

THE LINCOLN PARK HISTORICAL SOCIETY & MUSEUM

NEWSLETTER

Established 1955
Spring/Summer 2021 issue
Hours: see the newsletter for updates
www.lphistorical.org

1335 Southfield Rd, Lincoln Park, MI 48146
313-386-3137
lpmuseum@gmail.com
also visit our Facebook page

A Relief & Reopening



We are excited to announce that the museum will be reopening soon. After being closed for over 15 months, we will open to the public on Saturday June 26th at 1:00 p.m. From then on, we will be open our regular days and hours of Saturdays and Wednesdays from 1:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m.

Historical Society Members are cordially invited to a special pre-opening on **Friday June 25th from 6pm to 8pm**. You'll find a number of new displays to take in when you visit. In our down time, we have added to and revamped a number of our exhibits.

For now, we are asking that ALL VISITORS, whether vaccinated for the coronavirus or not, please take precautions and wear face masks when INSIDE the building regardless of the number of people inside. This is the best protocol for us to follow and what we feel most comfortable with, for now.

Watch for the museum Newsletter
Lincoln Park Centennial Edition
coming out between now and our Fall 2021 issue.
Businesses are invited to contact us for ad rates
for this special edition.
Ad deadline: August 31, 2021

Ain't We Got Fun"

The theme of the museum's exhibit for the Lincoln Park 100 year anniversary 1921-2021

When the museum reopens on Saturday June 26th, we will unveil our Lincoln Park Centennial Exhibit - "Ain't We Got Fun" - turning an eye to our first year as a village in 1921. The exhibit will feature artifacts from the museum's collections, including photographs, period clothing, documents, books, and manuscripts, all which have been donated over the years by local residents.

At the dawn of the "Roaring Twenties", Lincoln Park was just opening its sleepy eyes, developing from a small rural farming district within far-flung Ecorse Township into Downriver's bedroom community for the nearby auto industry. With the steady influx of newcomers, real estate sales and building construction worked hard to keep up. Lincoln Park's population quickly grew from just a few hundred in 1921 by over 6,000 new residents before re-incorporation as a city in 1925 – or, a nearly 2,000% increase in just four years! The Ford Motor Company's massive new Rouge River plant combined with Ford's fair wages triggered the vast majority of this population influx. The population would continue to rise until the Great Depression struck in 1929.

"Ain't We Got Fun" was published in 1921 by Detroit music publisher Jerome H. Remick; music by Richard Whiting, lyrics by Ray Egan and Gus Kahn. The song was first introduced by vaudeville performer Arthur West in the revue "Fanchon and Marco Satires of 1920". While the song's title and lyrics were meant to satirize the country's post-war hard times of 1920-1921: "There's nothing surer / The rich get rich and the poor get laid off / In the meantime / In between time / Ain't we got fun?", its continued popularity reflected the new prosperity of the "Roaring Twenties."



From the museum's collections

MORE MUSEUM NEWS

The Lincoln Park Historical Commission welcomes newest commissioner **Virginia Mondon**. While Virginia is new to the commission, she is not new to Lincoln Park city and community affairs. Having served four terms as city councilwoman, her lengthy civic associations include liaison to the D.P.S. and Brownfield and Cultural Commissions; the Lincoln Park Exchange Club; Little League baseball at Quandt Park field, where she served as a coach and umpire. Virginia's advocacy for the park continues to preserve the space for use by the community. She joins current commissioners, **Chair Jim Goodell, Vice-Chair Merritt Solomon, Secretary Kathy Carter, Treasurer Jackie Clark, and at-large commissioners, Sherry Huntington and Larry Jesue.**

A day of museum grounds cleaning was held on Saturday May 8th. Volunteer leader **Annette DeMaggio** kept everyone busy with a number of spring projects, weedings, plantings, trimmings, mulching, which helped the grounds recover from winter. A special thanks to Annette and her crew: Jackie Clark, Sandi Horst, Mike Higgins, Jimmy Cargill, Jim Mixer, Robert French, Jeff Day, and to Linda Mixer who provided refreshments and grilled hot dogs for the ravenous work crew. Later that week Larry Jesue came by and did shrub and tree trimming along the front of the building, while custodian Robert French re-planted the two small firs which had been growing in badly deteriorating wooden planter boxes on the museum's porch. Things were looking much better for our May 22 outdoor Memorial Ceremony.

The full-scale reproduction of **"Hauling In The Net"** by **Zoltan Sepeshy**, the 1940 Post Office Mural, has now been installed and is on view in the mural's original location in the front lobby, the culmination of a 2-year project. **Photo at right** shows the recent installation by graphic artist **Sinisa Nedelkoski**. New track lighting has been installed for the mural with the removal of a fluorescent fixture. In addition to Mr. Nedelkoski, we are indebted to the individuals who made this effort possible: Greg Wittkopp, Director, Cranbrook Center for Collections and Research; Lori Taylor-Blitz, Executive Director, Beaver Island Historical Society; Kenneth Katz, Detroit's Conservation and Museum Services; and photographer Tom Benjamin. A special dedication held for society members and special guests will take place later this summer.



World War II veteran **Walter Pretko** of Lincoln Park shown above left with **Jim Bademian**, U.S. Air Force veteran, at the Memorial bell ringing ceremony and plaza dedication on May 22.

Photos courtesy of Barbara Podkul

We were honored by the attendance of many veterans and families from the community at the recent Memorial Ceremony held May 22 on the museum grounds. Twenty-five new Heritage Plaza engraved pavers were dedicated that day. Longtime Lincoln Park resident, Walter Pretko, 97, is a World War II veteran who served in the U.S. Army (1943-1945) as PFC in Canada and Alaska, then re-enlisted in the U.S. Air Force (1945-1947). His Air Force career just after the war took him to occupied Guam and Iwo Jima. Mr. Pretko was honored with a paver stone by the Bademian family.

----- Paver orders are now being accepted for next year. -----



photo by Jeff Day

WELCOME to OUR NEWEST MEMBERS

Don Bilinski
Annette DeMaggio
Emily Solomon

CHUCK MILLER'S MOBILE MASTERPIECES

Opening on Saturday August 14, through September 18th, is the museum's special "Chuck Miller Mobile Masterpieces" exhibit.

By the time **Chuck Miller** graduated from Lincoln Park High School in 1961, he was already obsessed with cars, having created models with creativity and painstaking detail. At 15, he won a contest sponsored by a local hobby shop by transforming a 1954 Ford two-door into a convertible "Rebel Rouser," named after the Duane Eddy instrumental hit. As Miller later put it, he "got all excited" about the little car: "Cut the doors. Cut vents into her. Put in gold corduroy pleats, a TV, a telephone, changed the headlights, chopped the body, and won the contest. After that, I knew I'd make my living with cars."

When the young Miller wasn't sketching cars or working on models, he was wrenching the real thing, securing a job at Dick's Collision at 13 Delisle Street in River Rouge. At 20 years old, Miller took over the shop and changed the name to Styline Customs in 1963. Though he mostly made his living bumping out dents and fixing fenders, he was soon turning out eye-catching creations of his own. In 1968, he won the prestigious Ridler Award for his first important creation, The Fire Truck. A decade of custom designs followed, with Miller winning awards and turning heads at car shows across the country.

Miller eventually passed the Styline torch to new owners, but he still has the custom car bug, forging new creations and celebrating the mark he has left on the outer limits of automotive design.

The brainchild of Historical Society member Tim Caldwell and colleague J.R., this unique opportunity to honor the legacy of Miller's long association with hot rod creation grew out of plans to pay tribute to Chuck Miller at this year's (Covid-cancelled) 2021 Detroit Autorama.

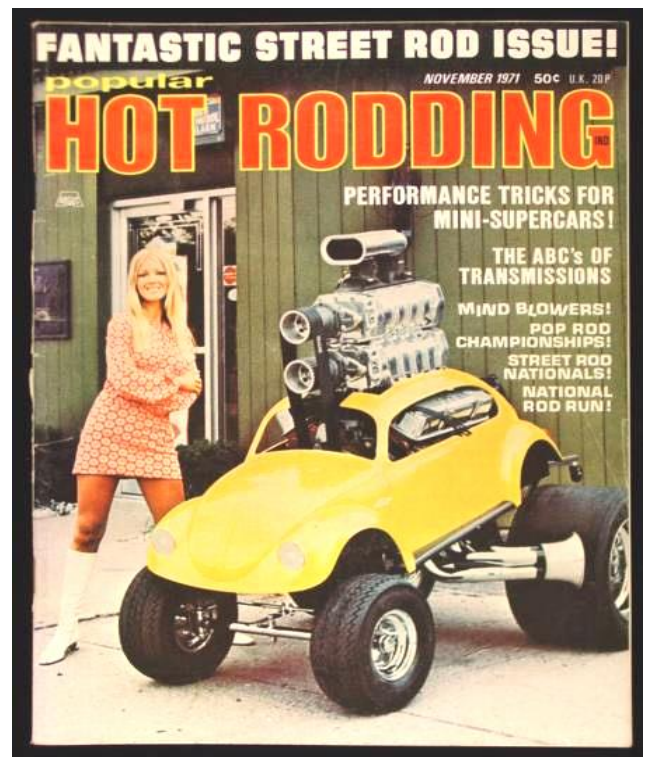
The exhibit's opening day will be held from **12pm to 4pm on the 14th of August** with the added feature of a hot rod display on the grounds of the historical museum. Local Hot Rod clubs have been invited to take part. Interested owners can contact J.R. at 248-924-0298.

Follow the link to more information on the museum's Chuck Miller event.

<https://www.facebook.com/chuckmillerstylinetribute>

also check out:

<http://chuckmillerstyline.com>



From the internet

Hot Rodding magazine from November 1971 featured one of Chuck Miller's "Zingers", the VW Super Volks on its cover. Miller is renowned for his Sixties creations The Fire Truck and The Red Baron.

HISTORICAL SOCIETY IN MEMORIAM



Susan Adkins

Life member No. 137

With our deepest condolences.

Lincoln Park Historical Society Board 2020-2021

President	Jim Nelson
Vice President	Dolores Walker
Secretary	Linda Mixer
Treasurer	Jim Mixer
Trustee	Alyce Riggs
Trustee	Bea Partridge
Museum Curator & newsletter editor: Jeff Day	
Membership Chair: Sandi Horst	
Director Emeritus: Muriel Lobb	

Board meetings are held at 1:30 p.m. on the third Tuesday of each month. The Historical Society Newsletter is published quarterly. To be added to our email list and help us save on postage costs, please send an email to: lpmuseum@gmail.com

DONATIONS

When the museum reopens in late June, we will feature a new exhibit titled **“Recent Acquisitions”**. While we have been closed, a decision was made to continue accepting contributions to the museum’s collections -- pieces that help to tell the story of Lincoln Park. This was one way that we were able to maintain a relationship with the community during these many months of pandemic.

Former Lincoln Park resident **Roy Horton**, a 1976 LP High School grad, devoted six years to creating a collection of hand-carved Kachina dolls after becoming fascinated by them. Created between 1988 and 1994, Roy’s collection totals nearly 500 pieces, each with an intricate and individual design. Roy has donated his personal collection to the museum along with a five-shelf glass enclosed cabinet for display. **(See part of his collection in the photo at right).** Kachina carvings come from the Southwest Hopi tribal tradition, originating in the 19th century when tribesmen carved the dolls, each with its own design and purpose, as teaching tools for Hopi girls. Roy’s ancestors include the Potawatomi and Pawnee on both sides of his family. These celebrated pieces from the hands of a local artisan are a welcome gift to our museum’s Native American collection.

Roy has also donated items from the 1970s era, when he and musician schoolmates formed a rock band which performed as the Thunderhead Railway at numerous Detroit area venues including Lincoln Park High School.

Member **Tim Caldwell** contributed two Native American artifacts from the collections of his late mother, Marylouise Caldwell Blanco. Seen below are a twig stem for a pipe and what looks to be a stone implement that were discovered years ago in her Wyandotte home originally built and owned by Charles W. Thomas, who in 1863 became Wyandotte’s first druggist.



Other recent contributions include an Admiral stereo console purchased from English Radio and T.V., which old-timers will recall was located for a good many years at 2178 Fort Street, next to Petri’s Bike Shop. We have **Frank English**, grandson of the shop’s founder, to thank for this donation along with photos of the shop and a 45 rpm single



purchased there: Bob Seger’s first big hit “East Side Story” recorded with his band The Last Heard, released on Hideout Records in January of 1966.

The recent acquisitions exhibit also includes pieces from donors Kathy Carter, Douglas Dishon, David Doss, Paul Zatyko, Noreen Bohn, Norm Tabaka, Terri Cook, Tom Karnes, Holly Ivey, Nancy Worden, Jim Mixer, Doris Blessing, Dan Galeski, Edward Boone, Virginia Mondon, and Ed Pecsénye. Our sincere thanks to all of our donors.

Electric Avenue Excitement

Road work conducted by Hennessy Engineering on River Drive recently uncovered old rail tracks near the juncture with Electric Avenue in the south end of town. These were part of the old Eastern Michigan Railway system – also named the Detroit Monroe Toledo Short Line RR and the DUR (the “Interurban”) - which ran from Detroit to Toledo through Lincoln Park and downriver from 1904 until 1932. Today Electric Avenue follows the old rail system and was named for it.

A huge Thank You to the Hennessey work crew and to our great crew at Lincoln Park DPS for their salvage efforts on behalf of the museum and the Lincoln Park community. Someday soon– somehow, somewhere – we will place a part of these on exhibit along with the story of the old Electric rail system.

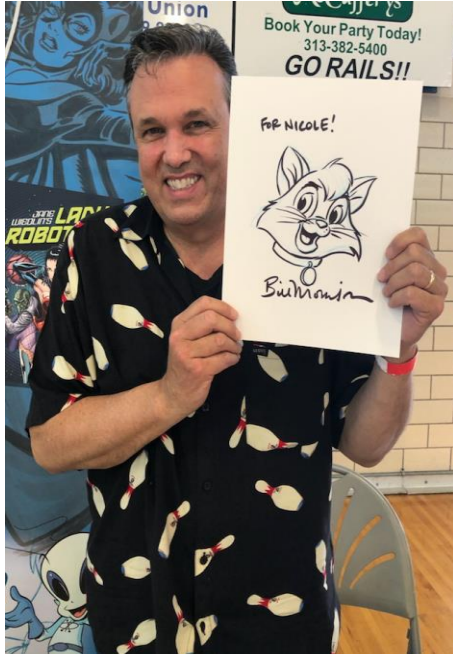


All photos on this page by Jeff Day

Bill Morrison Makes Local Appearance

At this year's Downriver Comic Con held June 5 and 6 at the high school, the featured celebrity guest was renowned illustrator, and Lincoln Park native son, Bill Morrison.

Bill kindly allowed the museum to share some space to help sell Morrison-designed posters and prints that we have in our gift shop.



Photos here, courtesy of Sandi Horst, show Bill at Comic Con with a sketch of the Disney character "Oliver" that he drew for Sandi's daughter Nicole; Bill created the original "Oliver and Company" movie poster in 1988 for Walt Disney Pictures. Bill is shown below with museum volunteer Sandi Horst at Comic Con.



We are delighted to announce that Bill Morrison is currently creating an original print that will highlight many of Lincoln Park's cultural icons. Sales of the print will benefit the Historical Museum. More information to come. Or check for updates on our Facebook page or website.

Museum Funding Campaign

In June of last year, we discovered a need for additional income to fund the museum in light of the City's financial picture during the ongoing pandemic. Since that time, with your help the Historical Society has managed to raise over \$11,000 for the museum. Together with the \$7,500 from the Downtown Development Authority, this enabled us to keep paying the bills for the current fiscal year. As for the year 2021-22, we are working with an unclear future. The museum is grateful once again to the DDA for making a generous contribution to our annual budget. We also greatly thank society members Jim and Linda Mixer and Art Booth for their recent contributions.

Donations may be made to the Lincoln Park Historical Society, 1335 Southfield Road, Lincoln Park, MI 48146.

The Historical Society & Museum's new website

made its official debut in March. Volunteer **Emily Solomon** contributed countless hours in creating this accessible and well-navigated site. Please visit:

www.lphistorical.org

The website continues to be updated with news and additional features covering Lincoln Park history. You will also find virtual editions of our new exhibits on the site.

Updates on museum and historical society news and events are also available by checking our Facebook page:

<https://www.facebook.com/Lincoln-Park-Historical-Museum>

A Virtual Tour of the Historical Museum conducted by Mayor Tom Karnes, with curator **Jeff Day** and videographer **Don Bilinski** is available to be viewed through the City of Lincoln Park's YouTube channel. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GmQwqW2d19Q&t=15s>