

THE LINCOLN PARK HISTORICAL SOCIETY & MUSEUM

NEWSLETTER

August, September, October 2014
Hours: 1:00pm-5:00pm -- Wed, Thurs, Sat.

1335 Southfield Rd, Lincoln Park, MI 48146
313-386-3137; lpmuseum@gmail.com

CELEBRATION! 1814-2014 THE STAR SPANGLED BANNER 200TH Birthday Party On Saturday, September 13, 2014



19th Century sheet music



The original 1814 flag from Ft. McHenry, now on permanent exhibit at the Smithsonian

On Saturday September 13, the Historical Museum is holding a 200th birthday party as we participate in the nation-wide commemoration of “The Star Spangled Banner”, our National Anthem.

Originating as ‘The Defence of Ft. McHenry’, Francis Scott Key’s 4-stanza poem was an ode to the fort’s enduring flag, which lasted through the night in the Battle of Baltimore on September 13-14, 1814 during the waning months of the War of 1812. [It appeared the British had the upper hand after the attack of Washington D.C. and the burning of the White House and Capitol building just weeks prior.] Key’s stirring poem was soon set to the tune of a popular British pub song, ‘To Anacreon in Heaven’, and renamed “The Star Spangled Banner”. The song became the most well-loved and oft-performed patriotic song in the country and as we know was eventually named our National Anthem, in 1931. For generation after generation, most every school student learned to sing the National Anthem from memory. The flag which inspired Key’s poetic tribute still exists. It was given to the Smithsonian Institute in 1908 and has been restored three times in its life time. We can see the flag on exhibit today at the Smithsonian, although it hasn’t flown free since that historic morning 200 years ago. (article continued on page 4)

A Retirement – and a Thank You



State Rep. Paul Clemente, of Lincoln Park, presenting a State of Michigan proclamation to Muriel Lobb on the museum’s 40th anniv. in 2012.

While those ‘in the loop’ will know of her recent retirement, this will serve as official announcement that our esteemed, nonagenarian - and nonaging - volunteer **Muriel Lobb** has retired from her position as Director of the Historical Museum, a position she has held since 2001. She was just a young 84 then, and volunteered to take on the work following the death of Dan Beggs.

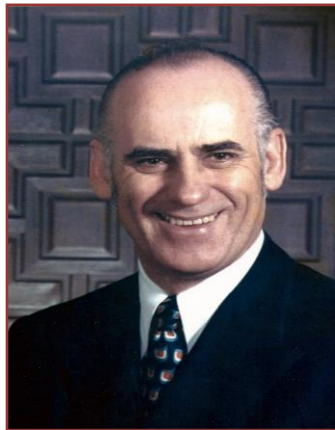
Muriel has been a volunteer with the Museum for over 30 years, and spent most the past 14 here nearly full time, never taking a cent for any of the time she’s so generously donated. She has worked tirelessly at overseeing our historic building’s upkeep and maintenance and its vast collections, it’s true -- but soooooo much more – additional responsibilities she’s taken on have included working with both the Historical Society and Historical Commission in an advisory capacity, visits to countless school classes, and guiding visitors while describing firsthand how the city grew 90 years ago. As we move on from here, it is difficult to imagine this place without Muriel’s guiding hand. But since she is almost 97, we will give her leave to enjoy a well-deserved retirement! (This is her second retirement after working at the Knoch-Lobb family flower shop for many decades.)

“Bless you, friend Muriel – and Thank You for all you have done to keep this museum moving ahead, and away from becoming insignificant. Your stories will stay with us, and we thank former mayor Pat Krause for taking on an oral history project with you so we will have your thoughts and legendary ‘unbiased opinions’ on most everything Lincoln Park, your home since you were just 5 years old.”

Muriel will continue to volunteer her time on Thursday afternoons 1pm to 5pm while the weather is good. So do stop in and give Muriel your well wishes!

Max Frank Schiebold
(1920-2014)

Mayor of Lincoln Park
1971-1975
City Councilman 1963-1971
(six years as president)
LP Planning Commission
1955-1963



A few years ago, when **Max and Ethel Schiebold** were moving out of their Lincoln Park home on Ford Blvd., the family made a gift to the museum of an extensive collection of materials related to Max's years of service in city government, where he began as chairman of the Planning Commission, followed by 4 terms as councilman, and serving as 2-term mayor from 1971 to 1975. It was during Mayor Schiebold's tenure that the Historical Museum opened in 1972 with his encouraging support. He continued to be involved in the city - and with the museum - for decades after leaving office. We are honored to place a number of personal memorabilia along with family photographs in an exhibit to pay tribute to Max Schiebold and his service to LP. This special exhibit will be on display for October and through most of November. We will notify members of the special reception date set for the exhibit's opening.

MARK YOUR CALENDAR

CURRENT EXHIBIT August-September
"A Bicentennial: Our National Anthem and the Flag that Inspired It";
& * PHOTO CONTEST * (please see page 4)

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 13 at 2:00 P.M.
A 200TH BIRTHDAY PARTY for 'The Star Spangled Banner' here at the historical museum.

NEXT EXHIBIT October & November
"MAX SCHIEBOLD: Public Servant"

HISTORICAL SOCIETY MEETINGS/PROGRAMS

Wednesday, October 1 at 7:00 P.M.
Program tba

Wednesday, November 5 at 7:00 P.M.
Program tba

SOCIETY MEMBERSHIPS

We Welcome Our Newest Members!

Edith Andrews of Lincoln Park
Ron Lobb of Trenton
Ronald Moore of Long Beach, Calif.

TIME FOR RENEWALS !

Historical Society membership renewals are payable in August; an envelope is enclosed here for your use. [If your copy of the newsletter does *not* include a renewal envelope, you are either a Life Member or a newer member. Those recently joined in 2014 will receive their first renewals in August of next year.]

Please mark the level at which you would like to renew and submit payment with the envelope. We truly appreciate all those who have become Patrons in recent years. We also urge 'Patron' level renewals if you are currently at the general membership level and can afford the increase. The museum continues to strive to meet the challenges of the financial stresses of our times. All society members receive quarterly newsletters, advance notification of our programs, exhibits and special events.

Also, beginning this year, Patron level members are allowed one complimentary 8x10 black and white copy of a photo from our extensive collection of historic Lincoln Park photos, normally a \$10 charge.

WE REMEMBER



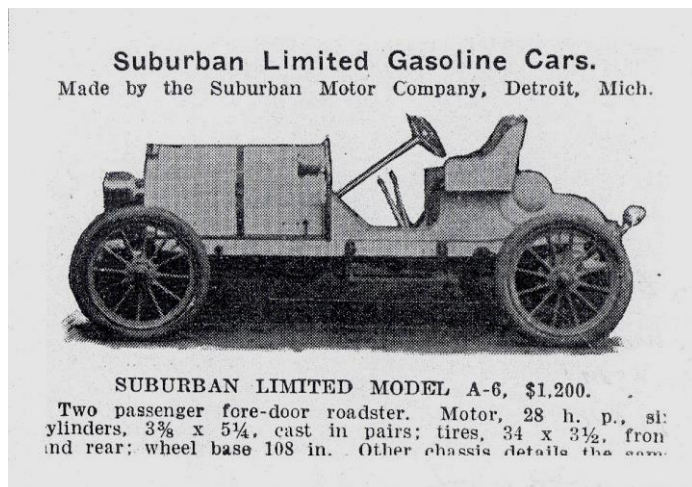
Since June we have lost three valued members of the Historical Society: **Max Schiebold**, former mayor of Lincoln Park, who remained active in city service and activities; **Austin Sibley**, raised in the University-Paris part of town, who was a LP mailman out of this building; and **Pauline Schafer**, wife of the former city librarian, James Schafer; Pauline regularly volunteered her service at our first two museums (the first located at the back of the library.)

SUBURBAN MOTOR CAR COMPANY
*The Company that Could Have Changed
Our City's Destiny*

[We promised in the last issue to delve further into this interesting story.]

The short-lived **Suburban Motor Car Company (1911-1913)**, herein called simply **SMCC**, is today just a footnote in the long saga of automotive history, yet it became part of a fascinating chapter of that history that would include such disparate elements as the Seven Little Buffaloes, a mayor of Bad Axe, the Ecorse River, a noted landscape architect and a model village, the Lincoln Park Subdivisions, and the Checker Cab Co.

The story of the SMCC begins with **William A. DeSchaum** (*orig. name* Schaum), an automotive design engineer, who started the DeSchaum Motor Company in Buffalo, N.Y. (1908-1910). The company, noted for the DeSchaum's distinctive high wheel rims, struggled in a market of better and cheaper cars; some would argue that DeSchaum was more a dreamer than a businessman. In early 1910 he whimsically re-dubbed the car the 'Seven Little Buffaloes', but the name change didn't help business, and before long the fledgling company went under.



Advert. listing for the 1911 Suburban Limited roadster Model A-6 (courtesy of National Automotive Historical Collection, Detroit Public Library)

The same year, DeSchaum moved west to Detroit where he met up with Frank Farnham and William Lankin, a former mayor of Bad Axe. Lankin became president of the new enterprise, with DeSchaum as general manager and vice-president, Farnham as secretary and O. B. Bachman as treasurer; together they formed a *new* DeSchaum Motor Car Co. to produce DeSchaum's roadster, the **Suburban Limited**. [See 1911 ad above] After producing just a handful of the prototype cars in two styles of roadster, the DeSchaum Motor Car Co. was

reorganized in September 1911 with the same officers, into the Suburban Motor Car Co., now with ambitious plans for a new industrial community on acreage in nearby Ecorse. According to press announcements in the New York Times as well as many automotive journals at the time [incl. *The Automobile*; *Motor*; *Motor World*; *Iron Trade*; *Iron Age*; *Automotive Industries*; *Motor Age*; *Accessories & Garage Journal*], the new Suburban Motor Car Co. was designed to be an impressive complex of factory buildings with direct access, via the Ecorse River, to the Detroit River and to the railroad lines that ran through to the city from the south -- with an adjacent model 'garden village' where the employees of the SMCC would live. (note: the factory location in Detroit where the first Suburbans were manufactured is yet a mystery.)

At the same time, the officers separately formed the Suburban City Co. real estate firm, which shared SMCC's Whitney Building offices downtown. The real estate enterprise was established to promote the planned development of the 240 acres at Ecorse into the model village to be known as Suburban City. The SMCC's scheme for a 'garden village' was described in the trade journal, *Parks and Cemeteries and Landscape Gardening*, of November, 1912. This article also depicts a unique detailed drawing for the village rendered by noted landscape architect **T. Glenn Phillips**; the complex is shown straddling the Ecorse River with acreage extending south of St. Cosme Line (now Southfield Road) to the Emmons property and extending west to Fort Street.

The property needed was subsequently bought up from the local farmers, which included the Goodells, LeBlancs, Bondies, Laffertys, and Cicottes. If you live in the area that was first developed by the Farnhams, you will have an abstract (deed) that shows your property history, and that the property passed through the hands of the Suburban City Co. in 1912; most of these were resold to Farnham Bros Real Estate which remained an active business in the downriver area for several years. It was the Farnham brothers who brought the words Lincoln Park here, and named their first subdivisions: "Lincoln Park No. 1 and No.2". Both Frank and his brother Hiram actually settled in the area for a time. Farnham Street is named for them.

It was an ambitious development project to be sure, possibly the first of its kind in the nation. The fact that architect T. Glenn Phillips, a high ranking Detroit city official on the Planning commission, was involved in creating the design added significantly to the hoped-for distinction and success of their plans. [Phillips was also known for his landscaping of the Henry Ford home on Edison in Detroit, and later designing the campus of Michigan Agricultural College (MSU) in Lansing.] The SMCC was however, a failed enterprise almost from the start. With a lack of capital and accused of

mismanagement, DeSchaum would step away from the Suburban project. Replacing him as president was auto executive, R.A. (Randall) Palmer, who was formerly general manager with the Cartercar Co. in Pontiac. It was Palmer who reorganized the SMCC as the Palmer Motor Car Company in late 1912. Production at the Ecorse plant had been limited (the total output of the SMCC was believed to be 25 cars) and ceased altogether in early 1913, without any further development of DeSchaum's dream village.

In June of 1913 Palmer joined with the Partin Manufacturing Co. and moved his operations to Chicago, where they began producing the Partin-Palmer auto. The Partin-Palmer in turn became the Commonwealth in 1915 until 1922. Commonwealth had developed a Taxicab called the Mogul; after more reorganization, the Commonwealth evolved into the Checker Cab Co. for its fleet production. Checker moved to Kalamazoo in April of 1923. By 1924, Checker was producing 4,000 units a year.

Beyond the establishment of real estate firms, led by the Farnham brothers, and the subdividing of land here in Lincoln Park, there is little left of the dreams of these men. It's interesting to imagine what this area might have become *had* the Suburban Motor Car Co. been a success. It was another few years before auto magnate Henry Ford arrived three miles down the road to begin building his mammoth Rouge plant, when our town would then swell with a population of auto employees of which William A. DeSchaum had only dreamed.

Note: There has been quite a bit of information gathered on this history and more to be discovered. We are keeping a notebook on the Suburban Motor Car Co. history and the research done so far and ongoing. The notebook will be available for public use here at the museum beginning in September. Included will be the only known photographs of the Suburban Limited taken on the streets of Detroit in 1911; the rendering of the Suburban City village plans by T. Glenn Phillips; and an interesting article that appeared in the November 7, 1957 Mellus Newspaper, by writer Al DuHadway, who interviewed some old timers that year who remembered the auto plant in Ecorse.

Lincoln Park Historical Society Board 2014-15

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The Newsletter is published quarterly; to be added to our emailing list and receive a color version of the newsletter and up to date notifications, and help us save on postage, please send an email to lpmuseum@gmail.com

Museum Curator: Jeff Day
Director Emeritus: Muriel Lobb

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The "Star Spangled Banner" on public display for its Centennial, in September, 1914 at Baltimore, Maryland

The amazing story of our country's flag and the National Anthem inspired by it is a rich part of our national heritage. For further reading, check the following websites: www.amhistory.si.edu/starspangledbanner

Also, Smithsonian Magazine's own story on the flag restoration:

www.smithsonianmag.com/history/star-spangled-banner-back-on-display-83229098

And, even Wikipedia has some very neat audio and video clips that are worth catching, to help get us in the spirit: en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Star-Spangled_Banner

IN CELEBRATION

... Of our nation's heritage and the National Anthem's Bicentennial we are offering our members and the public a special opportunity to see displayed the oldest flag from our collection: **the 38-star U.S. flag from 1877**. This historic flag was a gift from Richard and Esther Davis in 1976, the year of the U.S. Bicentennial. NOTE: The 1877 flag, featuring distinctive gold fringe, will ONLY be displayed completely unfurled for TWO DAYS: on Saturday, September 13, between 1PM and 5PM, with special hours on Sunday, September 14, also 1PM to 5PM.

****NATIONAL ANTHEM PHOTO CONTEST****

The Historical Society & Museum is having a photo contest on the themes of the "National Anthem" or the "U.S. Flag".

Submitted photos should be 8"x10" in either black and white or color format – one contest winner will be selected in each of the two categories -- and will need to be received at the museum by 5:00 p.m. on Saturday, September 6th. Winners will be announced on September 13th. Contact the museum for further details and entry forms. Note that all submitted materials will become the property of the Lincoln Park Historical Society. (Please retain your originals.)