

HIGHWOOD HISTORICAL SOCIETY

MAKING HISTORY EVERYDAY

Winter 2013

Volume 9, Issue 1

Inside this issue:

Dennis Nizzi Remem- bers Highwood	2
TomatoFest Winners	3
Volunteers Needed	3
New Items in the Collection	3
Lease Signed	4

Special points of interest:

- ♦ This issue is for Members only as a trial run to help reduce costs and to provide additional membership benefits. The Spring issue will be mailed city-wide in anticipation of our 2013 Annual Meeting in May.
- ♦ Watch for Part 3 of "The Lady Elgin Graves" by Tom Scopelliti in our Spring Issue.
- ♦ We are currently working with School District 112 to develop a 3rd Grade Local History Curriculum.

2012 Annual Meeting—Highwood in the 1940's



1940's Window Display at the Highwood Library

The Highwood Historical Society had a very informative and interactive program on "Highwood in the 1940's" at its Annual Meeting on Saturday, January 12, 2013. It was presented by Bill Kiddle from the Raupp Museum in Buffalo Grove. Members and guests shared stories and reflected on the economic and social life of the

community during this period and the impact of Fort Sheridan on its activities.

Maps of the North Shore Electric Line, major roadways, and land use were discussed relative to the development of Highwood's businesses and employment opportunities. Following the hardships of the Great Depression Highwood entered the 1940's reinvigorated, plunged into the War effort, and left the decade embracing another wave of post-war immigration.

The meeting was held at Bertucci's Restaurant where all enjoyed a delicious lunch. Special recognition was given to Lisa Cervac for her 6+ years as President of the Society. She was presented with a commemorative plaque and flowers for her dedicated service.

New officers and board members were elected for the 2013-2014 year. Antoinette "Teta" Minuzzo was installed as President, Jack Johnson as Treasurer to replace Ms. Minuzzo's former position, and Barbara Sherony Marianetti as Secretary.

Spotlight on the Past

Stop in at the Highwood Library and view the corner curio cabinet to see valentines from Mrs. Julius Laegeler. They were given to her by her son, Charles, in 1901. The Laegeler family was very prominent in Highwood's history,

having opened the first pharmacy in Highwood in 1891 at the corner of Highwood and Waukegan Roads. It remained a vital and important business until April, 2000. Mrs. Laegeler was the former Sarah Unbehan, daughter of

another early Highwood pioneer family.

The Laegeler children and grandchildren continued to remain active in Highwood's business and community life throughout their residency.

Dennis Nizzi Remembers Highwood

I was only about 15 when my parents and I traveled from the San Francisco bay area to Highwood where my father, Frank Nizzi, had grown up.

It was summertime and quite warm but I recall having Dad point out Santi's Bar and visiting a family friend who was taken in by my grandparents when her parents passed away. She lived with the family until she became an adult.

Dad often talked about Highwood and growing up there after being brought over to the United States from his home in Fiumalbo, Italy in the 1920's. My grandfather's town was on the Tuscany border but in the Emilia-Romagna province, the center of which was the city of Modena. Hence, he became part of the group of citizens of Highwood known as the Modenese.

I often wonder what strong drive was required of a man whose family had lived in the same Italian town for somewhere between 700-1,000 years to leave not only his town, but his country to immigrate to a new land half way around the world.

My grandfather bought or built a nice home there at 340 Oak Terrace in Highwood. Three daughters were born there bringing the family total to 4 children and my grandparents.

Dad recalled fun times as a boy and memories of playing with friends. He told me that a common pastime in the winter was for several boys with sleds to wait at an intersection stop sign in town. When a driver stopped at the sign, one boy would lay on his sled and grab the bumper, the remaining boys would lay on their sleds and

hold onto the ankles of the kid in front of them. As the car proceeded down the street, the boys enjoyed the ride until the driver looked into the rearview mirror and saw the snake-like following of kids on sleds. A sharp turn at a nearby intersection would send boy and their sleds flying into curbs, shrubs, and storefronts.

Dad recalled gangster John Dillinger traveling through town on several occasions when dodging the law between Chicago and Milwaukee. He told me of the Modenese men getting a keg of beer during prohibition and enjoying it in the nearby woods during summer weekends.

Dad's best friend in Highwood was Melford "Pooch" Gheradini. Their fathers were also best friends and moved to California, and to this day, the Gheradini family regularly interact socially.

My father worked as a caddy at a nearby golf course for many years and became a very good golfer. World War II ended his beloved sport for about 20 years. It wasn't until 1963 that Dad again took up the sport and loved it until he found it too physically exhausting at age 88. His accomplishments in the sport include shooting a score matching his age at 80, and hitting a hole-in-one at age 81.

Dad fell in love with my mother who hailed from the Upper Peninsula of Michigan and they were married at a private ceremony in Highwood. My father's best man was Casper Santi, Jr.

After the war in which my father served in the Aleutian Islands and the Mariana Islands in the Pacific theaters, he took my mother and older sister west to San Francisco whose weather he enjoyed. I came along after the move.

Transferred to Mel Gheradini to pass onto my father was a picture of Santi's bar, circa 1942, which was given to him by the Santi family. It was passed down to me and displayed in my home for many years.

The downsizing of my home coupled with having no heir who would appreciate it's history, encouraged me to donate it to the Highwood Historical Society for others to enjoy. It's home where it belongs. I'm sure that my father would be pleased.

Dennis submitted this article via our Facebook page. He currently resides in Everett, WA. Santi's Bar is now the home of "The Find" Antiques Store, at 9 Highwood Ave.



Come in for a better view & see this picture of Santi's Bar close up!

TomatoFest Winners

It seems like only yesterday that we were knocking on doors and picking tomatoes to be judged and juried last August. Any tomato grown in Highwood or grown by a Historical Society Member was fair game, and contestants ranged in age from 9 to 90. Tomatoes were weighed, measured, and analyzed by our crack team of tomato experts. The **Overall Most Terrific Tomato in town was awarded to Tony Vole**. Our event coincided with the City of Highwood's GarlicFest creating a huge turnout in Everts Park. New in 2012 was our People's Choice category where attendees voted with their 25¢ donations and Richard Fiore's proud entry won by a landslide. Congratulations to all!

Larry Donchin: Best & Deepest Red Color, Largest Overall, Heaviest
 Terrando Benassi: Sexiest, Best Beefsteak
 Tony Vole: Most Uniform, Most Uniform Ox-heart, Most Romantic
 Barbara Cizek: Greenest
 Mary & Claude Desagne: Yellowest Pair
 John & Luana Cioni: Best Cherry Cluster, Yellowest,
 Pete Biaggi: Best Plum
 Chuck Lens: Most Uniform Color
 Linda Pettorelli: Ugliest
 Michael Ori: Best for Pizza Sauce
 Julie Blanche: Best Grape Cluster
 Anthony Merucci: Most Aromatic, Best Vine Cluster
 Claudia Canovi: Largest Green
 Sister Immacolata: Holiest



2012 Tomato Judges: Dominic Ugolini, Eugene Croveti, Gene Greco, Carol Santi, & Aldo Croveti. Not shown: Sandy Anderson.

WE NEED YOU!

Passionate about the history of Highwood? Put your talents to use and consider joining our Finance/Fundraising, Programs, or PR/Marketing Committees.

The Historical Society also needs helpers to review and organize materials in our collections. Please contact Teta Minuzzo, President, to volunteer.

Call 847-682-9039 or 847-234-1859.

Special Thanks to:

- ... the **Highwood Library** for many boxes of archival materials, magazines, and newspapers
- ... the **Highwood Chamber of Commerce** for donating office cabinets
- ... **Carpets of Highwood** for a lovely 10 x 10 rug.
- ... the **Law Offices of Diambri & Caravello** for printing our newsletter.



1916 ticket aboard the ship America.

New Items in the Collection

- Home Videos from Marvin & Sue Baker, excerpts include the 1975 Small Fry Basketball Tournament in Puerto Rico, the 1977 Sherony Hardware Fire, and the 1980 Confirmation Mass at St. James Church.
- Original family documents of Patty Ugolini Price including her grandmother Ester Corsini's 2nd class ticket of passage to America in 1916 and her grandfather Pietro Prandini's Certificate of Citizenship received in 1939.
- Four photocopied versions of 28 Miles North by Marvin Wytelle, donated by the Highwood Library. Stop in the office for a cup of coffee and read the fascinating early history of our beloved City.

HIGHWOOD HISTORICAL SOCIETY
POSTAL CUSTOMER
PO BOX 132
HIGHWOOD IL 60040-0132

NONPROFIT ORG
US POSTAGE PAID
HIGHWOOD, IL 60040
PERMIT NO. 10



122 North Avenue, Highwood
Phone: 847-682-9039
email: highwoodhistory@gmail.com
www.highwoodhistoricalsociety.com

Office Renewed thru 2013!



Lease signing with Al Pierantoni at our January Board Meeting.

Our “Patron Saint” Al Pierantoni has come through again. We have officially signed a one-year lease on the office space at 122 North Avenue.

Whether you bought deli meats and groceries at Mike’s Store, had your hair styled at Bea’s Hair Salon, or purchased a policy at Bal-lantini’s State Farm Insurance, this location has many stories to share. Stop in and tell us one:

Office Hours:

Tues & Thurs: 10:00am—2:00pm
Wednesday Nights: 6:00-9:00pm
Sundays: 12:00-4:00pm

2012-2014 Board Members

Teta Minuzzo, President
Amy Strege, Vice-President
Barbara Marianetti, Secretary
Jack Johnson, Treasurer

Lisa Cervac, Past President
Leonora Cervac
Josephine Campagni
Aldo Croveti
Angela Croveti
Diane (Cookie) LoPresti
Tom Scopelliti
Carol Ugolini

**DO YOU KNOW OF ANYONE
WE SHOULD ADD TO OUR
ORAL HISTORY COLLECTION?
PLEASE CALL 847-682-9039
FOR AN INTERVIEW.**

“History never looks like history when you are living through it. ~John W. Gardner