

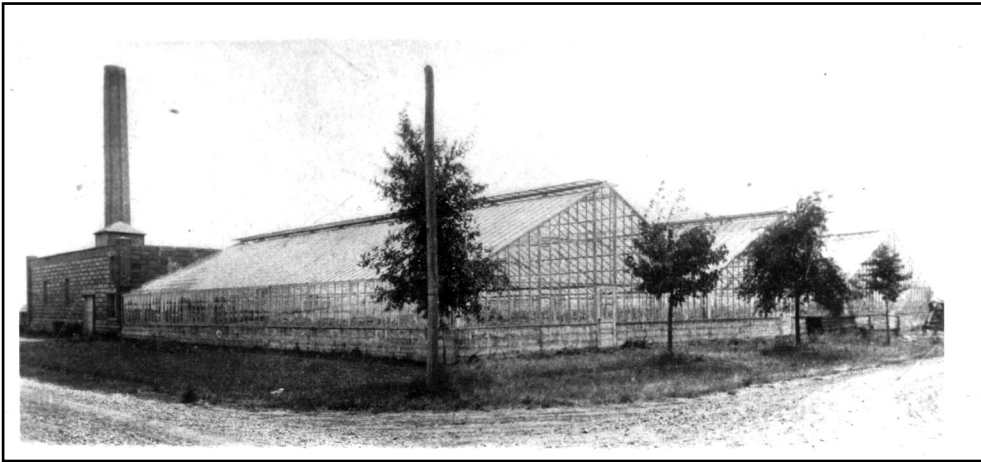
MOUNT PROSPECT HISTORICAL SOCIETY

KEEPING HOMETOWN MEMORIES ALIVE

MUSEUM JOURNAL

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BUSSE'S FLOWERS & GIFTS: A COMMUNITY HEIRLOOM



Busse's Flowers & Gifts greenhouses, c. 1916

In 1916, Louis Busse, following the suggestion of his son Fred Busse opened a wholesale flower business at 303 E. Evergreen. At that time, Mount Prospect was unincorporated; the population of the village totaled slightly less than three hundred; and Northwest Highway existed only in the minds of visionaries. Busse's greenhouse was on the outskirts of town at the time and was surrounded by open space and fields. The father and son team used Louis Busse's knowledge of farming and Fred Busse's experience working in a greenhouse in Des Plaines to build up a successful wholesale business, shipping flowers daily by train to merchants in Chicago.

As the population of Mount Prospect expanded in the 1930s and 40s, so did Busse's Flowers. No longer

considered to be on the outskirts of town due to development, Busse's Flowers began catering to the growing demand for retail sales in the community. By the end of World War II the population of Mount Prospect was booming and the time was ripe to expand the flower store. Harold Busse, one of Fred Busse's three sons, returned from his Army service in 1947. It was at this time that Busse's Flowers built an addition for retail sale of flowers, pottery and other gift items.

Harold Busse and his wife, Carol, began working exclusively in the retail floral business. They were able to expand this part of the business while the greenhouse continued to supply them with flowers by the dozen. In 1951 the store was remodeled and the sales

area was significantly increased. The store was now offering greeting cards, artificial flowers, decorative vases and an assortment of other collectibles. At this time, Mount Prospect was in a period of major expansion with a population more than doubling in the preceding ten years.

In 1964 Harold and Carol took over the ownership of the business and completely remodeled the store. With this remodeling came a major expansion of the retail store to meet the demand of the continually expanding population of Mount Prospect.

As with previous generations, Harold and Carol had both of their children involved in the business. Their older child,

(SEE "BUSSE'S FLOWERS," PG.3)

SAVE THESE DATES...!

June 11: "Historic Garden Party Bridal Shower," Mount Prospect Historical Society, 101 S. Maple St., 1-4 p.m., \$10 or \$12 day of event.

June 16: Mount Prospect Stories: "Busse's Flowers & Gifts: A Community Heirloom" at the Mount Prospect Public Library, 7 p.m. Free.

July 21: Life as a Prairie Girl I & II, 101 S. Maple St., 9:30-11:30 a.m. and 1:30-3:30 p.m., \$25.

July 28: The Science of History! at 101 S. Maple St., 9:30 a.m.-12 p.m., \$25.

August 10, 2016: Silent Movie Night at the MPHS Museum Campus Lawn, 101 S. Maple St., 7:30 p.m. Free.

To register for any of these events, or for more information contact the Historical Society, 847/392-9006, or visit the website at www.mthist.org

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Lindsay Rice

A year from now, Central School will be finishing up its inaugural season of field trips and tours for the school children of Mount Prospect, who will be buzzing with excitement at the end of another school year.

From my office, I can hear the busy every day life

FROM THE DESK OF THE DIRECTOR

walking past my window. I am looking forward to the day when I can hear the excited shrieks and laughter as children wait outside of Central School to step back in time.

With our fundraising energized by the recent appeal in the Village utility bill, the competition between elementary schools to collect spare change, and the Feel The Burn 5K Walk/Run for Central School, we're happy to report the Historical Society will have the schoolhouse open in time for the Village's centennial early 2017.

During the Village-wide garage sale, May 20-22, a student from Fairview Elementary decided to sell lemonade at his family's



garage sale. (Pictured above.) Along with some friends, he also decided to donate all the money from the lemonade stand and the garage sale to Central School! The money his lemonade stand made will be added to Fairview Elementary's spare change drive for Central School. The lemonade stand raised a total of \$118.36!

We are continuing to raise funds for Central School throughout 2016 to fund the

interior furnishings of the schoolhouse. In addition to renovating the structure itself, the interior has yet to be furnished to look as it did when it was a classroom over 100 years ago. By experiencing a historically accurate atmosphere, children will not only learn about the past, they will also to live it. Every dollar donated ensures that each child who visits Central School will walk away with a memory and a smile.

HISTORIC GARDEN PARTY BRIDAL SHOWER

June is bridal month and every bride knows that a wonderful gown is the key to her special day. Also, important, but not often mentioned, are those special supporting garments underneath which make everything look just right.

Ladies, join the Mount Prospect Historical Society and step back in time for a "bridal shower" for Bessie Friedrichs. Tour Bessie's historic home, which is now the Mount Prospect Historical Society. In the beautiful and historically accurate garden, guests can indulge in light refreshments of finger sandwiches, sweet desserts, lemonade, iced tea and champagne.

Our novel and sometimes naughty presentation for the afternoon: "The Rise and Fall of Ladies' Undergarments," by Ellie of *Ellie Presents!*

This talk will unveil facts and expose myths about women's unmentionables. It includes stories from real women past and present, and their amusing and sometimes uncomfortable relationship with their foundations.

Participants will also view examples of historic underwear.



Bessie and her mother, Lena on Bessie's wedding day in 1937.

Special thanks to Lurvey Landscape Supply & Garden Center for their \$100 donation to the Historical Society gardens!



Landscape Supply & Garden Center
2550 E. Dempster St.
Des Plaines IL 60016
847.824.7411 www.lurvey.com
(Conveniently located 2 blocks east of I-294)

“BUSSE’S FLOWERS”,
CON’T FROM PAGE 1)

Linda, runs the business today with her husband Paul Seils. Paul had been working at the flower shop part time while attending Northern Illinois University and dating Linda. In 1970, after graduating with a degree in Business Administration, Seils began working full time at the store and has been there ever since.

Since Paul and Linda have been at Busse’s Flowers there have been a few changes. The biggest of these is that Busse’s Flowers is now in a different building at a new address. In 1987, as a part of the Village’s downtown redevelopment plan, Busse’s Flowers sold its original location and moved two blocks from the corner of

Evergreen Ave. and Elm St. to the Corner of Northwest Hwy. and Elm St. The new store was exclusively retail with the greenhouses left behind. In this way, Busse’s Flowers has mirrored the development of Mount Prospect, going from farming to exporting specialty goods to mixed retail and finally to just retail.

Much of the legacy of Busse’s Flowers is not only the development and longevity of the business but also in what the business has given back to the community. In 1961 Busse’s Flowers began hosting a Holiday Open House, which became a yearly tradition, and was one of the most popular holiday events in the area. In the 1970s, the flower shop brought design and creativity to the residents of Mount Prospect by offering flower

design classes. Paul Seils was elected President of the Chamber in 1984 and now is a member of the Special Events Commission.

The traditions of Busse’s Flowers & Gifts have continued with a new generation. Paul and Linda’s children Jeremy and Heather have joined the staff of the store, and Jeremy’s wife,



Fred Busse standing in the greenhouse, c. 1970 Sarah, has joined the flower

business, as well. Utilizing the energy and dedication of this family’s fifth generation, Mount Prospect’s longest running business is sure to continue well beyond its 100th year.

Join the Mount Prospect Historical Society at the Library on Thursday, June 16 at 7 p.m. Mount Prospect Stories: Busse’s Flowers & Gifts: A Community Heirloom. For more information, visit mpppl.org.

CENTENNIAL STORE NOW AVAILABLE!

A variety of commemorative Mount Prospect Centennial items are now available for sale both locally and online. Yard signs proclaiming a homeowner’s support for the celebration are being sold for \$15 each (cash or check only) through the Mt. Prospect Park District’s Central Community Center, 1000 W. Central Rd., and RecPlex, 420 W. Dempster St., as well as through the River Trails Park District’s Marvin Weiss Center, 1500 E. Euclid Ave. They are being sold exclusively through the park districts (and possibly at selected events) because they would be difficult and cost-prohibitive to ship. All other items are available for viewing and purchase through the Centennial website at www.mountprospect100.com. **Shipping and handling fees will be charged and there will be a minimum merchandise charge of \$20 to use Paypal or a credit card.** Items may also be purchased at the Mount Prospect Historical Society museum, 101 S. Maple St., on Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays between 10 a.m. and 3 p.m., (847-392- 9006). They may also be sold on occasion at a “pop-up” type of shop during selected local events like the Farmer’s Market, the Downtown Merchants Association Saturday night Car Shows and the Downtown Block Party.

Centennial Lapel Pin

A cloisonné-style lapel pin (one inch in diameter) featuring the purple and white Centennial logo.

\$5



Centennial Posters

Three coordinating color 18" X 24" posters of modern Mount Prospect which may be purchased separately for \$20 each or in a set of all three for \$50. They are suitable for framing and come in poster tubes to prevent damage.

\$20/each or \$50/set



Centennial Coin & Ornament Set

An attractively-boxed set featuring one of the few remaining silver coins (encased in plastic) that was struck in 1992 to celebrate the 75th anniversary of Mount Prospect and a limited edition crystal ornament etched with the Centennial logo.

\$75



Centennial Baby Onesie

A white baby onesie showing the Centennial logo, along with the sentiment: “Babies: Making a Difference in Mount Prospect for over 100 Years.”

Sizes Available:
up to 18-24 months

Washing Instructions:
100% cotton
machine washable - cold, no chlorine bleach, tumble dry low, no ironing

\$20

These are being sold in honor of Norman William Pohlman who was born on January 31, 1917. His birth was eagerly awaited because the state dictated that a community had to have at least 300 people in order to incorporate. At the time of his birth, he became Mount Prospect’s 300th resident which allowed the papers of incorporation to be filed with the state. Norman’s story is included with each onesie purchased.





MOUNT PROSPECT HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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SUMMER ACTIVITIES FOR KIDS!



Celebrating history is NOT just for adults! The Mount Prospect Historical Society offers educational programs for kids, too! This summer, our Living History Committee is hosting three programs that are designed just for kids!

Life As A Prairie Girl

Thursday, July 21

Prairie Girl I

9:30 - 11:30 a.m.

For girls entering 2nd to 4th grade.

We'll make dolls, try old fashioned chores, and learn about helpful plants in the garden. We will also make our own lemonade!

Prairie Girl II

1:30 - 3:30 p.m.

For girls entering 3rd to 5th grade, and for girls who attended Prairie Girl I in July 2015.

During this session, we will try our hand at sewing, make a no-bake summer treat, explore the gardens, and more!

Space is limited.

Cost is \$25 per session, per child.

The deadline to register is Thursday, July 14.

The Science of History!

Thursday, July 28

9:30 a.m. - 12 p.m.

For boys and girls entering
2nd to 5th grade.

This program will include creating catapults, water wheels, simple machines and, if time permits, an old-fashioned game or two!

Space is limited.

Cost is \$25 per child.

The deadline to register is
Thursday, July 21.

To register for any of these events,
call us at 847/392-9006 or visit
our website at www.mtphist.org.

