

# THE LINCOLN PARK HISTORICAL SOCIETY & MUSEUM

## NEWSLETTER

Established 1955  
November, December 2018, January 2019  
Museum Hours: 1:00pm-6:00pm, Wednesday & Saturday

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313-386-3137  
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Or Find us on Facebook

### HOLIDAY EXHIBIT

#### "SMOKIN' ROCKETS!" with LYN 'BUDDY' OSBORN

Lincoln Park-raised actor **Lyn Osborn** will be honored with a new museum exhibit opening on November 24<sup>th</sup>. We will have on temporary display the loan of items highlighting Lyn's acting career in Los Angeles which covered most of the 1950s. His career was cut short when he died tragically at age 32 following brain surgery in 1958.



Publicity photo of Lyn Osborn, in his role as 'Cadet Happy', on "Space Patrol", ABC-TV series, 1950-1955

**Clois Lyn Osborn** was born in Wichita Falls, Texas on January 21, 1926, and was raised mostly in Lincoln Park where the family settled during the Depression. His sister Beth Flood, who passed away in California in 2015, was interviewed extensively by author Jean-Noel Bassior for her book, *Space Patrol: Missions of Daring in the*

*Name of Early Television* (2005). As his family had moved from the area years ago, much of what we know of Lyn's Hollywood career comes from the research Jean-Noel conducted for her book.

A 1943 Lincoln Park High School grad, known as 'Buddy' to his family and friends, Lyn traveled to the west coast after returning from service with the U.S. Navy during World War II. Historical Society member Joe Turinsky remembers Buddy from those early years, when their families lived on Lincoln Street. Joe recalls sneaking in off the back alley to see Lyn when he was performing at the Empress Burlesque Theater on Woodward where he worked as a stand-up comic and emcee. Joe has stories! We are also grateful to member Tim Caldwell for his research into Lyn's life and career and for loaning items from his personal collection.

After studying for several years with the Pasadena Playhouse, Lyn's first film appearance, in 1951, was in an uncredited role in "Up Front", based on WWII cartoonist Bill Mauldin's characters Willie and Joe. He later appeared in the landmark 1956 Playhouse 90 live production of "Requiem for a Heavyweight", starring Jack Palance. His final film, "Paradise Alley", was released in 1962, several years after his death.

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To commemorate this year's 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the end of World War I (also known as "The Great War"), the Lincoln Park Historical Society and Museum is hosting events to observe the centenary along with our current exhibit, "The Great War and Its Local Connection". The exhibit, which ends November 14<sup>th</sup>, presents numerous pieces from the war-era, donated to the museum or on loan from local families and private collections.

On Saturday, November 3<sup>rd</sup>, at 2:00 p.m., **Elizabeth Clemens**, the author of *Detroit in World War I* (Arcadia Publishing, 2015), will be the museum's guest speaker, offering a visual presentation on Detroit's role in the war, its industrial contributions and the effect of the war on the Detroit home front. Clemens is the audiovisual archivist at the Walter Reuther Library, Archives of Labor and Union Affairs at Wayne State University. Copies of Ms. Clemens' book will be available for purchase and signing at the event.

At the same program, **Lincoln Park Mayor Tom Karnes** will read excerpts from the war diary kept by his grandfather, **Walter P. Gaffigan** of Detroit. Private Gaffigan's journal covers six months from the time of his enlistment in April of 1918, his deployment to France in July and serving at the Western Front with G Company, 112<sup>th</sup> Ammunition Train of the 37<sup>th</sup> Division. The 37<sup>th</sup> was involved in heavy fighting at the Meuse-Argonne and the Ypres-Lys offensives against the German Army, just prior to November's Armistice.

On Sunday, November 11<sup>th</sup>, Lincoln Park joins with communities across the country in hosting a ceremony and bell-tolling, observing the centenary of the Armistice which brought peace and an end to the Great War at the 11th hour of the 11th day of the 11th month. The declaration of peace after four years of devastation and fighting involving six continents led to the establishing of Armistice Day here in the U.S. as an annual day of remembrance. Armistice Day officially became Veterans Day in 1954 as a day to honor all veterans.

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But it was for his role as ‘Cadet Happy’ on TV’s “Space Patrol” that he is best known and which brought him fame in the early 1950s. Young viewers and many adults were captivated by the early science fiction TV series and its motley characters which also included Carol Carlisle, Major Robertson and Tonga. Led by Commander Buzz Corry (Ed Kemmer), the 30<sup>th</sup> century interplanetary peacekeeping force was challenged in every episode by the actions of dastardly cosmic marauders.

Playing Commander Corry’s light-hearted sidekick, Lyn’s ‘Cadet Happy’ easily became the show’s most endearing character. Cadet Happy’s standard reaction catch-phrase was, “Smokin’ Rockets!”

The show made its debut on March 9, 1950 on local Los Angeles television, and ten months later was picked by the ABC-TV network. Like most television series at the time, the live show, which included special effects in practically every episode, was true to the motto that “the show must go on” even when mistakes were made. Through its five-year run ending in February 1955, the actors kept pace with a schedule that included five 15-minute daily TV segments that aired locally, the weekly half-hour network show and two radio episodes – all performed live. On weekends the cast was often touring the country making personal appearances. A total of 210 half-hour shows and close to 900 15-minute shows were produced. After five years, many of the cast were ready for a break.

After “Space Patrol” ended its run Lyn appeared on a number of television programs and in feature films – notably of the science fiction variety, including “The Cosmic Man”, “The Amazing Colossal Man”, and “Invasion of the Saucer Men”. In “Saucer Men”, Lyn played the role of ‘Artie Burns’, friend of the Frank Gorshin character, and served as the narrator for the film.

The museum’s Lyn Osborn exhibit will run into 2019, at which time a part of the display will become permanent. We are grateful to collectors **Tim Caldwell** and **Bob Vermeulen** for loaning many rare items for the special exhibit.



Lobby card for the 1957 film, “Invasion of the Saucer Men”  
The film’s cast is shown flanking Lyn Osborn’s character ‘Artie Burns’, center.

Check out the museum’s Facebook page honoring Lyn Osborn: [Facebook.com/smokinrocketswithLynOsborn](https://www.facebook.com/smokinrocketswithLynOsborn)

The State of Michigan has proclaimed November 11, 2018 as ‘World War I Remembrance Day’, as has the U.S. World War I Centennial Commission, to honor the memories of those who served and those who gave their lives in the Great War. Lincoln Park’s two veterans’ chapters, American Legion Post 67 and VFW Post 552, which were founded by the war’s veterans, are co-sponsors and participants in this commemoration event. **Lincoln Park Mayor Thomas Karnes, U.S. Congresswoman for the 12<sup>th</sup> District, Debbie Dingell, State Representative for 14<sup>th</sup> House District Cara Clemente, Wayne County Commissioner for District 4 Ilona Varga,** and other government officials will be on hand to take part in the ceremony, held on the museum grounds.

We will gather a bit earlier to start the ceremony at **10:45 a.m.** The ceremony will feature the reciting of names of those men from our community who served in the Great War, and will include the Presentation of Colors along with readings, prayers, and music. The Goodell School bell, to be used for the ceremony, was rung for the first time a century ago in 1918 when the brick school first opened.

All are invited to attend, with a special invitation extended to those whose ancestors served in the Great War. The museum will have extended hours on Sunday, November 11<sup>th</sup>, remaining open to the public until 2:00 p.m. For more information on the centennial check the website [ww1cc.org](http://ww1cc.org)



The special exhibit includes a number of WWI uniform pieces seen above. The white helmet painted RUSSIA was worn by **Vernie Stocking**, a member of the 339<sup>th</sup> Infantry, 85<sup>th</sup> Division, which trained at Fort Custer and served in North Russia as part of the ‘Polar Bear Regiment’ from the fall of 1918 to spring of 1919. Other local Polar Bear members were **Walter Pegouske**, and **Benjamin V. Goodell**, who died in 1923 and for whom the V.F.W. post was named in 1930. The messenger bag at left belonged to **Sgt. John Sanno**. Sanno, a native of Italy, immigrated to the U.S. as a young boy with his parents and later joined the army serving at the Western Front. He became a charter member of VFW post 552 in 1930.

## IN MEMORIAM



**Jeanne Hancock**  
August 26, 2018

Member Jeanne Hancock passed away on August 26<sup>th</sup>, at age 91. Jeanne was the beloved wife of the late Herman Hancock. She was elected to the City Council in 1979, serving the city until 2003, and became the first woman ever to chair a council meeting in Lincoln Park. Jeanne was also a longtime member of the Historical Society and an ardent museum supporter in the years that the post office building was acquired and transformed into the museum with crucial assistance from the city. Jeanne's level of community service was inspirational. Our deepest sympathies are with her family.

## MEMBERSHIP

**Thank You** to those members who have renewed your memberships for 2019. Membership Chair Alyce Riggs states that our current membership totals 209 including 68 Life Memberships. We extend great thanks to two of our members who upgraded their membership to 'Life Members' this past year: Garry Gish and Garry Summers. Also, keep in mind that Society gift memberships are a great idea for holiday - or anytime - gift giving!

There are still a few folks who have yet to renew for 2019 and they will find here a reminder slip tucked inside their newsletter. We know how easy it is to forget some of these more mundane things. Please take a moment to renew your support today. Thank you!

### *Lincoln Park Historical Society Board 2018-2019*

President/Treasurer	Jim Nelson
Vice President/Secretary	Dolores Walker
Trustee/Membership Chair	Alyce Riggs
Trustee	Lucille Stroh

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

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

The museum is still researching local military service personnel from the World War I era. We are seeking information and photographs to help in telling the story of early Lincoln Park.

## CALENDAR of EVENTS

The public is invited to attend all Historical Society events.

### **Ongoing through Wednesday, November 14<sup>th</sup>**

Special Exhibit: *"The Great War and Its Local Connection"*, featuring WWI-era items both donated and on temporary loan

**Saturday, November 3<sup>rd</sup> 2:00 pm** "Detroit in World War I" with guest speaker, author **Elizabeth Clemens**. **Mayor Tom Karnes** reads excerpts from the 1918 war diary kept by his grandfather, Walter Gaffigan of Detroit

### **Sunday, November 11<sup>th</sup> 10:45 a.m.**

Armistice Centenary Ceremony and Veterans Day Observance; featuring the commemorative bell-tolling precisely at 11:00 a.m. and the reading of names of those from our community who served in the Great War; held on the museum grounds. Museum is open till 2:00 p.m.



**Saturday, November 24<sup>th</sup>** – Opening of the "Smokin' Rockets!" exhibit honoring hometown actor Lyn 'Buddy' Osborn. The exhibit extends into 2019 (see article)

**Friday, November 30<sup>th</sup> 6:00 p.m.** City of Lincoln Park Tree Lighting Ceremony with indoor refreshments following at the museum.

**December 9<sup>th</sup> 2:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.** Historical Society's Annual Holiday Open House

**December 31<sup>st</sup>, 9:00 p.m.** Annual New Year's "Penny Drop" with Dinner and Concert, sponsored by the Hands of the City of Lincoln Park, a fundraising event for the Historical Museum; tickets are available at the museum regular hours or by calling 313-386-3137

**Please be sure to stop in and visit our Holiday Open House on Sunday December 9<sup>th</sup> from 2:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. The hot mulled cider will be on!**



## 2019

We will be entering the year 2019 with the extended exhibit on the life and career of Lyn 'Buddy' Osborn. Part of this exhibit will become a permanent display in the new year.

Following this, we will showcase a specially-curated selection of items from our early collections when the museum opened in 1972. Many of these items have not been on public view for some time. Opening in May 1972 in a newly-built extension at the rear of the Public Library, the Lincoln Park Historical Museum's early collections grew to where we now house over 10,000 pieces on two floors of the former post office building – itself a historic "item."

The recent news of the Sears closing has of course prompted us to give thought to reflecting on its 62-year legacy in our community with an exhibit sometime in the coming year. Stay tuned for more news about this. We will be seeking input from the Lincoln Park community to help with the Sears project. If you have stories, memories or items/memorabilia that could help, please contact us at 313-386-3137.



**The New Year's Eve Penny Drop and Fundraiser Dinner & Concert for the Museum**  
sponsored by  
**the Hands of the City of Lincoln Park**  
**DECEMBER 31, 2018 at 9:00 P.M.**  
**Lincoln Park V.F.W.**  
Tickets are available at the Museum

**Sears**, the once-dominant retail chain that changed how Americans shopped and lived for 132 years, filed for bankruptcy on October 15, 2018. The news is still sinking in that Lincoln Park's own landmark Sears store – the largest in the world when it opened in 1956 at a time when suburban shopping malls were changing the fabric of American life – will be closing by the end of the year.



When it opened on August 16, 1956, Lincoln Park's Sears store anchored a shopping center that soon grew to a capacity 31 stores. By 2017 the remaining retail stores had all been closed and the plaza itself was soon razed leaving only the Sears store standing adjacent to its sprawling parking lot – and the island Big Boy restaurant that continues to thrive. Even more than the store itself, the round water tank – towering 125 feet – has been an iconic downriver landmark for its six decades. The future of the water tank is another question mark.

*Historical status perhaps?*