

# THE LINCOLN PARK HISTORICAL SOCIETY & MUSEUM

## NEWSLETTER

Established 1955

May, June, July 2019

Hours: 1:00pm-6:00pm, Wednesday & Saturday

1335 Southfield Rd, Lincoln Park, MI 48146

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also see our Facebook page

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### ANNUAL DINNER held MAY 23<sup>rd</sup>

#### “DETROIT’S OWN POLAR BEARS IN WORLD WAR I”

The summer of 2019 will mark the 100-year anniversary of the return of Michigan’s 339<sup>th</sup> Infantry – self-named on their return voyage as “The Polar Bear Regiment” – to Detroit in July of 1919.

**Goodell. Pegouske. LeBlanc. Stocking. Boundy. Osborn. Rankin.** Some of these family names are familiar to people who live in Lincoln Park, others possibly less so. Each of these men lived in our city and each is significant in representing the 5,200 soldiers who fought with the 339<sup>th</sup> Infantry of the 85<sup>th</sup> Division in World War I. The 339<sup>th</sup> was made up of men from the Detroit area who trained at Camp Custer near Battle Creek. The men found themselves in the late summer of 1918 heading to fight the German army along the Western Front, where most American soldiers had been sent since the U.S. entered the war.

By the time their ships reached England in August, however, the 339<sup>th</sup> was given orders by General Pershing to re-deploy to Archangel in North Russia as part of an Allied expeditionary force to fight the Bolsheviks. Russia, formerly an Allied nation, pulled out of the war the year before while dealing with its own civil war. The Allies now saw both the Red Army and the Germans as threats to the large stockpiles of weaponry and supplies at Archangel, demanding military attention. Along with the 339<sup>th</sup>, the First Battalion of the 310<sup>th</sup> Engineers plus a few other ancillary units from the 85<sup>th</sup> Division took part in the North Russia intervention.

The re-routed soldier transports arrived at Archangel, a port city on the White Sea, on September 4, 1918, where a long, harsh winter soon set in. Making matters worse, a good many of the young troops were stricken on ship by the Spanish Influenza that was spreading across the globe. On November 11, when the armistice in Europe was declared, the Americans fighting on Russian soil were still at arms, now part of an allied force of over 15,000 combined troops from Britain, France, the U.S., Canada, and Italy. Fighting against the Red Army continued well into 1919. In the end, 230 American soldiers had perished from warfare or disease.

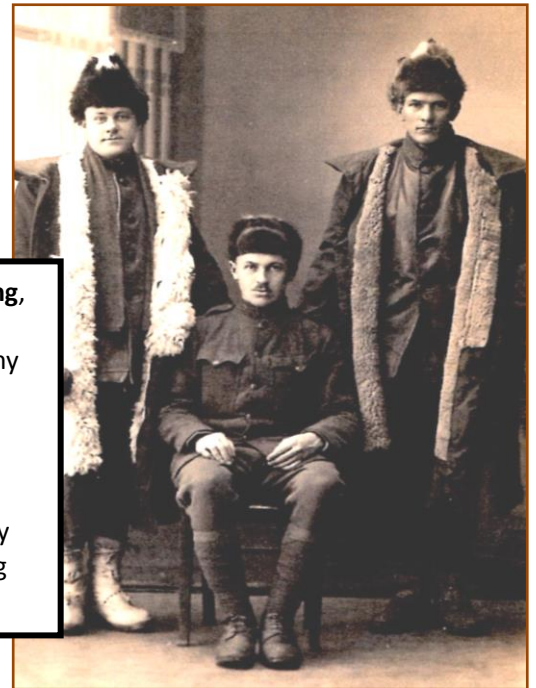
Three men of the 339<sup>th</sup> – Benjamin Goodell, Walter Pegouske, and Columbus LeBlanc – returned to their

homes in this community. The others named came to settle in Lincoln Park in the years following the war.

Benjamin Goodell died in 1923 at age 35. He was posthumously honored by local V.F.W. Post 552, which was named in his memory upon forming in 1930.

A young veteran named Vernie Stocking began his tire business here in 1933. Long known as Park Tire, today it is a thriving fourth-generation family business.

William Boundy, Newton Osborn, and Garry Rankin are other veterans of the 339<sup>th</sup> known to have lived in Lincoln Park, according to research by Polar Bear historian Mike Grobbel.



**Vernie Stocking,** standing far right, with army buddies, at Archangel, Russia; April 2, 1919. Photo courtesy of the Stocking family

The community will have an extraordinary opportunity to learn about the Polar Bear Expedition in Russia at the Historical Society’s Annual Dinner, held Thursday evening, May 23<sup>rd</sup> at Lincoln Park High School. The presentation will be given by **Mike Grobbel**, President of the Polar Bear Memorial Association, who also serves as a director of the Michigan Military Heroes Museum in Frankenmuth.

The evening begins with a buffet dinner, followed by the election and installation of Historical Society Board officers. Doors open at 6:15pm with dinner served at 6:30pm. Members of the Society will receive their invitations in the mail. The public is invited to attend. The cost is \$20 per person; reservations must be in by Monday, May 20<sup>th</sup>.

## **CALENDAR of EVENTS**

*The public is invited to attend all Society events.*



Appearing at the Clemente's Restaurant program at the museum on April 5, 2019 are, left to right, **Alice Clemente, Rose (Clemente) Jackson, nephew Ed Clemente, the presenter of the program, and Joe Clemente.** The full house that night thoroughly enjoyed Ed's talk bringing back many years of memories.

Photo by Merritt Solomon

### **Welcome To New Society Members!**

Ed Clemente of Lincoln Park  
Carl Joyce of Lincoln Park  
Michael McCloy of Ypsilanti

**In our last newsletter**, we published a list of the years for which the museum was seeking LP High School yearbooks. We are pleased to report that members and friends came through with shining colors.

Our Thanks to the following for their donations:

Member **Paul Zatyko** for yearbooks from 1954, 1955, 1956

Member **Kevin Cox** for the 1978 book  
The **Lincoln Park Public Schools Office** for yearbooks from 2000, 2002-2005, and 2007-2018 - excepting **2010 and 2013** which we are **still looking for**, as well as books for **1979, and 1986.**

It has been confirmed to us by several alumni that there was no yearbook issued for 1953.

**Wednesday, May 1 – 7:00 P.M.** Program: "Yankee Air Museum" with a presentation by Brian Higgins, YAM Board member.

**Saturday, May 18 – 12 Noon** The Annual Memorial Bell Ringing ceremony and the dedication of new Heritage Plaza pavers; on the museum lawn, with reception following.

**Sunday, May 19** – The Lincoln Park Memorial Day parade is held along east side of Fort Street beginning at 1:00 p.m. at White Street, followed by Memorial Park ceremony.

**Thursday, May 23 – Historical Society Annual Dinner**, doors open 6:15 p.m. with buffet dinner at 6:30 p.m., Evening program: "*Michigan's Own Polar Bear Regiment of World War I*" (see article on page 1). Reservations are due by May 20<sup>th</sup>; \$20 per person. Also, the election and installation of Board officers will take place at the dinner.

**Wednesday, June 5 – 7:00 P.M.** Program: "Sears Catalog Kit Homes", a presentation by historical preservationists Andrew and Wendy Mutch; co-hosted by the Lincoln Park Preservation Alliance.

**Saturday, June 8 – 2:00 P.M.** Opening reception for the exhibit: "Sears Department Store, 1956-2019" and dedication of Sears Clock restoration and installation. (see article on page 3). Exhibit runs until Labor Day weekend.

The museum will be **closed on Wednesday, July 3** and **Saturday, July 6** for the Independence Day holiday.

**Our refurbished military service exhibit** will open on May 18<sup>th</sup> – ranging from a list of the men from local families who served in the Civil War to recent deployments to zones in the Mid-East. This will be a fluid exhibit, updated and changed from time to time as we try to place much of our military collections on display. We are looking for new items for the exhibit and any information on the service of LP men and women.

## Sears Kit Homes



This 'Gladstone' model was built on Lincoln Park's Winchester Street in 1925 and is the earliest known Sears home built in the city.

Below is an image of the same model as it appeared in Sears 'Modern Homes' catalog of 1916.



This house has been built at Roanoke, Ind., Dayton, Ohio, Detroit, Mich., Fort Wayne, Ind., Kankakee, Ill., Wellsville, Ohio, and other cities.

**Sears Catalog Kit Homes** - sold under the Sears 'Modern Homes' label - were kit houses offered primarily through mail-order catalog. More than 70,000 of the homes were sold in North America between 1908 and 1940; and over 370 different home designs, in a wide range of architectural styles and sizes, were offered during the program's 33-year history. The homes originally cost between a few hundred and a few thousand dollars. The "Gladstone" pictured above, one of the most popular models, originally sold for \$884 in 1916. Many kit purchasers could save enough on the low cost to pay for the labor or construct the homes themselves.

Mail-order house enthusiasts estimate that about 70 percent of Sears houses are still standing today. **Andrew and Wendy Mutch** of Novi live in a "Hamilton" model home built in 1927 and run the **Kit House Hunters** blog, where they share the extensive work they and other researchers have done to identify kit homes around the country. They have identified ten known kit homes still occupied in Lincoln Park, including the Gladstone pictured at top.

Andrew and Wendy will share their presentation on the Sears homes at the historical museum on Wednesday, June 5<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 p.m. The event is co-sponsored by the Lincoln Park Preservation Alliance.

## The Sears Clock & Summer Exhibit

**We are now much closer** to having the restored working Sears clock installed at the museum (see photo in the last newsletter). A re-dedication is scheduled for Saturday, June 8<sup>th</sup> as part of our Sears Department Store exhibit's opening reception held from 2pm to 4pm. We are still seeking temporary loans of Sears store memorabilia for the exhibit which will remain on display through the summer. We ask that items arrive at the museum by the end of May; these will be returned to their owners after Labor Day. Contact curator Jeff Day if you have anything to offer.

One of the delays in the clock installation has been locating the four motors which have controlled the clock's four separate faces since its manufacture in 1938. Several people are helping us to resolve that issue.

We are grateful to each of the following for their invaluable help through every step of the process:

**Lincoln Park resident Lisa A. Matheson**, whose father was once a store manager; she convinced the store's management to offer the clock to the museum when she heard the store was closing.

**Kim Williams**, asst Sears manager, worked closely with us, overseeing the transfer to museum hands, providing access to the building and use of ladders and equipment; she also offered several historic items, including many of the building's original 1956 blueprints.

**Alan Villalta**, former Sears maintenance technician who coordinated the removal of the clock from the Lincoln Park store and personally unbolted it from the dark side of the ceiling. (Alan worked in Lincoln Park when the clock arrived from the Highland Park store in 1993.)

Museum custodian **Robert French** assisted in removing the clock from the ceiling and moving it to the museum. Historical Society President **Jim Nelson's** SUV transported the clock from Sears to the museum.

**Bill Ellison**, a clock repair expert who examined the clock for us and recommended all four motors be replaced.

**Arnie Ciupka**, who is handling the clock's ceiling installation for the museum.

**Steve Haddix** of Haddix Electric, who's handling the final step – the power hook-up – to give us a fully operational clock after it is in place.

**And Michael McCloy**, whose father worked in the tire/service department for 35 years; Mike grew up a "Sears kid"; He recently completed an account of the clock's history and the installation project for our archives.

*~ Our deep thanks to all these abundantly helpful hands! ~*

## Lucille Stroh - A Remembrance

With our last issue going to press just days following Lucille's death on January 19<sup>th</sup> we were unable to publish a proper tribute to her at that time. Lucille had served as president on the Historical Society Board for many years and afterward continued to serve in a Trustee capacity as her health allowed. Lucille's selfless contributions to, and active involvement with, our society and with many area non-profit organizations made her many close friends across the region. Her infectious energy and youthful spirit belied her years. She continues to serve as an inspiration.

One of Lucille's projects here at the museum was handling the gift shop and organizing the large stock of vintage jewelry sold to help raise funds. Her sorting and cleaning and labeling took many hours and she gingerly handled the task with an appreciation for each life lived through the pieces that passed her hands.

We are very grateful to the Stroh family for a donation of many of Lucille's collectibles from over her lifetime. Some of these have become a part of our own history collections, and some will be placed in our gift shop, in Lucille's honor, to help with raising money. One donation from the family, in particular – of some two hundred 45-rpm records – has given us the inspiration to locate a period juke box for the museum. We will keep you informed of that progress. We are looking for additional unique 45s of local artists/bands to add to this audio collection. Our gift shop offers posters, books, T shirts and used records, jewelry and gift items. All proceeds benefit the historical museum.



Past-President Lucille Stroh, pictured at right, with membership chair Alyce Riggs, taken on December 9, 2018

## IN MEMORIAM



Marilyn Nagy April 14, 2019  
Delbert Peters April 8, 2019  
Geno Sorice August 5, 2018

We extend our deepest sympathies to the families of these dear members and supporters.

## DRGS HAS A NEW HOME



The Downriver Genealogical Society reports that it has found new quarters for its offices and library. Their new home is in the city of Flat Rock; inside the **Flat Rock Community Schools Administration Building, Room 100, 28639 Division St., Flat Rock.** Library hours for research are Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays from 11am to 4pm. Members of the society are on hand to assist visitors. The DRGS can be reached at phone: 734-535-6530; or email: [downrivergensoc@hotmail.com](mailto:downrivergensoc@hotmail.com)

## Lincoln Park Historical Society Board 2018-2019

President/Treasurer	Jim Nelson
Vice President/Secretary	Dolores Walker
Trustee/Membership Chair	Alyce Riggs
Trustee	Bea Partridge
Trustee	Vacant

Museum Curator & newsletter editor: Jeff Day  
Director Emeritus: Muriel Lobb

Board meetings are held on the third Tuesday of the month at 1:30 P.M. The Society Newsletter is published quarterly. To be added to our email list and help save on postage costs, please send us an email at: [lpmuseum@gmail.com](mailto:lpmuseum@gmail.com)