



MANOR NEWS

SPRING

2016

Event Calendar

Manor Spring Fling: Saturday, March 19th, 2-5 p.m., BreakRoom Brewery, 2925 W. Montrose Ave.

Easter Egg Hunt: Saturday, March 26th, 10 a.m. (prompt), La-Pointe Park, Giddings and Manor.

RMIA Semi-Annual Meeting: Tuesday, April 12th, 7 p.m., Horner Park Field House, 2741 W. Montrose Ave. (Speaker: Commander Elias Voulgaris, 17th District, Chicago Police Department.)

Community Meeting: “Manor Greenway Project,” May (time/date TBA), Horner Park Field House. (See page 7 for details.)

Manor Garage Sale: Sunday, May 15th, 10 a.m. – 4 p.m.

RMIA Concert: Friday, June 10th, 7-9 p.m., Manor Park

Weekly and Monthly Events:

Walk the Manor: Wednesdays, 6:30 – 9 p.m.

RMIA Board: 2nd Monday of the month, 7:00 p.m., Horner Park Field House, 2741 W. Montrose Ave.

Horner Park Advisory Council: 1st Monday of the month, 7:30 p.m., Horner Park Field House

CAPS-Beat 1724 (south of Wilson) Meetings: 3rd Wednesday of the month, 6:30 p.m., Horner Park Field House

CAPS-Beat 1713 (north of Wilson) Meetings: 4th Wednesday of the month, 6:30 p.m., Magnuson Campus Center, North Park University, 5000 N. Spalding Ave.

Early “Model Homes:” An Endangered Species?

By Jim Peters

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Top: This Chicago Tribune ad from July 1909 illustrates the various styles of “model homes” that potential Ravenswood Manor buyers could choose from. Bottom: The basement excavation for a new residence that replaced one of the original model homes last year.

When Ravenswood Manor was being marketed in 1909-11 as “The First Suburb Beautiful—of the New Chicago,” developer Wm. E. Harmon & Co. constructed 15 residences to help promote the sale of house lots in the 60-acre subdivision.

Harmon’s “model homes” represented a variety of architectural styles, including American Four Square, Bungalow, Craftsman, Prairie, and Queen Anne. Most of the models were located within a block of the real estate sales office in Manor Park, so that potential buyers could readily see them after disembarking at the Francisco “L” station.

For more than a century, these 15 original houses have survived largely intact. However, since 2013, two of these original model homes have been demolished or seriously modified—and a third model home may be razed later this year.

Three years ago, the exterior of one house (built 1910; Bostrom & Olson) was completely re-faced by a developer, who subsequently resold the property (page 5, top). And, last year, another model home (built 1909; Nelson & Lewin; greatly altered c.1960s) was demolished for a new residence, which is now nearing completion (page 4, bottom).

Later this year, informed sources tell *Manor News*, yet another original Harmon Model Home (built 1909; Nelson & Lewin), also will be demolished and replaced by new construction (page 5, bottom). Meanwhile, numerous other historic residences are being rehabilitated throughout the neighborhood—some by their owners, others by builders on “spec”. While some of these projects are minor additions, others are (continued, page 4)

Neighbors in the News

The Chicago-based band, Twin Peaks, is scheduled to release a new album, "Down in Heaven," in May. Its drummer, **Connor Brodner**, grew up on Richmond Street, where his parents, Cate and Mark, still reside.**Darryl DePriest**, of Leland Avenue, was confirmed by the U.S. Senate in December as Chief Counsel at the Small Business Administration's Office of Advocacy.**Allyson Dykhuizen** (Manor Avenue), the editor of the online site, *Holla Knits*, recently published *Midwestern Knits*, a collection of knitting patterns by 11 designers; it's available for \$25 at the Supreme Beauty Salon, 4665 N. Manor Ave.**Bill Kindra**, also of Manor Avenue, is a partner of Quad Indoor Sports, whose 68,000 sq. ft. inflatable dome opened in January at 2454 Oakton St., Evanston, providing indoor recreational fields for youth and adult sports programs, as well as private rentals.**James Fahye Shanabruch**, born December 5th, is the son of Stephanie and Steve Shanabruch of Eastwood Avenue. Steve is the designer of *Manor News*. **Summit Industries Inc.**, a manufacturer of diagnostic radiographic equipment, has announced plans to sell its 1.23-acre property at 2901 W. Lawrence Ave. as a "redevelopment site." In January, the RMIA asked Ald. Deb Mell to create a public planning process for the redevelopment—and/or rezoning—of this parcel, which also fronts on the Chicago River and Manor Avenue.

If you have neighbor news, please send it to the Manor News editor at peters.e.james@gmail.com or to P.O. Box 25486, Chicago, IL 60625

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Notable Neighbors

Marian Wrobel: Policewoman

Ravenswood Manor historically has been a popular residence for city police and fire officials. Yet, one of the most notable Manor residents to work in the Chicago Police Department was actually an early policewoman, Marian Wrobel.

Born in Chicago in 1918, Marian joined the police department in 1947, the same year that she and her husband, Adolph Wrobel, moved into an apartment at 2910 W. Eastwood Ave. Later, the family moved to a house at 4430 N. Manor Ave.

Initially, Wrobel worked undercover for detectives and in the youth division. She was a frequent bodyguard for visiting dignitaries, including Presidential spouses Lady Bird Johnson and Pat Nixon. Her personal files include letters and photographs from a wide range of celebrities, including FBI director J. Edgar Hoover, Chicago Mayors Jane Byrne and Michael Bilandic, Illinois Gov. William Stratton, actors Danny Thomas and William "Hopalong Cassidy" Boyd, White Sox owner Bill Veeck, and Harlem Globetrotter founder (and Manor resident) Abe Saperstein.

During her 34-year police career, she was the subject of numerous newspaper articles, including her work as a plainclothes officer along Lake Michigan beaches and in the Lincoln Park Zoo, where she and a male partner made 75 arrests one summer—in less than five weeks.

She also specialized in pursuing "gypsies" for thefts and illegal fortune telling. Her photo became a wanted poster "in reverse" among that community of mostly Hungarian immigrants. "I'm never afraid of them," Wrobel told the *Chicago Tribune* in 1968. "There could be 20 gypsy men in the apartment when I'm having my fortune told. With my gun in my purse I feel safe."

In 1976, following her marriage to Robert Affleck (Mr. Wrobel had



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Clockwise from top left: *Marian Wrobel in the 2900-block of Eastwood, c.1955; Wrobel was the subject of numerous newspaper articles in the 1960s and '70s, including her work in the police department's youth division; Wrobel was both a uniformed and plainclothes security officer for numerous visiting celebrities, including: White Sox owner Bill Veeck (center) and Harlem Globetrotters founder—and Manor resident—Abe Saperstein (left) in the 1970s; actor William Boyd, in his role as cowboy hero "Hopalong Cassidy," in the 1950s; actor Leo Carillo, known for his role as "The Cisco Kid"; Presidential and Vice Presidential candidates Richard Nixon and Henry Cabot Lodge in 1960. (All photos courtesy of Adrian Collins.)*

died in 1964), Marian was a member of the panel that designed a new uniform for women officers. Previously, "we carried our gun in a purse, had a silly hat, inch-and-a-half heels and those tight skirts," an early policewoman remembered. "It was ridiculous, when you are tussling with someone and you are in skirts and nylons and heels."

Yet, despite Wrobel's involvement in the uniform design, her daughter Adrian Collins, a longtime Manor resident, said her mother "never herself wore the uniform pants, but continued to wear skirts." (For more about Wrobel, see Collins oral history interview on our website under "History/Manor Stories.")

Wrobel retired from the police department in 1981 and died in 2006. Her former partner, Kim Anderson, told the *Tribune*: "[She] was a teacher of the lessons of life and policing. She was my field training partner, but she was like a partner to all of us women. She was smart and had a lot on the ball. She could sense things you couldn't imagine." And *Tribune* reporter Robert Wiedrich wrote: "She was tough as nails but she could be gentle as a kitten. She had a big heart and was given to helping people whenever she had the opportunity."

This is the first in a series on notable former residents of Ravenswood Manor.



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Endangered (cont.)

major renovations (see house at right).

Some residents view these changes as the natural evolution of a neighborhood that has witnessed a substantial increase in property values since the recession of 2007-10, in part due to the improvement of Waters Elementary, 4540 N. Campbell.

Other residents, however, express concern over the loss of these original residences, fearing that too much demolition and out-of-scale redevelopment will erode the character of a neighborhood that was listed—just eight years ago—on the National Register of Historic Places, due to its “wide variety of both high-style architecture and popular house styles of the early-20th century.”

Making sure these projects strictly adhere to city building codes and zoning laws is a key concern of the Ravenswood Manor Improvement Association (RMIA). But there also is hope for solutions that will preserve these historic residences through the use of the special property tax incentives that are linked to the neighborhood’s historic designation.

Although National Register listing does not prevent the demolition or alteration of historic buildings (unlike a City of Chicago local landmark district), it does enable the owners of historic residences to avail themselves of property tax incentives, provided they rehabilitate—rather than demolish or alter the historic features of—their properties. This is the primary reason that the RMIA pursued National Register status for the area in 2008.

The State of Illinois’ Property Tax Assessment Freeze Program permits owner-occupants of historic homes who undertake a “significant” rehabilitation project to have their property’s assessed value *frozen* at the pre-rehab level for an eight- to 12-year period. This program is designed to reward owner-occupants of historic homes by not penalizing them with dramatically higher property taxes after they’ve invested in preserving those properties.

The eligibility requirements for these property tax incentives are spelled out in the application process, which can be found on



A recent project by a suburban-based developer has completely transformed this historic Manor residence, which was built in 1909. Left: Fall 2015, after the house’s front porch was removed. Right: February 2016, as additions were being built to the front and third floor. Despite its size, the project meets building and zoning codes, since the roof peak remains at the same height.



This original “model home” (left) was built in 1909, but greatly altered in the 1960s. It was demolished last year and replaced by a new residence (right).

the web site of the Illinois Historic Preservation Agency (IHPA), which administers the program (www.illinois.gov/ihpa/preserve/pages/taxfreeze.aspx).

However, the two most important things for an owner of a historic property to

know are: 1) you must apply for the incentive prior to beginning any work and 2) all work must meet the *U.S. Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for Rehabilitation* (www.nps.gov/tps/standards/rehabilitation.htm). If the project does not meet these standards—or the owner-occupant begins reha-



The evolution of one rehabilitation of a historic “model home” (left to right): as it appeared in 2012; after the original stained glass bay windows and original dormer windows were removed; and the current appearance of the house.

bilitation prior to approval of their application—they will not receive the property tax freeze. Since 2014, according to the IHPA, two historic homeowners in Ravenswood Manor have taken advantage of the property tax freeze program, as part of major rehabilitation projects. One was a Craftsman-style residence built in 1913; the other was a Chicago-style Bungalow dating to 1919.

In addition to the homeowner tax freeze, there is also a federal rehabilitation tax credit available for the owners of historic commercial buildings, including apartment buildings. Information on this program also is available on the IHPA web site.

For more information on Harmon’s Model Homes, please see the self-guided walking tour on the RMIA web site at www.ravenswoodmanor.com/harmonmodelhomestour.



Jim Peters, a professional city planner, is the editor of Manor News.

This historic “model home” (built 1909) is scheduled to be razed and replaced by a new residence later this year, sources tell Manor News. Inset: a drawing from a 1909 advertisement for Ravenswood Manor.

Do-It-Yourself Walking Tours

Don’t forget that 2014’s walking tours are available on the RMIA web site, along with a walking map.

Tours on the web site (ravenswoodmanor.com/walking-tours):

- Harmon’s Model Homes
- Gems of the Manor
- Heart of the Manor

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About RMIA

Manor News is published quarterly by the Ravenswood Manor Improvement Association.

Established in 1914, the RMIA is a neighborhood association run entirely by volunteers. We hold monthly board of directors meetings, stage various social events and special projects, and maintain communication channels through our web site, e-mail alerts, and newsletter. Your annual RMIA membership helps to support all of this work.

The RMIA Mission Statement is: "To promote the welfare of the community in respect to the maintenance and improvement of the physical appearance of the private and public property; the compliance with the laws as applicable to private and public property; the maintenance of facilities with respect to the safety, health, and welfare of its residents."

The RMIA officers are:

Athene Carras – President
Jim Peters – Vice President
Kathy Monk – Secretary
Rick Glick - Treasurer

Web site: ravenswoodmanor.com
Facebook.com/ravenswoodmanor
E-mail: board@ravenswoodmanor.com
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Manor News is delivered to residents and businesses by volunteer block captains. Past issues are available on our web site (see "Communications"). Editor: Jim Peters; Design and Layout: Steve Shanabruch; Advertising: Thomas Applegate.

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Correction:

An article on block clubs in the Winter 2015 issue of *Manor News* incorrectly identified the 2800-block of West Leland Avenue as the "2400-block." Our apologies to those residents (including your editor).

Spring Events Planned – but Summer on Hold

Several spring events—from March through May—have been planned by the RMIA. However, a couple of the neighborhood’s traditional summer events, including the Independence Bike Parade and the Manor Garden Walk, are in danger of being cancelled this year if volunteer coordinators don’t step forward to assist.

The **Manor Spring Fling** will be held on Saturday, March 19, from 2 to 5 p.m., at the BreakRoom Brewery, 2925 W. Montrose Ave. Our thanks to Bill Termini, a former RMIA board member, for organizing this event, which is a reprise of last fall’s SeptoberFest event at BreakRoom.

The **Easter Egg Hunt** for young children will be held the following Saturday, March 26, at 10 a.m., at LaPointe Park, Giddings and Manor. Please arrive early, since the “hunt” begins promptly at 10 a.m. and ends when all the eggs have been found—which usually takes only a few minutes. There are separate hunt areas for smaller and older children. Thanks to Athene Carras, RMIA’s board president, for organizing this popular spring event, which is held come rain or sunshine (or sleet or snow).

Police Commander Elias Vulgaris, 17th District, Chicago Police Department, will be the speaker at RMIA’s Semi-Annual Meeting on Tuesday, April 12, at 7 p.m., in the Horner Park Field House, California and Montrose.

The **Manor Greenway Project** will be the topic of a community meeting in May at Horner Park Field House. The date is still to be announced; please check our Facebook page or Ald. Mell’s 33rd Ward weekly email newsletter for details. The “greenway” proposal is to create a bicycle route through the Manor, between the south end of Ronan Park (at Lawrence) and the north end of Horner Park (at Montrose). This Chicago Department of Transportation study has been developed in conjunction with Alderman Mell’s Office and the 33rd Ward’s Transportation Action Committee (TAC).

The **Manor Garage Sale** is scheduled for Sunday, May 15, from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. This longstanding neighborhood event attracts thousands of shoppers to visit the garages—and sidewalk sales—of more than 100 participating residential households. Our thanks to RMIA board members Geoff Gieske and Suzy Thomas for their coordination of this event, although additional volunteers are always welcome. Please check the Ravenswood Manor Improvement Association Facebook page or <http://ravenswoodmanor.com/garagesalesignup/> for more information, including how to register to be a participating seller.

The **RMIA’s Summer Concert Night** will be held on Friday, June 10th, 7 – 9 p.m., in Manor Park. Thanks to Tracey Lowenthal for coordinating this show—and to the Horner Park Advisory Council (HPAC) for hosting the 22nd annual series of summer concerts and plays in our neighborhood parks. Watch for an announcement of the bands for “RMIA Night” on our Facebook page and in our e-mail newsletters. For more information on the HPAC’s Summer Concert Series, please check its web site and Facebook page. To become a series sponsor, contact its coordinator, John O’Connell at johnroconnell4530@gmail.com.

Also starting in early June, the **Horner Park Farmer’s Market** plans to initiate the 3rd year of its weekly Saturday events, which are held at the corner of California and Montrose.

Unfortunately, unless volunteers are found to assist, two other traditional summer events may not be held this year: the **Independence Bike Parade** and the **Manor Garden Walk**. While both have been very popular for participants, a lack of volunteers to manage these events may make it necessary to cancel them. If you are interested in helping, please contact Athene Carras, the RMIA’s Board President, at athenecarras@gmail.com.



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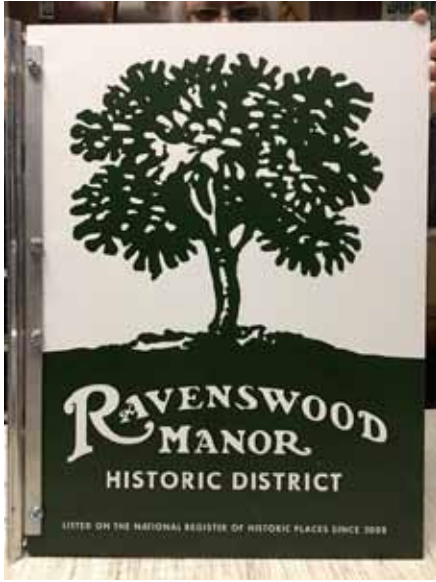



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SUZY THOMAS

New District Signs



As the holiday “snowflakes” came down in February, a dozen new signs went up—indicating the neighborhood’s status as a National Register Historic District.

The new signs, 18 x 24-inches in size, were installed at the key entries to the neighborhood. They replaced a previous set of neighborhood identification

signs that had been lost due to age, deterioration of the mounting brackets, or theft. The side-mounting system of the new signs was designed to be more durable.

The signs were designed by Steve Shanabruch, a graphic artist who also designs *Manor News*. The central tree image on the sign is from the RMI’s logo (see page 6), while the lettering is the same typeface used in the 1909-11 *Chicago Tribune* advertisements for the Ravenswood Manor and Ravenswood Gardens subdivisions (see page 1). The new signs in the Gardens, east of the Chicago River, also use this historic typeface.

The new signs are believed to be the fifth version of neighborhood signs in the Manor since the late-1970s.

Business Profile: HOT BAR

By Kathy Monk



Dave Miller, owner of HOT BAR, said he knew he needed an extra baking space to complement his successful Baker Miller bakery in Lincoln Square. He wrestled with a concept for the new store, but ultimately opened HOT BAR on Francisco Avenue, south of the “L” station, on

Nov. 14, 2015, with a basic ‘grab and go’ menu. He adds proudly that “everything is made from scratch.” Aware that Ravenswood Manor is a tight-knit community, Miller makes it clear he is very interested in what neighbors want in a café.

Miller is considering developing a new menu, expanding lunch, and possibly staying open in the evening for dinner. Proposed additions are seasonal sandwiches, salads, grits, and Baker Miller’s signature oatmeal. Miller indicates that he wants to be inclusive as far as dietary needs and, when asked how a bakery accommodates gluten-free customers, he says that HOT BAR freshly grinds their own grains—including oats and corn.

As far as competing with First Slice Café, just north of the “L” tracks, Miller says, “We’re friends and much of our traffic occurs before First Slice opens. Ravenswood Manor needs more than one café – people want to go to a variety places. Plus, HOT BAR is different so we don’t feel like competitors.”

HOT BAR is located at 4642 N. Francisco Ave. and is open from 6:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m., weekdays; 7:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. on weekends; ph: 872-806-2901.



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