

MOUNT PROSPECT HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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10 THINGS YOU DIDN'T KNOW ABOUT WILLIAM BUSSE

William Busse's legacy is well-known in Mount Prospect. However, as a Cook County Commissioner and at one time President of the Board, Busse was involved in numerous activities from the mundane to the grand. Below is an excerpt from the next installment of "Mount Prospect Stories," to be held at the Mount Prospect Public Library on Thursday, November 17th. (Visit www.mppl.org to pre-register).

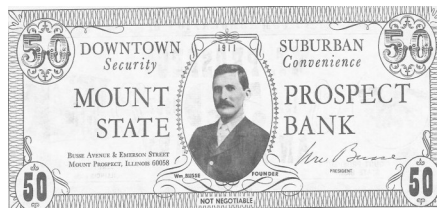


He was President of the Board:

William Busse was a lifelong Cook County politician, and put Mount Prospect on the map through his many commercial and civic ventures. His first appointment was Deputy Sheriff of Elk Grove Township on Dec. 12, 1894. He was subsequently elected to the Cook County Board of Commissioners, where he represented the "country town" factions of outlying Cook County. He served as the President of the Board, one of a mere handful of Republicans to do so, from 1907 to 1910.

He fought corruption:

Even during the term of President Busse in the early 1900s, corruption was an



(Top) William and Dina Busse relax at home, in this cozy photograph taken December 1, 1940. (Bottom, Left) Busse is seen in his Victorian finery on the occasion of the funeral of President William McKinley in 1901. (Bottom, Above) Commemorative Mount Prospect State Bank note depicting Busse.

issue in Chicago and Cook County government. Busse found that despite the old adage, thieves were stealing even what *was* nailed down. "You might not think it, but some of the cheapest thieves in town are to be found in the new county building," he told *The Chicago Daily Tribune* shortly after his election to the board presidency in February of

1908. "What will you think when I tell you some low down persons have been stealing the nickel plated and brass features from the washrooms." He continued: "Looks pretty cheap, eh? One of those nickel brackets might bring the price of two drinks. But to replace them, I must make a requisition through the

(SEE "BUSSE", PG. 3)

FROM THE ARCHIVES...

MOUNT PROSPECT HERALD
THURSDAY, MAY 22, 1969

"YEP, DURING PROHIBITION I HAD A LICENSE TO SELL GOVERNMENT WHISKEY FOR MEDICINAL PURPOSES TO ANYONE WHO HAD A DOCTOR'S PRESCRIPTION. YOU JUST WOULDN'T BELIEVE HOW MANY PEOPLE HAD THE FLU IN THOSE DAYS."

- **HERB VAN DRIEL**,
RECALLING THE EARLY
DAYS OF HIS DRUG STORE,
NOW HOME TO BUSSE'S
FLOWERS AND GIFTS

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Greg Peerbolte,
Executive Director

*HISTORY
REALLY IS
EVERYWHERE
YOU LOOK
(EVEN IN A
T-SHIRT),*

FROM THE DESK OF THE DIRECTOR

. If there's one thing I've learned, it's that history doesn't stand still. Today's current events are tomorrow's history. Here at the Society, it behooves us to document the events that are occurring around us today and have occurred in the recent past, since they are just as important to our preservation efforts as the oldest artifacts in our collection. I was reminded of this recently with the Society's Sammy Skobel t-shirt fundraiser. We've had an overwhelming response to these shirts, but I think the success goes well beyond wanting to make a fashion

statement. What's more important is what the t-shirts represent. I've heard many stories from people picking up these shirts of their recollections of visiting with Sammy and Vee in the restaurant, various milestones and memories associated with enjoying a (ketchup-free) hot dog there, and even former employees recalling fond memories of their first jobs there. The operative word here is "memory". To me, this fundraiser comes down to the Society's desire to engage residents of our community at all levels. Your memories of Mount

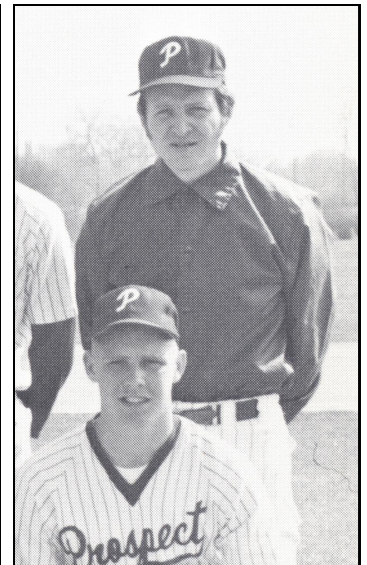
Prospect are meaningful to us all, and the times and places are all part of the wonderful, and ongoing, story of our community. History really is everywhere you look (even in a t-shirt), and it is a meaningful thing. Thanks for your continued support.

WELCOME!

The Society is pleased to welcome two new volunteer interns: Kelsey Henquinnet, a senior at Prospect High and Eileen O'Keefe, a recent graduate of Winona State.

FROM THE COLLECTION:

Recently, the Mount Prospect Historical Society received a donation of several Prospect High School yearbooks, courtesy of the Friends of the Arlington Heights Library. Of particular interest was the 1976 edition of the *Crest*, which discussed the 1975 Knights Varsity Baseball's season under its young captain, shortstop Mike Quade. Led by Quade, the Knights finished with a winning record of 11-10, with the highlight of the season coming in a perfect game thrown by pitcher George Savage against conference champs Rolling Meadows. For his part, Quade was one of only two Knights named to the All-Conference team. Apparently, Quade was quite comfortable in his leadership role, and an astute captain, as he is now in his first full season as the skipper of the legendary Chicago Cubs. In a recent interview with the *Daily Herald*, Quade reflected on his leadership philosophy. He cited his coaches at Prospect High School, where he was a standout in three sports, as early influences, including baseball coach Larry Pohlman (pictured with Quade above): "It comes from a lot of great teachers that I've had," he says. "The words 'teacher' and 'coach' are synonymous. The teacher is instructing something academic. The coach is instructing something athletic. To me, it's that simple." On behalf the Society, we congratulate Coach Quade on this monumental accomplishment and wish him great success in exorcising the Billy Goat.



BUSSE, CON'T FROM PAGE 1

sheriff's office, the superintendent of public service, and finally it is brought up before the county finance committee." Busse vowed to station plain clothes men throughout the building, and also vehemently defended the building's "scrub women" from the accusations: "No, sir. Judge Barnes left his gold watch on his desk the other day when he left the building. A scrub woman brought it to me the next morning."

It further appears that the *Tribune* was having a particularly bizarre news day. An article which ran directly below this one bore the title of "What is a Sausage? Solved By Federal Food Experts" (In case you're curious: "Comminted meat from cattle or swine...contain(ing) no larger amount of water than the meats from which it is prepared, and if it bears a name descriptive of composition or origin, it corresponds to such descriptive name. All animal tissues used as containers, such as casings,



Second Busse Buick, circa 1930

stomachs, etc., are clean and sound.") Another nearby piece reported: "The Lutheran clergy of Milwaukee has denounced (William Shakespeare's) 'Merchant of Venice' as against Christian principles, tending to demoralize the church, and without literary value."

He had a sense of humor: In a 1923 series of humorous advertisements that were created by noted writer J.P. McEvoy, William Busse was listed among a group of Chicago's elite politicians and businessmen as County Commissioner and operator of a Buick dealership. The advertisement suggested that Busse apparently was an advocate of paved roads (for obvious reasons), and

that his status as County Commissioner assured potential customers he could be trusted. (Insert Chicago politician joke here.) A limerick at the conclusion of the ad stated:

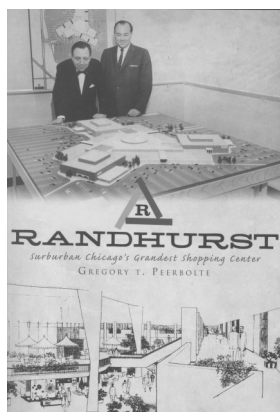
*Is your little old auto too mussy?
To finicky, freaky or fussy?
Then scurry or swish
To this County Commish
And get a real bus from Bill Busse*

He helped to make Illinois the "Land of Lincoln": While president of the county board, Busse was one of the charter members of the Lincoln Centenary Association. The group's aim, according to the *Chicago Daily Tribune* in 1908, was to make "Lincoln's state a world Mecca" and ensure Illinois was "celebrating the one hundredth anniversary of the birth of Abraham Lincoln in a manner that will command world wide attention."

To be continued at the Mount Prospect Public Library, Thursday, November 17th.

Randhurst: Suburban Chicago's Grandest Shopping Center.

Get your copy at the Society or online today! This volume covers the entire history of Randhurst Shopping Center and is loaded with pictures! The book has been featured in the *New York Times*, the *Daily Herald*, C-Span's Book TV and Chicago Public Radio. A review of the book on goodreads.com states, "Local history at its best, but still relevant to a much larger audience." Copies are \$20 and benefit MPHS.



Sammy Skobel T-Shirts Still Available

The Society has recently re-stocked on Sammy Skobel t-shirts. The shirts are \$20 and all proceeds benefit the Society's operating fund. The sizes range from adult S-XL. We also have a very limited number of XXLs, available at \$22. Shirts can also be shipped anywhere in the country via Paypal through our online Museum Store at www.mtphist.org

Got a Randhurst memory? Photos?
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STADTMITTE STRIKES BACK - THANK YOU!

We'd like to thank our sponsors, volunteers and participants for our second annual Stadtmittle History Crawl. We again had beautiful weather for this event, and it was great to see downtown Mount Prospect come to life on a summer evening. In case you missed it, some highlights included: (top right) "Crawlers" enjoying the ambience, and a little "Mount Prospect Trivia" at Mrs. P & Me; (below right) Pastor Dan Swinson portrays an 1830s settler to the area, periodically dismissing passing trains on the Northwest line as a "fad" outside of Keefer's Pharmacy.



2011 Holiday Housewalk

This year's 24th annual Holiday Housewalk will be held **Sunday, December 4th**. It's not too early to save the date! Further details of the event will be announced when they become available.