been sold by Vermont Country Store since about 2007. The museum has one set of the replicas, as well.

Our exhibit, "Step Back into a 1950s Christmas, in December, will use a number of Christmas Gurley Candles, along with Rosbro plastic figures. **Marshall Field's bricks will be on sale.** Check our website.

Information in this article is borrowed from RubyLane.com, boominback.com, and forums.ebay.com.

Photograph by Jane Nicoll.