

Highwood Historical Society News

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KOHL McCORMICK STORYBUS TRAVELS TO HIGHWOOD

Interactive Children's Literacy Museum-on-wheels gets children on the road to reading

On Saturday and Sunday, December 9 and 10 from 10am to 4pm. The Highwood Historical Society, and the Highwood Chamber of Commerce will be hosting the Kohl McCormick StoryBus, an interactive children's literacy museum-on-wheels. Bring your children to this free innovative and enriching literacy program which will transport them into the world of THE THREE LITTLE PIGS. Inside the StoryBus, children will be engaged in hands-on exhibits such as building the little pig's straw house, face painting and more! The program will be in English and Spanish and there is no fee to participate. The StoryBus will be located at JJs Auto Service, 435 Sheridan Road in Highwood, right next door to Buffo's Pizza.

Owner Lenny Inocenzi has generously allowed us to keep the children warm and occupied in his restaurant as they wait to enter the enchanted world of the StoryBus. The Historical Society will provide coloring books and entertainment by a professional storyteller inside of Buffo's.

The mission of the Kohl McCormick StoryBus program is to build enthusiasm for literature and learning to read among young children, a journey into literacy that will last a lifetime. The Dolores Kohl Education Foundation and the McCormick Tribune Foundation joined together to create this one of a kind national model.

This will be a wonderful event for children. The Kohl McCormick StoryBus has been to many communities throughout the Chicagoland area. Highwood is so lucky that the Kohl McCormick Foundation and the Dolores Kohl Education Foundation is providing this wonderful gift to our community.

If you have any questions please call 847-433-2984.

Who was Angelo Salvatore?

While looking for interesting sites around town, Leonora Cervac and Arlene Nannini discovered the Angelo Salvatore tombstone, the mystery photo from the last newsletter. What we've learned in the last month led us on a hunt to research and discover information on Angelo Salvatore and if he really existed.

The tombstone was originally dug up from the backyard of a home on Jeffries Avenue. Today it is the site of Jeff Coske's lovely backyard pond. When the stone was discovered, the home was owned by Dino Pagliai and had been the Pasquesi home before that. When Dino dug it up, Timo Coske asked to keep it and placed it in his front yard, where it has been since the 60's. Timo had no information, and Jeff believed Dino might have crafted the tombstone himself as a jest.

We have been unable to find a death certificate for Mr. Salvatore, although there are 12 Angelo Salvatores noted on Ellis Island.org. (A fascinating site for immigrants who came to the United States from the late 1800's to the mid 1900's) We may never know who Mr. Salvatore was, but we will continue our hunt.

You'll have another treasure to hunt when winter breaks. Congratulations to Ado Pasquesi, our first Highwood treasure hunter. Ado Pasquesi tracked Arlene down at Walgreens the day after our newsletter hit. Bob Koopman, and Mary Lens also knew where the tombstone was located. We've gifted Ado with a \$25.00 gift certificate from Baccio's. Bon appetito!

For those of you who still don't know, the tombstone can be found at 324 Green Bay Road (formerly Railroad Avenue) in front of Timo's house, in between Hunter's Lounge and VIP Carpet.

For Pete's Sake *One of Highwood's Little Rascals*

There were nine of us stuffed in that little brick house, Mom, Dad and seven kids. One winter Saturday morning Mom had things to do so she told my older brother, "Pete, you can't go anyplace until Betty is dressed. You take her with you today." Little did she know what a treat I was going to have!

I was four or five at the time and Pete was three years older. He grumbled but he got me dressed and set off with me and a sled. "This is going to be the most exciting day of your life," my big brother promised me. "What are we going to do?" I asked. All he'd say was, "You'll see when we get down to the lake."

It wasn't that far a walk. Soon we came to the bluff overlooking the lake. There was a path that Highwood people used to get down to the lake. Pete stopped there and told me, "Listen to every word I say. I'm going to lay down on the sled. You lay on my back and hold on for dear life because it's going to be a rough ride." I grabbed on with both hands. Once he made sure I had a good grip, off we went bumpity-bumping down that cliff and out onto the frozen lake. "How far can we go?" I asked my brother. "Until the ice cracks," he said. I wasn't scared. I just thought, "O.K. he knows what he's doing. He's my big brother." Just as I thought that, the ice cracked. Peter quickly turned the sled sideways. We flew that way for a while because we were going so fast. It was a long walk back. I was tired by the time we got to the shore.

When we got home my mother said, "Look at your rosy cheeks and sparkling eyes!" Pete hadn't told me not to tell and I didn't notice his frantic signals. I said, "Oh Mom, I had the best time!" As I told of our adventures my mother's smiling face changed like a witch woman's! Peter had to go to his room. I felt terrible that he got punished.

Peter could turn almost anything into an adventure. On my first day of school my mother asked him to walk me to St. James so I would know how to get there. Peter took me on a shortcut. Every day we crawled underneath some parked railroad cars by the Highwood station. On Monday my mother said, "Betty do you know how to get to school?" Peter said, "I'll take her one more time so she'll know for sure." That day he took me the right way. For the first time I saw some of my classmates on the way to school. "Don't ever tell Mom," Peter cautioned me. And I didn't

Told by Betty Murphy Fiocchi

Highwood Memories

In trying to come up with a Highwood story from my time spent there, I realized that rather than a funny

incident or two, it was the people of Highwood who were the real story. I actually lived in Highland Park, but it was a short bike ride from Highwood, where I played baseball, basketball, went to dances, and basically hung out a great deal of my "wonder years," age 8 to 13, from 1957 to 1962, when my family moved to Connecticut.

I have fond memories of having ice cream sodas and reading the latest baseball magazines (and occasionally buying one too) at Bernardi's, getting a hot cross bun at the bakery, bowling at Mary Jane Lanes (where they had White Rock pop-I always liked the girl on the bottle,) eating the best sausage sandwiches at the Del Rio, stuffing myself from the greatest selection of penny candy I'd ever seen at Mike's, going to the circus, and on and on.

But as I said, it was the people of Highwood that left the most lasting impression. Stella at the Del Rio, always the perfect hostess, friendly and funny, when my family went there to eat...Mr. Maestri, smiling and waving as he threw me a wiffle ball from his gas station as I rode my bike down the street one day...the barbers, whose names I forgot now (up the street from the Del Rio) who always had the latest issue of the Police Gazette (exciting reading material for a 10-year-old kid)...Bruno Somenzi, who gave me pitching tips...my friends from Wayne Thomas, Oak Terrace and Northwood...the guys I played baseball and basketball with-Minnie Scornavacco, my old double play partner when he was at shortstop and I was at second base, Danny Castelli, the catcher, who threw the ball back faster to me than I was pitching it in to him. Dave Fell, whose father sponsored my basketball team, and many more too numerous to mention.

The one person who stands out most in my memories is Don Skrinar. I played baseball and Little Guys basketball under his coaching for 5 years, and had the best time a kid could ever have. Winning the Little Guys International Championship in 1961 was the icing on the cake. But everything at the Community Center was fun. Skrinar ran a program that the entire community benefited from, and I feel so lucky that I was there in the right place at the right time. After I moved away I was very happy to learn that the Community Center was named in his honor. It's a fitting tribute to a man who obviously cared so much for Highwood, and affected so many people in a positive way.

So to all the people of Highwood past and present, to steal a line from Bob Hope...thanks for the memories. I'm grateful for the time I spent with you all.
Phil Graeber is a long-time historical society member.
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Do You Remember?

- Ray Vai, Bill Spellman and Bobby Garrity's turkey raffle
- St. James May crownings
- Skating at Oak Terrace

Legend Has It

On a cold, winter night in 1945, German POW's housed at the south end of Fort Sheridan, along Lakeview Avenue, walked outside of their barracks and saw a two story home on Lakeview Avenue on fire. The German soldiers, members of Rommell's Africa Corps, raced to climb the barbed wire fence that held them captive, banging on doors and windows to awaken the sleeping families.

Tom Russell, living with his family on the second floor, rushed his wife Grace and their three-month-old baby daughter outside to safety. He then climbed back up the stairs to rescue his 3-year-old son, Tim. Young Tim was trying desperately to escape his second story bedroom, but passed out from the smoke. Tom Russell rescued his son and carried him to the roof since the flames made it impossible to reach the ground. Firemen from Highwood's volunteer fire department were able to save Tom and his young son Tim.

When the family tried to find the German soldiers to thank them for their effort, none of the soldiers would admit to climbing the fence, fearful that they would get into trouble for leaving the base.

Editors' note: Tom Russell and his mom, Grace, were both contacted to confirm this story. Neither of them had ever heard of the German POW's attempts to save the family. The Benvenuti family lived on the first floor, and may have been the first ones awakened by the German soldiers. Highwood volunteer fireman, Bernard Murphy, told this story to Don Cowgill.

GIVE THE GIFT OF MEMBERSHIP

If you have remained in Highwood, you know that our history is rich and varied. Share news from "home" with family and friends. This would be a unique way for them to keep in touch with special memories about Highwood and news about the historical society.

Take this opportunity to purchase a Family Membership in the Highwood Historical Society for \$15. We will mail each issue of the Highwood Historical Society News to a family member you designate with a gift card from you for the holidays. This membership is for the

2007-2008 membership year. If you plan to give this holiday gift, please send in the \$15 dues ASAP and no later than December 15th. Include name, address and phone number for the recipient and your name, address and phone number as the donor.

Send all membership information to:

Highwood Historical Society
P. O. Box 132, Highwood, IL 60040

Highwood Home Project

(Below we tell the stories of our family homes. We hope they will inspire you to share yours.)

Every home tells a story. Who built it? Who lived there? What memories or interesting things happened there? Do you know if your home was built by a well known architect and what year was it built? Did you know there were homes in Highwood that were speakeasies, churches, schools or cavalry barracks?

The Moley House

In past years, my home was the home of Mrs. Moley. It will always be the Moley home. Mrs Moley gardened $\frac{3}{4}$ of the yard, made cheese and wine in the basement, and helped support her family with her fabulous vegetables and the best pears (they still are the best) in town. As best as I can discover, my home was built in the 20s, and my block was home to Highwood's early Swedish immigrants. *Lisa Cervac (resident of the Moley home)*

The Dollhouse

The house at 342 Ashland Avenue was built by Harold Enstrom, Sr. and his wife Nellie, in 1924. Harold built a 16' x 11' workshop in the NE corner of the property. During the Depression he conducted his side business there sharpening saws and ice skates. When Harold, Jr., their oldest son, became a teenager, he used it as a gym. He, Ray Fiocchi, Leo Mattei and Don Cowgill spent many hours there buffing their physiques.

After the war young Harold, Jr. bought a car and the workshop was converted to a small garage. Harold and his father use planks with pipes as roller and moved the workshop to line up with the driveway. A sloping addition was added to accommodate the hood!

After Harold, Jr. got engaged, young Harold and his father converted the garage into a very small house. It was so cute Nellie dubbed it "The Dollhouse." Harold and his wife Elsa moved right before their 5th child was born. Many Highwood newlyweds made their first home in the Dollhouse. *Stephanie Sedik (first resident of the Dollhouse)*

Every house has a story. Please send the story of your home to the Highwood Home Project.