

# MOUNT PROSPECT HISTORICAL SOCIETY

KEEPING HOMETOWN MEMORIES ALIVE

# MUSEUM



# JOURNAL

VOLUME XIII, ISSUE 2

SUMMER 2022

## MEMORIES ALL UNDER ONE ROOF: CELEBRATING 60 YEARS OF RANDHURST

BY EMILY DATTILO

Randhurst Shopping Center will celebrate its 60th anniversary on August 16th. Over six decades it has undergone many changes, but it became—and remains—an important part of the northwest suburban community. Nearly every long-time resident has a memory from Randhurst.

In honor of this milestone, we're sharing some Mount Prospect memories of shopping, working, and visiting Randhurst.

### Shopping

A friend and I would have Girlfriend Outings about once a month. We'd go to the nail place down one of the halls, and then head to the Food Court Area and have a pretzel when we were done. I think the place was Auntie Anne's.

~Deb R.

As a young teen, my brother and I loved going to Kroch's & Brentano's to look at the coffee table art and travel books. K & B's also had a basement with remaindered books.

~ Martha N.



### Working

“As a teenager growing up in Mount Prospect, I like many, worked at Randhurst. For several years in high school and on breaks from

college I worked as a waitress at the Patisserie bakery and restaurant, when it was still on the first floor. On a late afternoon in August 1981, I remember there was a lot of “buzz” in the mall. Arnold Schwarzenegger was going to be down at Kroch’s and Brentano’s doing a book signing for one of his body building books. I so wanted to sneak out of the restaurant and catch a glimpse of “Mr. Universe” but the mall was busy and my station was occupied. At this time, Arnold was not yet a movie star. Conan the Barbarian and the Terminator came out a couple years later. He was just “a hunk.”

I remember turning around, and lo and behold, there he was. Arnold appeared at our hostess stand looking for a table and was seated in my section! I remember thinking he was dressed oddly for August in a blue polo shirt with a white heavy wool sports coat on top, that his biceps were trying to bust out of with every movement. But what struck me the most though, were his eyes, not his muscles. His eyes were striking - large, bright and the lightest shade of blue. They captured



*Aerial view of Randhurst, c.1960s*

and held your attention. I still remember his order, apple pie ala mode. Don’t ask me what we talked about while I stood at his table—I was too star struck to recall. I do remember he was easy to talk to and smiled a lot.

Over the years people have asked me, “Was he a good tipper?” I honestly don’t remember! I just wish the cell phones we have today had existed then, so I could have snapped a selfie and captured this moment.”

~Jill H.

### Special Events

During the late 1980s I remember participating in a "Jail and Bail" fundraising event at

Randhurst, to benefit The United Way. It was hokey,

*(Continued on page 3)*

### IN THIS ISSUE:

RANDHURST MEMORIES	1
FROM THE DESK OF THE DIRECTOR	2
FROM THE COLLECTION	2
RANDHURST MEMORIES, CONTINUED	3
UPCOMING EVENTS	4

## FROM THE DESK OF THE DIRECTOR

One of the most exciting moments of spring 2022 has been the return of school field trips to Central School, Mount Prospect's first public school. Throughout April and May over a dozen classes from District 57 and St. Paul Lutheran School attended a Living History Experience field trip at Central School.

These field trips are a fantastic way to immerse students into local history. Each 21st-century class becomes an 1896 class at the one-room Central School, even adopting the names of real students from the past. The 1896 teacher, called a schoolmarm or school master, begins the day with a recitation of the rules. Some rules are familiar to 21st century students, like the Golden Rule, while others are new, such as addressing the teacher as "ma'am." They recite the ABCs of Central

School, solve arithmetic problems on slates, and compete in a spelling bee. Of course, playing with reproduction historic toys at recess, like Jacob's ladders, and learning old-fashioned games are always a highlight of every student's visit.

This entire experience is made possible by the Historical Society's Living History Committee and a talented group of volunteer schoolmarms. Their enthusiasm created this program in 2017 and their dedication returned it to our programming calendar after a two-year hiatus.

You can learn more about the Living History Experience or sign your class up for this program on our website: <https://www.mtphist.org/livinghistoryexperience>.

If you would like to become a schoolmarm or

school master, please fill out an online application: <https://www.mtphist.org/volunteer>.

Have a wonderful summer!



*Emily Dattilo*  
Director

## FROM THE COLLECTION



This ash tray once sat on a table at The Picnic in Randhurst Shopping Center. The Picnic was a food court located directly under the central dome. It was actually the second dining area in that spot since the shopping center opened. This space was originally occupied by several restaurants highlighted as "floating restaurants" because it did not have sidewalls or partitions. By the 1970s, however, the "floating restaurants" had been converted to retail space.

In the mid-1980s Randhurst underwent a large remodeling project. One of those projects was to turn the top level of space under the dome to its original use as a dining area. The Picnic officially opened on October 4, 1984. The celebration began with a ribbon-cutting ceremony and then-local celebrity, Oprah Winfrey, picked the winner of a \$1000 shopping spree. Other special events included a book signing and giveaway with Judith Bell and her book "Guide to US Cooking Schools", life size storybook characters, clowns, balloon artists, and performances by Prospect High School's chorus and band.



The fifteen restaurants in the new food court included Boardwalk Fries, Bon Appetit, Diamond Dave's, and 1 Potato 2. Generations of shoppers recall enjoying a meal or grabbing a quick snack at these restaurants.



(Continued from page 1)

but fun. Someone paid to have me "arrested" and then I had to call people and ask them to donate to United Way in order to "bail" me out. Funeral Director Hank Friedrichs convinced me to participate!

~Jean M.

One winter we took our little Goddaughter over to see the snow sculptures in the parking lot.

~Deb R.

**Other Memorable Moments**

I remember sitting on a bench in the shopping center's mall and watching the people. To me, the enclosed mall served as the town's center as I believe architect Gruen intended.

~Diane L.

In 1973, my recently widowed mother was trying to get a credit card. This was before the Fair Credit Opportunity Act which made discrimination illegal. Visa denied her application; she thought it was because she always paid her bill in cash or check on time, and probably didn't have any credit history. A sales clerk at the Montgomery Wards in Randhurst gave my mom a store credit card application, and happily, she was approved for a small amount.

We loved going to the basement hunting for bargains. And of course, we called it "Monkey Wards".

~ Martha N.

The best memory I have of Randhurst was when we got to go beneath the mall to the Historical Society's storage place. I'd always heard about the extensive space beneath the mall (originally built to be a shelter to hold the entire population of MP in case of disaster) and was thrilled to get to go down there. The indoor mall was in the last stages of closing in order to get ready for its conversion to an outdoor mall, and the Society had to move the portion of its collection that was stored down there. It was so neat to go below and see all the roads, tunnels, and storage places down there, but it was even more amazing to look at the extensive collection of artifacts the Society had collected over the years. It was the first time I'd seen them. I was in History Geek Heaven!

~Deb R.

I read *Randhurst: Suburban Chicago's Grandest Shopping Center* during the COVID-19 lockdown in spring 2020. After finishing the book I was inspired to learn more about the mall and find more photos, so I went to the Historical Society website. In the process I stumbled across the job posting for the open Director position. The rest is history!

~Emily Dattilo

You can send us your memories of Randhurst at [info@mtphistory.org](mailto:info@mtphistory.org).

Happy anniversary, Randhurst!



**WHERE FRIENDLINESS IS A WAY OF LIFE**

In 1950, the Chamber of Commerce held a contest to choose a slogan that best described Mount Prospect. Elmer Bussert won the contest with his slogan, "Where Town and Country Meet." This slogan for Mount Prospect was used until 1965 when the Chamber felt it no longer applied due to the expansion of the town. A new contest was held and "Where Friendliness is a Way of Life," submitted by Delores Wells, was chosen to represent Mount Prospect. It remains our town's motto to this day.



**How well do you know Mount Prospect history? Test your knowledge with these trivia questions!**

1. In what year was the Village of Mount Prospect incorporated?  
A. 1917 B. 1920 C. 1848 D. 1950
2. Which local organization established the Mount Prospect Public Library?  
A. Lions Club B. Chamber of Commerce  
C. Women's Club D. Bookworm Club
3. Lions Memorial Park was established to honor those who died while serving in which war?  
A. World War I B. World War II C. Civil War  
D. Revolutionary War

ANSWERS: 1. A, 2. C, 3. B



## MOUNT PROSPECT HISTORICAL SOCIETY

101 South Maple Street  
Mount Prospect, IL 60056-3229  
www.mtphist.org

Located on the southeast corner of Maple Street and  
Busse Avenue

Phone: 847/392-9006  
Fax: 847/577-9660  
Email: info@mtphistory.org



NEWSLETTER

UNDERWRITTEN BY:



NON-PROFIT ORG

U.S. POSTAGE PAID

PERMIT NO. 90

MT. PROSPECT, IL

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

## UPCOMING EVENTS

### Summer Programs for Young Historians

*The Science of History (Wind)*  
Thursday, July 28  
9:30am — 11:30am

*If You Lived in Colonial Times*  
Thursday, July 28  
1:30pm — 3:30pm

Register at [www.mtphist.org](http://www.mtphist.org)

### Randhurst's 60th Birthday Party

Saturday, August 13  
11am — 2pm  
Location: Randhurst Village  
Come celebrate Randhurst's 60th  
anniversary with us!  
There will be carnival  
games, treats, a car  
show, and a historical  
display by the  
Historical Society.



### Second Sundays at the Society

11:30am—1:30pm  
Location: Mount Prospect Historical  
Society Central School (103 S. Maple St.)  
The Dietrich Friedrichs House (101 S.  
Maple St.) will also be open for tours.  
Fee: Free!

*Read in the Garden*  
Sunday, August 14  
Bring a chair or blanket and a book and  
read in our beautiful garden. You may also  
borrow a book for the day from the  
Society. Stop by Central School to make a  
colorful bookmark.

*Dietrich Friedrichs House Museum Birthday  
Party*  
Sunday, September 11  
Join us to celebrate the 30th Anniversary  
of the Dietrich Friedrichs House/  
Museum. We'll have birthday treats as  
well as party themed make-and-takes.  
Sign a special card to help us celebrate.

And be sure to take a tour of the Museum  
and post your pictures on-line.

### Save the Date!

*Sewing Circle Series: Make a Sewing Kit*  
Saturday, October 15  
10am — 12pm  
Location: Parlor of the Mount Prospect  
Historical Society Dietrich Friedrichs  
House (101 S. Maple St.)

*Nancy Drew Presentation*  
Saturday, October 29  
Location: Mount Prospect Historical  
Society Central School (103 S. Maple St.)  
Learn more about Nancy Drew,  
America's first girl  
detective, in this  
presentation by Susan  
Becker. Stay tuned for  
more details!

