



THE SPIRIT

Preserving the life of America's unique community

A publication of
the
Park Forest
Historical
Society

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September 2024

Annual Meeting and Election of Board. September 29, 2024, 2:30 p.m.
Hear about our new website. Celebrate Museum's 26th Year. Visit 75th Anniversary displays.



Join us In-person, Sunday, September 29, 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.

Program

Hear about our new website and special features it has.

Museum Tour

After the program, we will open the museum for tours of "It's Halloween at the Museum" and our 75th Anniversary of Park Forest displays. Extra 75th Display materials may be set up in Ryan Hall.

We will be celebrating the 26th Anniversary of the Museum.

You may have heard that St. Mary's may be closed by the Joliet Diocese next July 1. It is on a list of 19 churches being considered. This may be the LAST anniversary of the museum.

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, parkforesthistor.org.

26 Years of the Museum!

The museum began as the 50th Anniversary House Museum meant to be a 2-month temporary exhibit to kick off the 50th Anniversary of Park Forest. It was sponsored by the 50th Anniversary Committee, the League of Women Voters and David Clapper of ThornCreek Townhomes.

It came together so nicely we just kept getting extensions. Park Forest Historical Society took over operation and it remained in 397 Forest Blvd for 9 years. For the last 1 1/2 years we also occupied 395. When we lost 395 and 397 in 2007, we spent some time in storage, then were welcomed at 141 Forest Blvd by new owners of Central Park Apartments.

In 2015, after rent increases and then losing 141 so that complex could be sold, we found our current home in St. Mary's, at 227 Monee Road. Now we face the threat of St. Mary's closing.

You have not seen it in 26 years?
Come on out for a visit!

Connect with the Society
On "X": akaTwitter:
@1950smuseum
@parkforeststory
On Facebook:
-1950s Park Forest House Museum
-Park Forest Historical Society



In My Own Little Corner

By Jane Nicoll

It's Halloween at the Museum" Exhibit will be on display September 21, 2024 to November 6, 2024. Up to December we will be featuring 75th Anniversary displays. August 30 will be the 76th Anniversary of the 1948 move-in of the first residents of Park Forest. **The museum, located at 227 Monee Road (inside St. Mary's) is open Wednesday and Saturday 1-3:30 p.m.**

Call Jane at 708-481-4252, or email us through our website for appointments on other days.



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. "Step Back into a 1950s Halloween" with us! It is a great inter-generational experience.**

The Park Forest Historical Society also maintains the Park Forest Local History Collection and Archive. The Local History Files, stored in the Museum, consist of more than 270 subject files full of articles and documents on topics important to Park Forest history.

The transcripts to, "OH! Park Forest" Oral History of Park Forest interviews recorded in 1980 to 1981+ are stored in the file cabinets, with copies in the Archive Office. The Hall of Fame plaques are currently in the museum along with a file of all of the Hall of Fame brochures with brief biographies of those inducted. In the Archive Office we have the tapes and about 46 transcripts done of 94 oral histories, "GI Stories from a GI Town," done by Suzanne Brown.

The subject files include the histories of many of the organizations and original churches. Our collection includes, film, videos, audiotapes, brochures, photographs personal papers, books—all challenging to preserve and catalog.

The Society has a CDROM curriculum unit on Park Forest created by Jean Bernstein, Suzanne Brown, and May Wiza. Currently we have no retired teacher or volunteer to take the unit into the schools. We hope that in this 75th Anniversary year, we can get a new volunteer, and that ALL of the Park Forest schools will be eager to have that volunteer come in to teach it. Still looking since last September. Curriculum needs to be updated, too!

******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 on the new version of our website.

Just Join!!

Memberships, donations and purchases will be easier to do on the new site.

Visitors will be able to pay at the door, or in the museum store, once our volunteers are trained to accept those payments and our wi-fi signal is strong.

Active Volunteers and Members: In order to remain in operation as a Society, we must have more Active Volunteers and more Members.

Our thanks to the Village of Park Forest for renewing our Matching Challenge Grant of \$5,000.

75th ANNIVERSARY OF PARK FOREST EVENTS

75th Anniversary Gala & Concert

The Gala & Concert will be held on September 26, 2024 at Freedom Hall, 410 Lakewood Boulevard, and will feature a guest performance by Terisa Griffin. Proceeds will benefit the Park Forest Veteran's Closet & Resource Center, the Park Forest Historical Society, and the Youth Academic Scholarship Fund.

Reception/Concert is \$75 per person; Dinner/Concert is \$125 per person (no elevator access); Dinner/concert Table of 8 is \$975. The Gala is a Black Tie event. **RSVP's are due by September 24 or by calling 708-283-5621.**

Tickets to the concert without reception or dinner are now available for \$40 per person.

The Society is grateful to the 75th Anniversary of Park Forest Ad Hoc Committee for our being included in those who will benefit from the Gala.

Labor Day Run/Walk

To commemorate the Park Forest Scenic Ten race, on Labor Day from 9 to 11 a.m. a 3-kilometer run/trot/walk event was held. The track wound through Central Park. A fee of \$15 allowed the first \$100 who entered to have a free pancake and sausage breakfast and a T-shirt. The event was a great success.

September 29, 2024, Park Forest Historical Society Annual Meeting and Election. and Celebration of the 26th Anniversary of the Museum.

The Annual meeting will be followed by a celebration of the 26th year of the museum, and tour of the museum with Halloween decorations and 75th Anniversary displays, including documents and photographs.

October 20, 2024, Park Forest Historical Society Program,

"Remembering the Richard Nixon Campaign Visits to Park Forest, 1956 and 1960." Sunday afternoon, 2:30 p.m. Planned for Village Hall Park Forest, Board Meeting Room, 350 Victory Drive. Watch for confirmation of that location.

We will be sharing news articles, photographs and a short home movie. Come share your stories. Let us know if you have digitized photos or home movies of the visits.

November 9, 2024 75th Anniversary Program

Saturday, November 9, 2024 3 p.m., Freedom Hall, 410 Lakewood Blvd, Park Forest, IL.

A 75th Anniversary Ad-Hoc Committee will be hosting an afternoon of programming on the history of Park Forest. Watch for more details. This is probably the final event of the 75th Anniversary Committee.

Calling for Rich Township High School Memories

We have been contacted by a member of Rich Township High School's first Class of 1954, Mitch Steinberg. Mr. Steinberg would like the Society to solicit memoirs, especially from the class of 1954 members. The Society would like to know when graduates moved to Park Forest and why, where they lived, then what they accomplished with their lives post-high school.

The Society is interested in receiving memoirs from Park Foresters in general, hopefully in electronic format, to be shared on our website.



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



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

September 21, 2024 to November 6, 2024

Located at 227 Monee Road, Park Forest, IL 60466

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

Open Wed and Sat 1:00 to 3:30;

or other days and times, or groups by appointment.

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

Call Jane Nicoll, 708-481-4252, or Mike Gans, 708-305-3308 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.

75th Anniversary of Park Forest documents and items featured through November 2024

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

parkforesthistor.org

"Like" us on Facebook "1950s Park Forest House Museum" &

"Park Forest Historical Society"

"X" or Twitter @1950smuseum; @parkforeststory