

THE LINCOLN PARK HISTORICAL SOCIETY & MUSEUM

NEWSLETTER

Established 1955

Winter 2021 issue

Hours: currently by appointment only

1335 Southfield Rd, Lincoln Park, MI 48146

313-386-3137

lpmuseum@gmail.com

also visit our Facebook page

CENTENNIAL!

1921 ~ 2021

On a partly cloudy Friday in March 1921 – it was the 11th, in fact, and just one week after the inauguration of the country's 29th president, Warren G. Harding, on March 4th – the residents of Ecorse Township made their way to the polls. Some walked, some took horse and buggy, and some drove Model Ts. They were voting on whether or not to approve the incorporation of a new village to be named Lincoln Park from a section of Ecorse Township. As we know, the vote was successful - by a margin of 1561 to 1077. Soon after the March 11 vote, another election was held to create the Charter Commission, tasked with creating the Village's new charter and presenting it to the state of Michigan. Thus, the process began of creating a new community out of a longstanding community of farm families. The section selected for incorporation (as described much more in detail on the March 11 ballot) was bounded on the north by Pepper Road (Outer Drive) and the Ecorse River; on the east by the Ecorse River and Gohl Road; on the south by Goddard Road and on the west by a zigzag pattern incorporating Champaign Road, Raupp Road, and St. Cosme Road. (Future annexations took place in the coming years expanding the boundaries into the slightly odd shape we are today.)

With a new president in the White House following a landslide victory in November, signifying a new post-war era; with women heading to the polls to exercise their hard-fought vote; with liquor now "unavailable" due to Prohibition; and with a new hot jazz music taking the nation by storm, the Roaring 20s were upon us full force --- "Ain't We Got Fun!"

Herman Quandt's Inn and Social Hall, shown here circa 1910, was located at Fort Street and St. Cosme Line Road (Southfield Road today); the site served as the first Lincoln Park Village hall in 1921. With the extension of Fort Street in 1925, Quandt's Inn was moved a short distance to the west side of Fort where it has seen many lives, as city hall, library, and finally becoming part of the Painters Supply building.



From left to right: Standing, Floyd Harrison, clerk of the village; George Sayers, Delbert Wilber, secretary of the Board of Commerce, George Shanley. Sitting, James Green, Mark A. Goodell, president of Lincoln Park; Harry Timm, Harry S. Sharpe.

Pictured above in the July 2, 1922 issue of the *Detroit Free Press* is the Lincoln Park Village Council. Seated: (L to R) James Green, President Mark Goodell, Harry Timm, and Harry Sharpe; standing: Clerk Floyd Harrison, George Sayers, Secretary of the Board of Commerce Delbert Wilber, and George Shanley. Not pictured: Treasurer Louis Keppen



HISTORICAL SOCIETY
IN MEMORIAM



Ted Schave
June 28 2020

Ethel Schiebold, age 100

Life member No. 6
November 19 2020

Pat Kush
November 28 2021

Barbara Porath
December 2020

Joseph Turinsky
Life member No. 161
January 3 2021

Lindley Hogan, age 100
January 25 2021

*We share our deepest condolences
to the families on the loss of these
dear members and friends.*

News Items

We extend our heartfelt gratitude to Board trustee **Alyce Riggs** for her many years serving as the Membership Chair. While she has asked to retire from the chair's duties she will remain active on the Board which we are very pleased about. And a big Thank You to society member **Sandi Horst** for stepping in and handling the membership tasks!

We are pleased to welcome Lincoln Park City Councilwoman **Lillian Ross** as the city council liaison to the Historical Commission. Her attendance at recent commission meetings, her sound advice and encouragement have been a boon to us, and we are very fortunate to have her strong support.

The Historical Commission is currently functioning with one empty seat. Any Lincoln Park resident who may have an interest in serving is advised to check with the City Manager's office for an application.

When we wake up from winter in a few weeks we will begin to look outside and soon it will be time to clean and plant and weed – museum garden master **Annette DiMaggio** is planning a spring museum grounds clean-up day for **Saturday May 8th** and can use any willing hands. Bring gardening gloves and tools if able, or just yourself and we will put you to good work. Plans are to meet from **10am to 1pm** but consider donating any time you can spare. The rain date is Saturday May 15th.

Lincoln Park's annual Veterans Day ceremony honoring local veterans was held this past fall on the museum grounds, and we were privileged to have among our veterans attending that day Korean War vet **Joe Turinsky**. Sadly, Joe passed away with pneumonia on January 3rd, at the age of 91. Joe was a long time Historical Society member who also served two terms on the Historical Commission. **He is pictured here participating in the bell-ringing portion of the ceremony held Wednesday November 11th**. Our friend Joe tried to never miss a Veterans or Memorial ceremony. Not, as he said, for any honors or recognition, but so he could pay tribute to those with whom he served and to all other service men and women who should be honored and remembered.



Photo by Gordon Gilbert

PLEASE MAKE NOTE OF OUR MAJOR SUPPORTERS



**Industrial
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1187 Empire Ave
Lincoln Park,
Michigan 48146
P: 313.388.3000



Museum 2020-21 Funding Campaign

Thanks to our recent generous donors:

Get Well Urgent Care

Lincoln Park Community Credit Union

John A. Papalas & Co.

Tom Cunningham

Jim and Marsha Day

Carl Karoub

Sal's Barber Shop

...and all those bottles and cans that have been
donated for the cause too!

The Historical Society continues to seek funds to help with the museum operations during this current fiscal year and difficult time of pandemic. If you are a business or resident who can assist us in the mission of conserving the heritage of the Lincoln Park community, please consider making a donation. All donations are valuable to us. You can reach the Society at 313-386-3137; lpmuseum@gmail.com.

WE HAVE UPDATES!

The Post Office Mural reproduction has experienced a couple of delays and will now be completed and installed on the wall of the lobby in March. Stay tuned for news on its official dedication date.

A Virtual Museum Tour with Mayor Tom Karnes and videographer Don Bilinski will appear online in March through the city of L.P. website and the city's Facebook page.

The Historical Society & Museum's new website makes its official debut on March 20, the first day of Spring! A Great Thanks to volunteer **Emily Solomon** for contributing countless hours of work to create this accessible and easily-navigated site: www.lphistorical.org

We hope you will check us out on the 20th – and we will continue to make updates and additions to the site as we go along.

HERITAGE PLAZA Pavers: April 17 deadline for special "Centennial" paver orders – the cost is \$125 for an 8x8 inch sq. engraved paver w five lines of text; order forms are available by contacting us, on our museum Facebook page, and at the new website; forms are also available at City Hall & the Library.

Memorial Bell Ringing Ceremony will be held Saturday May 22 at 12 noon on the Museum grounds; also, the dedication of new pavers in Heritage Plaza.

Lincoln Park Book sales – you can find the *Lincoln Park* book, from Arcadia Press (2005), at City Hall, the Library and Museum. The cost is \$20, and a portion of the proceeds comes to the museum.

All of the museum's 2021 exhibits, including a special Lincoln Park Centennial Anniversary exhibit opening in June, will be virtual as well as physical, and accessible on our website and on our museum Facebook page.

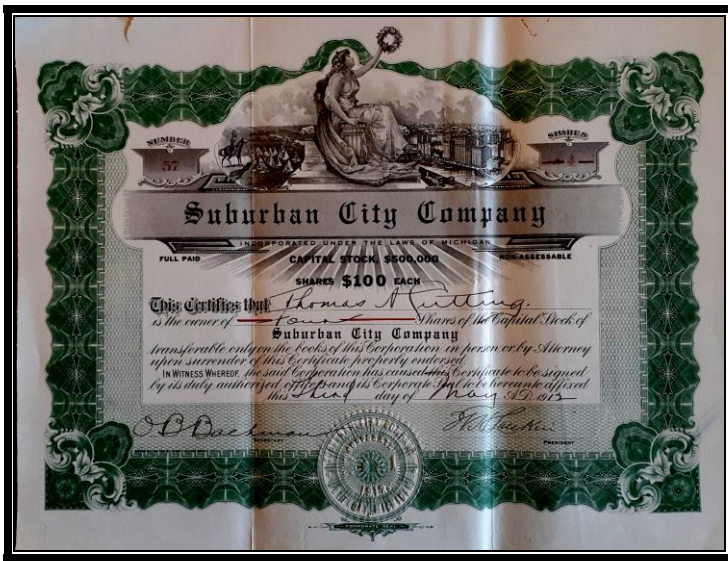
MEMBERSHIPS

'Thank You' to all who have renewed their historical society memberships for 2021. Know that we are appreciative of your support for our mission and for the operations that continue during the pandemic.

Members who have not yet renewed will find a friendly reminder slip tucked inside their newsletter. Please take a quick moment to send in your dues.

Remember that the museum is now open for visits by appointment, with safety precautions in place.

Thanks to all for your continued support!



Quite by coincidence, we've recently received a unique donation of this original stock certificate, above, for the Suburban City Company, signed by William Lankin, President, and O.B. Bachman, Secretary and dated May 3, 1912. The SCC, a real estate venture established in 1912 in association with the Suburban Motor Car Company [see article on next pages] was the precursor of the more successful Farnham Brothers Real Estate enterprise, the first realtors to make lasting inroads in the district that would later become Lincoln Park. In fact, the Farnham brothers (Frank, Hiram, and Charles) established the earliest developed subdivisions in this part of Ecorse Township, two of which were named **Lincoln Park Subdivision No. 1 and No. 2**, located just south of St. Cosme Line Road (today's Southfield Road) and east of Fort Street. This was the first introduction of the name "Lincoln Park".

In 1920 the name was adopted for use by the Lincoln Park Improvement Association at the urging of resident Mark Goodell. It was this civic-minded group which led efforts toward incorporation of Lincoln Park as a village in 1921.

In the next newsletter issue, we will take a closer look at other early realtors and entrepreneurs who made a difference including Maurice Levy, and B.F. Horger.

Please stay tuned... More of the early Lincoln Park story will be shared in our Spring, Summer, and Fall special centennial anniversary issues.



Newspaper advertisement for Frank Farnham's Washington Park Subdivision appeared in the *Detroit Free Press* feature section on the village of Lincoln Park, July 2, 1922.

Frank Farnham remained a major real estate force in the village and city. Farnham Street, extending through both Lincoln Park Subdivision No. 1 and No. 2, is named for him.

A BIG WELCOME & THANK YOU!
to the Historical Society's newest Life Members
Tracy & Yvonne Manick of Allen Park
John Taylor of Trenton
Nancy Flatau Gallagher of Waukegan, Illinois

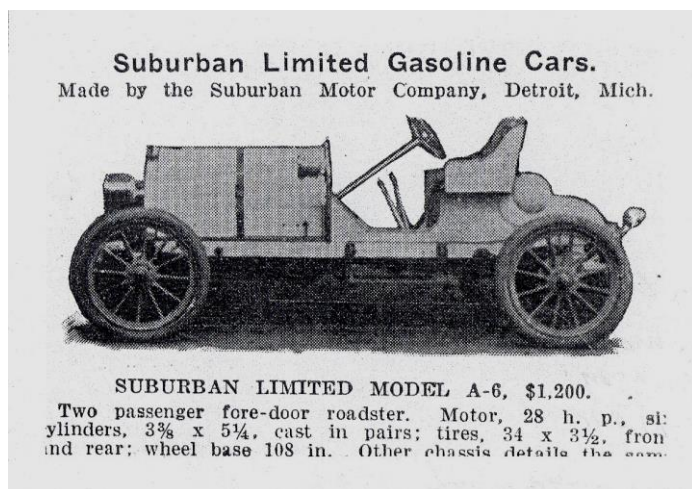
Unless otherwise indicated, all images that appear in this newsletter are from the collections of the Lincoln Park Historical Museum.

SUBURBAN MOTOR CAR COMPANY

*The Company that Could Have Changed
Our City's Destiny*

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 first Lincoln Park Subdivisions, and the Checker Cab Co.

The story of the SMCC begins with one **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 of a dreamer than a businessman. In early 1910 he whimsically re-dubbed his 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 adjacent 1911 ad] 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 Company, now with ambitious plans for a new industrial community on extensive acreage in nearby Ecorse Township. According to press announcements in the *New York Times* as well as many automotive journals at that time [*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 Michigan Central 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 in 1911 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 in downtown Detroit. 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 ambitious 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 design 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 (today's Southfield Road) to the Emmons property and extending west to Fort Street from the Michigan Central RR.

The property sought was subsequently bought up from the numerous local farmers, including names like Goodell, LeBlanc, Bondie, Lafferty, and Cicotte. If you live in the area that was first developed by the Farnhams, you may 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 lots were resold to Farnham Bros Real Estate which remained an active business in the downriver area for nearly 20 years. It was the Farnham brothers who brought the name **Lincoln Park** here, and dubbed their first subdivisions: "Lincoln Park No. 1 and No. 2". Both Frank and his brother Hiram actually settled in our community for a time. Hiram built a home on River Drive near Mill Street smack dab in the middle of

the planned-for "Suburban City". Farnham Street in Lincoln Park is named for the brothers.

It was an ambitious development project to be sure, but not the first of its kind in the nation, being modelled in part on the workers residential housing and planned community built by the Pullman Company on Chicago's south side in the 1880s. The fact that architect T. Glenn Phillips, a high-ranking City of Detroit official serving on the Planning Commission, was involved in creating the Suburban City design added significantly to the hoped-for distinction and success of their plans in Ecorse Township. [Phillips was well-respected for his landscaping of the Henry Ford home on Edison Street in Detroit, and later designed the campus of Michigan Agricultural College (MSU) in Lansing.] The SMCC was, however, a failed enterprise nearly from the start. With his company lacking sound capital and accused of mismanagement, William DeSchaum stepped away from the Suburban project. Replacing him as president was auto executive, R.A. (Randall) Palmer, 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.

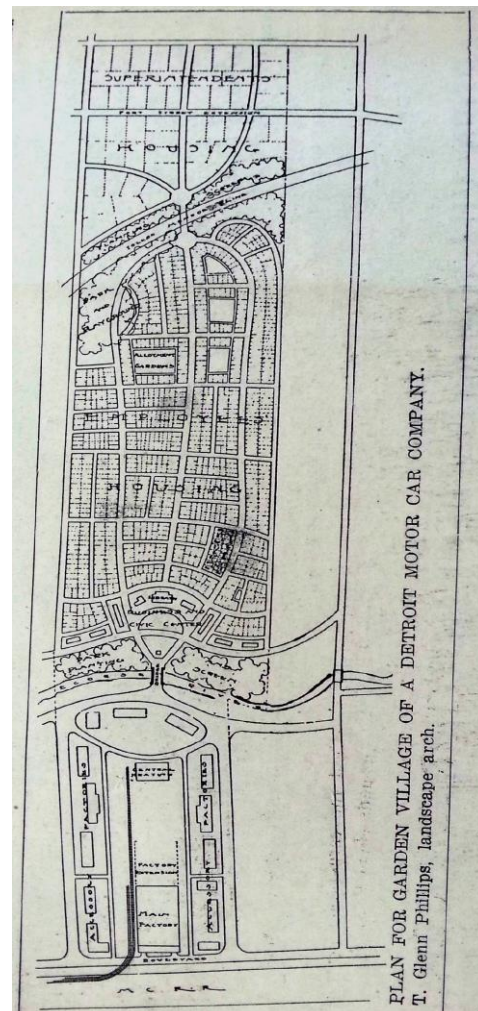
In June of 1913 Palmer joined with the Partin Manufacturing Co. and moved operations to Chicago, where they began producing the Partin-Palmer auto. The Partin-Palmer in turn became the Commonwealth in 1915 until 1922. Commonwealth had developed a Taxicab called the Mogul; after more reorganization, the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

Little remains of the dreams of these men: the establishing of early real estate firms and the first subdivisions of land here in Lincoln Park, led by the Farnham brothers; and Suburban Street in Ecorse which was designed to be the wide central thoroughfare for the factory complex and remains as wide today, without most folks knowing why. It's interesting to imagine what this area of Ecorse Township might have become had the Suburban Motor Car Co. been a success. History can be fickle. It was just a few years later when auto magnate Henry Ford arrived three miles down the road and began building his mammoth Rouge River plant; it was then that our town would swell with a population of auto workers of which William A. DeSchaum had only dreamed. By the time 1921 rolled around the locals and

the steady influx of new residents were singing the praises of Mr. Ford.

Note: There has been quite a bit of information gathered on this history and still 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 design of the Suburban City village plans by T. Glenn Phillips; and an interesting article that appeared in the November 7, 1957 Mellus Newspapers, by writer Al DuHadway, who interviewed some old timers that year who spoke of their memories of the auto plant in Ecorse from over 40 years before.

This article on the Suburban Motor Car Co. and the Suburban City Real Estate Co. was prepared by curator Jeff Day for the museum's newsletter of August 2014. The article has been slightly modified with a few corrections and additional information.



PLAN FOR GARDEN VILLAGE OF A DETROIT MOTOR CAR COMPANY.
T. Glenn Phillips, landscape arch.

"Garden Village of a Detroit Motor Car Company" ['Suburban City Village']
T. Glenn Phillips, landscape architect

Parks and Cemeteries and Landscape Gardening
Vol.22 No.9
November 1912
Pgs. 217, 218
Courtesy of Michigan State Univ Library

The Suburban City plan extended west from the Michigan Central RR in Ecorse (at bottom) to Fort Park (at top), and was situated south of St Cosme Road

(the main existing artery seen here)

Lincoln Park Historical Society Board 2020-2021

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Vice President/Secretary	Dolores Walker
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 on the third Tuesday of each month at 1:30 P.M. The Society Newsletter is published quarterly. To be added to our email list and help us save on postage costs, send an email to: lpmuseum@gmail.com