



Lake Villa Historical Society's Vintage Views

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President's Letter

Happy New Year!
Hope everyone enjoyed the holiday season. It was a very busy time for Lake Villa Historical Society. Thanks to our volunteers who represented LVHS in the Lake Villa Holiday Parade in November and handed out flyers advertising for Breakfast with Santa. Thank you to the countless volunteers who helped us make the 7th Annual Breakfast with Santa a very successful event. We are so fortunate to have so many community minded organizations including the Lake Villa Township Lions Club, the Girl Scouts, and Boy Scouts and Lake Villa Queens volunteering their time to help make it such a great event. We wrapped up the season enjoying a performance from the Antioch High School Madrigal Chorus at our December membership meeting that was held at the library. Be sure to join us for our upcoming meetings listed in our calendar of events. Next up is Lake Villa Trivia on February 19th. We look forward to seeing you!
Stay warm,
Lori Heitman



Membership Renewal for 2019

"Calling all past, present and future Lake-Villians! It's now time to renew your LVHS membership for 2019. Please take a moment to fill out the attached application and consider giving a gift membership to someone who loves Lake Villa (who doesn't ?!) We have an exciting year of fascinating programs and special events planned for you. Programs are held the 3rd Tuesday of the month at 7pm at the museum (223 Lake Ave.) We plan a fun field trip once a year, and also travel to places of historical importance around Lake Villa. Don't miss out...Join or renew today! "

Sympathy

Deepest sympathy is extended to Joanne Osmond and the family and friends of LVHS member Bud Osmond. Bud passed away on January 9, 2019.

Heartfelt sympathy is extended to Karen Harms, Lake Villa Board Member, and family and friends on the loss of her husband David. He passed away on January 23, 2019.

Museum Hours

Thursdays 1:30 – 4:30pm
We will gladly open at other times by appointment. Just give us a call or email to make arrangements.

A PAGE FROM THE PAST

The Lake Villa economy was fueled by a major ice harvesting industry from the mid 1800s until refrigeration became common in the 1940s.

From *Images of Lake Villa Township Illinois*, p. 38 comes the following information.

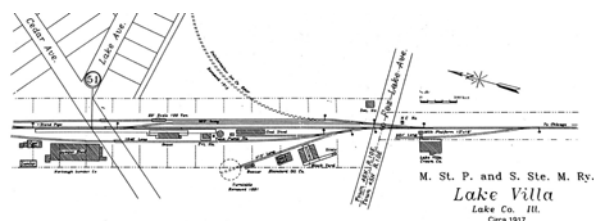


LAKE VILLA LIBRARY HISTORY FILE
PHOTOGRAPHS - LAKE VILLA, 1901 - 1941

The Knickerbocker Ice Company built a plant on the south shore of Deep Lake in 1888 with a railroad spur connected to the site. This industry thrived in part because it coincided with the growing commercial need for thicker, cleaner ice. Blocks of ice were cut from the frozen area lakes and shipped by train to Chicago. Horses pulled huge double cut saws along the lakes and steam engines lifted the 22" blocks on ropes and pulleys to the warehouse. The meatpacking plants of Chicago were in great need of ice to keep meat from spoiling in railroad cars. A 10-cent per ton tax on all ice exported from Wisconsin also created a need for ice houses in Illinois.

In the winter of 1896, 40 railroad cars of ice were leaving Lake Villa daily; by 1906, the number increased to 120 carloads daily. Local farmers were employed by the ice industry as were migratory workers who came to live and work in Lake Villa.

The Knickerbocker Icehouse had twenty plus rooms set aside to accommodate the workers. Many industries in addition to resorts and ice grew as a result of the train's arrival including lumber and dairy.



Dan Botts, LVHS Board member shares the following: *My grandfather, Leo Barnstable was a farmer and also an ice harvester. When I was in my pre-teen years, my Mom (Edna Botts) and I lived with my grandparents while my Dad, Joe Botts, was deployed overseas. In their house was a horsehide rug on the attic floor. I didn't think much about it until I was told that the horse fell through the ice while my grandfather was cutting ice . . . then I was terrified of the rug. It wasn't until recently (60 years later) that I found out the rest of the story. While looking through a book at LVHS I came across this article in the Antioch News, dated January, 1915.*

"Leo Barnstable lost a valuable team of horses while driving across Long Lake. He had been filling his ice house and was returning some of the slides. On his way home he drove on some thin ice. Guy Hook and Soren Sorenson were with him and Sorenson happened to get onto solid ice. With the help of a slide and pike pole, the other men finally got onto solid ice but the team and sleigh were lost."

The following excerpts are from *Lake Villa Then and Now, Centennial History of Lake Villa Illinois*: "Ice cutting in the winter was one of Lake Villa's past industries. Both Lester Hamlin and the late Elmer Sheehan would reminisce about those days. Ice from most of the local lakes was cut to put into ice boxes. The ice was kept in an icehouse on the southwest corner of Deep Lake. Cork was used as insulation for walls, and sawdust was put between the layers of ice so all of the ice wouldn't melt together. It would be shipped to Chicago by rail to be used for refrigeration. An iceman would go down the street and families could buy ice for their ice boxes. Lester would jokingly say that it was a lot of fun when the ice would melt and "flood" the kitchen. Jobless people from Chicago would come out on the train and work a couple days cutting ice to earn some money, and then go back to the city. They didn't have any warm boots so they'd wrap their shoes in burlap sacks. They'd come out to Lake Villa because they knew there would always be work cutting ice." (page vii)

E.J. Lehmann's children deeded the land on Cedar Avenue known as Lehmann Park to the Village in 1921. The land is to be used as a park for Village residents. The deed states that there is to be no commercial ice harvesting or the land will revert to the Lehmann family. (page 4)

What's In Your Attic

Can you identify this object from our museum collection? The answer will be in the Spring 2019 edition of *Vintage Views*. If you can't wait to find out, drop by the museum.



Last issue featured a hair dryer. It still works if anyone is interested in stopping by to try out a new hairstyle!

Meeting Moment

Antioch High School Madrigal Chorus entertained at the December meeting held at Lake Villa Library.

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