



# The Manor News

Ravenswood Manor Community Newsletter

Winter  
2014

## Happy New Centennial Year!

*A message from Thomas Applegate, Centennial Co-Chair*

This year marks our 100th anniversary of the association, which makes us one of the oldest continuously running neighborhood organizations in Illinois. Our team has made the resolution to bring our community a year's worth of engaging, educational, and community building events and projects to honor an amazing milestone. Please feel welcome to join in the fun, come out and meet your neighbors, and learn something new about the neighborhood in which you make your home.

Events kick off with our Centennial Homes project, recognizing houses 100 years or older. In late February, Centennial Home owners will receive a certificate from the RMIA and have the option to buy a commemorative bronze plaque for display. On February 15 we launch our walking tour series with "Model Homes," focused on the 15 original houses built by developer William Harmon.

To keep up to date on all the goings on throughout the year, "like" RMIA on Facebook, sign up for twice monthly email updates, and visit our newly redeveloped RavenswoodManor.com! •



### MARK YOUR CALENDAR

T-shirt order deadline: Feb 23

"Gems of the Manor" Tour:  
reg. opens Mar 8; tour Mar 29

"Where was the A&P" Tour:  
reg. opens Apr 12; tour May 3

Easter Egg Hunt: Apr 19

RMIA Semi-Annual Meeting:  
Apr 23

Neighborhood Garage Sale:  
May 18

"History, Mysteries, Tall  
Tales, & Colorful Characters"  
Tour: reg. opens May 31; tour  
Jun 21

Centennial Bash: Jun 28

### RMIA Semi-Annual Open House

**Wednesday, April 23, 7:30pm**, Urban Homes, 4668 North Manor Ave.  
You're invited to this open neighborhood meeting to learn about the work of your association, meet your neighbors, and discuss local issues.

### WHAT'S INSIDE

Ravenswood Manor 1914.....	2
The World in 1914.....	2
Centennial Tours.....	3
A Visit with Horner Park	
Woodshop Teacher .....	3
Order Form .....	4
Wm. Harmon: Developer and Philanthropist .....	7
RMIA Membership .....	8
Curious Manor .....	8

## Get into the Centennial Spirit

Help commemorate 100 years of Ravenswood Manor with your purchase of t-shirts and artwork and by renewing your RMIA membership. All proceeds support Centennial events.

• **Centennial t-shirts:** Order before the deadline of **February 23**. T-shirts come in childrens, ladies, and mens sizes and are \$15. Printed in early March.

• **Art Print:** A limited edition commemorative work of art by neighbor and nationally acclaimed artist Tom Melvin. This 36"x20" hand blocked print is offered in one color for \$100 or hand colored by the artist for \$160.

• **Centennial logo print:** By local graphic designer Steve Shanabruch to hang on your wall. High quality, frameable 11"x17" prints are \$25.

• **RMIA membership:** Show your community pride by renewing your membership or becoming a new member. Please consider becoming a Centennial Member (\$100) this year. Thank you to everyone who has already joined! See items for sale on the order form on page 4 of this issue,





## Ravenswood Manor 1914

by Jim Peters

Wm. E. Harmon & Co. began to sell house lots for their "Ravenswood Gardens" and "Ravenswood Manor" subdivisions in the spring of 1909. The 80-acre community, which had been platted on either side of the Chicago River, was served by new ground-level "L" stations at Rockwell and Francisco—along the recently-extended Ravenswood transit line.

Harmon built a real estate sales office a half-block south of the Francisco "L" station (near where today's Manor Park pergola stands). House lots were priced at between \$690 and \$990, depending on their size and location. To spur sales, Harmon constructed 15 model homes, mostly located within a block of the sales office along Eastwood, Francisco, and Wilson streets.

To ensure a high level of quality for these "suburbs beautiful," as he termed them, Harmon instituted deed restrictions that would be in force until Jan. 1, 1920. These included minimum building costs of \$2,500-\$4,000 for single-family or two-family residences, required building materials and minimum front yard setbacks, and an improvement fund for parkway flowers, tree trimming, and snow removal.

By 1914, however, only 100 houses had been constructed and residents were growing concerned. A vast majority of the lots remained vacant, deed restrictions were due to expire within five years, and the parkway maintenance fund only had a few more years of life. On August 27, 1914, a formal letter signed by eight property owners was sent to Harmon.

"Our growth is not satisfactory," the residents told Harmon. "Matters of importance are confronting homeowners and prospective home builders. Our lack of organization is, in itself, a menace to the welfare of our community; existing conditions and conditions which will arise in the near future demand unanimity of action." The letter invited Harmon to personally attend a meeting on September 1st at his real estate sales office at 4516 N. Francisco. "Your presence is essential for the success of this undertaking for the protection of your interests."

At the September meeting, the Ravenswood Manor-Gardens Community Club was formed. A month later, on October 3rd, the group was formally incorporated at the real estate office. Its first president was William A. Prindiville, an attorney who lived at 4516 N. Richmond. In December 1916, the club was renamed the Ravenswood Manor-Gardens Improvement Association. (The Gardens remained a part of the RMGIA until 1947.)

In late 1914, the Ravenswood Manor-Gardens Park District was created to purchase park space for the area. It was merged into the Chicago Park District in 1934. •

## THE WORLD 1914

Ford Motor Co. introduces assembly line for Model T's	← January 14
First airplane flight from Los Angeles to San Francisco	← February 16
Wrigley Field opens as Weegham Park	← April 23
President Wilson proclaims Mother's Day	← May 9
Mahatma Gandhi's first arrest, campaigning for Indian Rights in South Africa	← June 30
Babe Ruth debuts as pitcher for the Boston Red Sox	← July 11
World War I begins when Austria-Hungary declares war on Serbia	← July 28
U.S.A. declares neutrality in WW I	← August 4
Panama Canal opens	← August 15
Ravenswood Manor-Gardens Community Club established	← September 1 ●
Ravenswood Manor-Gardens Community Club incorporated	← October 3 ●
U.S. Post Office 1st use of automobile to collect and deliver mail	← October 19
Federal Reserve Bank of Chicago opens	← November 16
First feature-length silent film comedy, "Tillie's Punctured Romance" released. Marie Dressler, Charlie Chaplin star	← December 21

by Debra Desmond



## Welcome to Your Ravenswood Manor Centennial 2014



### February

Walking Tours launch; 1st Tour "Model Homes"  
Saturday February 15 @ 10a. Registration closed.

Order Centennial t-shirts until Feb 23, \$15, 100% cotton, great design, ladies, mens and children's sizes.  
Order now: [ravenswoodmanor.com/support/tshirts](http://ravenswoodmanor.com/support/tshirts)

Volunteer: [ravenswoodmanor.com/support/volunteer](http://ravenswoodmanor.com/support/volunteer)



### March

Drop In / Pick Up @ Urban Homes, Sat Mar 15 9a – 12n

Walking Tour "Gems of the Manor" Sat Mar 29 @ 10a  
Registration March 8 @ 10a

### April

Easter Egg Hunt  
Saturday April 19 @ 10am  
LaPointe Park

May walking tour registration begins Apr 12 @ 10a

### May

Walking Tour  
"Where was the A&P"  
Saturday May 3 @ 10a

Garage Sale  
Sunday, May 18, 10a – 4p

June walking tour registration begins  
May 31 @ 10a

### June

Walking Tour "Histories, Mysteries, Tall Tales, and Colorful Characters" Saturday June 21 @ 10a

### Centennial Bash, Saturday June 28

Our big party for the Centennial, starts with the Annual Independence Day Bike Parade, then goes all afternoon with family activities, music, arts and crafts, BBQ grilling, food trucks, and raffles for kids and adults. Come out for the neighborhood photo!

### October

Manor + Gardens Party, celebrating our cofounding in 1914

October, date TBD  
> plans in development <

Home Movie Day  
Saturday October 18  
We are collecting your home movies, photos, and oral histories all year long

T-shirts: Order deadline Feb 23rd. \$15/shirt  
Ordering: [ravenswoodmanor.com/support/tshirts](http://ravenswoodmanor.com/support/tshirts)

Walking tour registration: [rmiawalkingtours.eventbrite.com](http://rmiawalkingtours.eventbrite.com)

RMIA NEW! website: [ravenswoodmanor.com](http://ravenswoodmanor.com)

RMIA on Facebook: [facebook.com/ravenswoodmanor](http://facebook.com/ravenswoodmanor)

The Ravenswood Manor Improvement Association (RMIA) is your neighborhood association, and it "promotes 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."



Ravenswood Manor Improvement Association: Membership Form

**Special Centennial Member \$100**       Additional Centennial Donation \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Pick your membership level:       \$50     \$25     \$10

Please return form to:

Membership is from November 1, 2013 to October 31, 2014.  
Please make your membership payment payable to RMIA.  
Your personal information will be used only by RMIA for communications with you.  
RMIA will not sell or share your information.

**RMIA**  
**P.O. Box 25486**  
**Chicago IL 60625**

Name(s) 1. \_\_\_\_\_ 2. \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Phone 1 \_\_\_\_\_ Email 1 \_\_\_\_\_

Phone 2 \_\_\_\_\_ Email 2 \_\_\_\_\_

- I would like to volunteer this year with RMIA. We will be in touch with you.
- I moved to the neighborhood within the past year. We will send you a RMIA pdf welcome packet.
- I prefer to remain anonymous and to NOT be listed on any donor lists

**Centennial Spirit! Order Form for T-Shirts and Artwork**

Check out the t-shirt design and the artwork at either:  
[ravenswoodmanor.com](http://ravenswoodmanor.com) at the "Centennial" tab or  
on Facebook at: [facebook.com/ravenswoodmanor](https://facebook.com/ravenswoodmanor)

**T-Shirts**

Size/Style	Children	Men	Women
# of Small			
# of Medium			
# of Large			
# of XLarge			
<b>Total t-shirts</b>	<b>#</b>	<b>X \$15 =</b>	<b>\$</b>

T-shirts are \$15 each, blue 100% cotton, heavyweight, and printed on front and back.  
Order deadline is February 23, and t-shirts will be available in early March.

**Order Contact Information**

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

**Commemorative Artwork**

Hand blocked print by Thomas Melvin. This limited edition, commemorative, artwork is offered in two versions by the artist: a single color version of the Centennial print, ready for framing, and a hand colored version in which the artist adds color to the print. The image is 36" wide by 20" tall, signed by Thomas Melvin, and limited to only 50 prints.

\_\_\_\_\_ # of single color prints x \$100 = \$ \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ # of hand colored prints x \$160 = \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Total of both prints ordered: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**Centennial Logo Print**

Our logo, designed by local graphic designer Steve Shanabru, is available in a high quality 11" x 17" print, suitable for framing.

\_\_\_\_\_ # of logo prints x \$20 = \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**Make checks payable to: RMIA**

**Please mail form to:**  
**RMIA**  
**P.O. Box 25486**  
**Chicago IL 60625**

**All proceeds support RMIA Centennial events and projects**





## Centennial Tours

As part of the celebration of our centennial, the tour committee is offering free tours of the neighborhood, each with a different focus on the history of the Manor. All tours begin at First Slice at 10.00am. Space is limited to 20, and registration begins three weeks before the tour, on Saturday at 10:00am. Tours last about 1.5 hours and are developed and led by neighbors.



We welcome you and your guests, but please understand that capacity is limited. We encourage you to tell your neighbors to join in, but please do not publicize the tours more broadly. Signup is through [eventbrite.com](http://eventbrite.com), and tours will be listed at this link when registration begins: <http://rmiawalkingtours.eventbrite.com/>

- February 15, 10:00 AM - **Model Homes** - Take a tour of the first fifteen homes built by Harmon to "sell" the Manor. Registration is closed. Tour information will be online for download and self guided tours after Feb 15.
- March 29, 10:00 AM - **Gems of the Manor** - This tour covers 13 structures identified as having citywide "significance" by the City of Chicago's Chicago Historic Resources Survey (1996). This is the tour of the best of the best. Registration begins Saturday March 8 10am
- May 3, 10:00 AM - **Where was the A&P?** - Ravenswood Manor has had a varied commercial past. This tour will reveal the histories of the different businesses that have occupied the retail spaces adjacent to the Francisco L stop and the courtyard buildings. You'll be amazed. Registration begins Saturday April 12 10am
- June 21, 10:00 AM - **Histories, Mysteries, Tall Tales, and Colorful Characters** - This is the tour that brings the human interest stories to light. The famous people who lived here, the speakeasy past, the vision of the developer and other tales of the Manor. Registration begins Saturday May 31 10am.



## A visit with Eric Boelkens, Wood Teacher Horner Park Woodshop

by Sarah Reiser

*In Horner Park Advisory Council meetings last year I kept hearing folks ask Horner Park Supervisor Tom McManamon, over and over again, "How's the wood shop coming? Any news yet?" So when, late last year, Tom triumphantly announced budget approval to add a new wood shop instructor to his staff, a flurry of excitement ensued. Naturally, I was curious about the source of so much anticipation.*



SR: Where are you from originally?

EB: Originally Arkansas, but I've lived in the Chicagoland area, most of my life.

SR: How did you get your start with woodworking?

EB: Well, my mom's creative, my father was a carpenter, and my grandfather always had a shop and would make things. One of my first jobs as a kid was working on construction sites, mostly cleaning and sweeping, learning by doing. And, too, I went to school at a time when wood shops were still available, so I took woodshop and art class and had a mix of painting and drawing in addition to wood.

SR: How has it been getting settled in here?

EB: I have a background in architecture, so I've spent a lot of time in shops. Here I'm trying to be progressive, doing a lot of cleaning and organizing shop maintenance. I just finished a new mitre box table and built wood storage.

SR: Did you discover anything unusual?

EB: Oh, sure. I found some pretty cool old black and white photos of people doing woodworking from the 1940s. They must predate Horner-- I think this field house building was built in '56 or '57-- a lot of the tools have been here since then.

SR: Who are your students?

EB: All age groups-- nine year olds through seniors.

SR: How does it work?

EB: You sign up for a seasonal session, and then people pretty much bring their own projects. So far

*(continues on page 7)*

Hey, woodworkers, heads up for Park District Spring Woodcraft Showcase. Details forthcoming on [chicagoparkdistrict.com](http://chicagoparkdistrict.com) or talk to Eric Boelkens at Horner Park.



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## William E. Harmon: Real Estate Developer and Philanthropist

by Mary Pendergast

William Elmer Harmon was born in Lebanon, Ohio, in 1862. He wanted to be a physician but abandoned his studies due to family financial hardship. Instead, he took a job as a salesman at a nursery. Realizing his gift for sales, he then pondered what he might sell that would appeal to more people—and how he could make it affordable. The answer was land.



At age 26, Harmon revolutionized real estate development when he developed an installment plan for buying lots in Cincinnati. For a dollar down and a dollar or less per month, people could now buy land that previously had required a one-third or one-half down payment.

Wood, Harmon Company, which he formed with his brother and uncle, opened offices throughout the East and Midwest, becoming one of the largest real estate operations in the world. After starting Wm. E. Harmon & Co. in 1907, he created Ravenswood Manor in Chicago, using the “improved real estate” strategy that had become popular following release of the 1909 Plan of Chicago. He promoted quiet, spacious, tree-lined neighborhoods in contrast to the city’s other noisy, crowded residential areas. His advertisements called it “The First Suburb Beautiful—of the New Chicago.”

In addition to building streets, sidewalks, and utilities in Ravenswood Manor and Ravenswood Gardens, Harmon also built trellised archways over main entrances, planted trees, shrubs, and flowers in the parkways, set aside land for a “Motor Boat Colony,” and charged a \$2/year fee to homeowners to maintain these parkways.

Harmon became a wealthy real estate mogul and settled in New York City. He also became a secret philanthropist. Under the name “Jebediah Tingle,” he sent checks to aid poor children and writers and artists in need, including those who were part of the

Harlem Renaissance. He established the Harmon Foundation in 1922 to provide assistance to black artists, loans to college students, pensions to health care workers, rural clinics in South Carolina, and urban playgrounds. “Serving one’s own people,” he said, “transcends duty...and becomes a privilege.

Upon his death in 1928, the New York Times revealed Harmon as the mysterious benefactor Jebediah Tingle, a name which had come from his maternal great grandfather. Harmon’s mission in donating money was “to bring smiles and tender thoughts...to those who do exceptional things or suffer.” •

(Woodshop, continued from page 5)

all my adult students have had a basic starting skill level, so my role is mainly to help them design and complete their projects. I think people are more enthused about what they’re working on that way. For kids I do more instruction.

SR: Do the kids use power tools?

EB: Some. Mostly I have them start with hand tools so they’ll understand what the power tools do.

SR: You mean like hand drills?

EB: Mainly hammer and nails. I like to teach kids how to use a hand saw and hammer and nails to learn basic skills. Then, once they’ve been shown certain equipment, they can use that without having to ask. I have them build their name out of wood using the techniques I’ve taught them or little houses out of scrap wood. Older kids work on built-up sculptures, cutting and layering. I spent ten years working as an architect before college. Then in college I was a student teacher and studio assistant.

SR: What’s your Park District class schedule like?

EB: I split my time between Horner and the shop at Brands Park, which is tiny, so we can’t do as much. My classes there are almost full, but here there’s room for kids to sign up. At Brands the woodshop’s on the first floor right when you come in, so kids see it and get interested-- here the shop’s down in the basement, so it gets less exposure.

SR: Do you have any recommendations for neighbor kids who might be interested?

EB: I’ve noticed that if kids come in with a friend, they’re more motivated to get their projects done-- it’s a comfort level thing, sitting there side by side, working on the same project, talking.

SR: I miss that-- working in a studio with others.

EB: Yeah, it’s pretty great. •



## RMIA Membership

2014 will be an exciting year for Ravenswood Manor: the RMIA has plans in place to celebrate, learn, and share community, and now we need your support to bring these plans to reality. Please join this year and show your neighborhood pride by becoming a \$100 Centennial Member of the RMIA.

Ravenswood Manor is the strong community that it is because of the accumulated efforts of its residents and their association over the past 100 years. Let's celebrate our accomplishments in the past, present, and future during the Centennial.

Please return your membership form today, and while we hope that you join as a \$100 Centennial Member, any amount at \$10 or above helps to support the work and events of the RMIA. If you prefer to sign up online, go to RavenswoodManor.com. •

## Safety & Service Contacts

- 911 Emergency
- 311 City Services: Graffiti Removal, Non Emergency Police, Water and sewer, streets and sanitation, trees, parkway
- 17<sup>th</sup> District Station Chicago Police
- 4650 North Pulaski Rd, Chicago, IL 60630
- 312-742-4410
- Chicago Alternative Policing Strategy (CAPS)
- CAPS.017District@chicagopolice.org
- 312-744-3774
- 33rd Ward Alderman Deb Mell
- www.33rdward.org
- www.facebook.com/33rdWardDebalderman@33rdward.org
- 773-478-8040
- 3649 N Kedzie, Chicago IL 60618
- Office Hours: Mon-Fri 8am-5pm; Weds 5-7pm; 1st Sat each month 9am-12pm
- **RMIA Board:** Joe Cesario, President; Athene Carras, Vice President; Orysia Pokorni, Secretary; Chuck Renner, Treasurer. Members: Rick Glick, Jim Peters, Sarah Reiser, Geoff Gieske, Kathy Monk, David Rownd, Bill Termini, and Scott Wheeler.
- rmiaboard@ravenswoodmanor.com

## Are You Curious, Manor?

Q. What do the words Ardmore, Irving, Juniper, Keystone, and Longbeach have in common-- in relation to Ravenswood Manor?

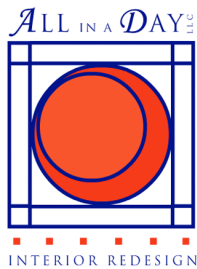
Q. What do the words Jamot, Fairfield, Humboldt, Potwyne, and Vilas have in common--again, in relation to Ravenswood Manor?

Q. Which well-known 1960s music group had a band member who grew up in Ravenswood Manor?

Answers in next issue. Or check the Ravenswood Manor Improvement Association Facebook page

Do you have a question, something that you have always heard and wondered if it was true? Send your curiosity and any Manor-related questions to:

[curiousmanor@ravenswoodmanor.com](mailto:curiousmanor@ravenswoodmanor.com)



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## Support Our Community

Here are just a few of the ways you can support your neighborhood association:

- **Volunteer** to help with the Centennial Bash on June 28 & other events
- Renew or start your **RMIA Membership**
- Buy **t-shirts** and commemorative **prints**
- **Submit** photos & stories
- **Take out an ad** in the Manor News: 4 issues/year - \$350 1/3 page, \$300 1/4 page, \$225 biz card

[volunteer@ravenswoodmanor.com](mailto:volunteer@ravenswoodmanor.com)  
[newsletter@ravenswoodmanor.com](mailto:newsletter@ravenswoodmanor.com)



The Manor News

Thanks to the many neighbor volunteers who help bring *The Manor News* to your doorstep each season—and please thank our advertisers with your patronage. *The Manor News* is published quarterly by the RMIA for Ravenswood Manor residents.

The RMIA's purpose, per its by-laws, 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.

Please send comments and contributions to: Ravenswood Manor Improvement Association, Newsletter, PO Box 25486, Chicago IL 60625, or [newsletter@ravenswoodmanor.com](mailto:newsletter@ravenswoodmanor.com).