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Northwest Chicago Historical Society

Your Neighborhood Historical Society

Newsletter – July 2010

In This Issue:

Number XII

St. Pat's High School - 150 Years

• The Jefferson Ice Company

The Northwest Chicago Historical Society would like to thank Megan M. Ivers, Media Relations Director at Saint Patrick High School, for contacting us regarding the school's 150-year anniversary. She supplied us with many of the great images for this newsletter. The school, located at Belmont and Austin, has been a fixture for many years; it is hard to imagine anyone who has not had a relative or friend that attended this institution.

Excitement about local history is contagious. Upon hearing about the St Pat's High School's 150-year anniversary, NWCHS board member Chuck Brown was kind enough to share his multi-generational connection to the school. Thanks for the history Chuck!

Another long-lived institution on the Northwest side was the Jefferson Ice Company. For 142, years it was an integral part of the Northwest Side. Many may not remember home delivery of ice and the big yellow buildings that supplied ice from coin operated machines. However, their story of change parallels the same changes our great city has gone through: horses, automobiles, mechanical refrigeration and air-conditioning.

The Northwest Chicago Historical Society is always open to finding out more about historic happenings, such as the anniversary of St. Patrick High School. Feel free to contact us about anything that would be of interest to our readers. Additionally, we are open to including historic article submissions about the local area. This publication, along with meetings and events, helps us to disseminate information throughout the Northwest Side as part of our mission. We appreciate the support of local institutions and businesses who continue to further our success. - Frank Suerth

Mission Statement:

As the Northwest Chicago Historical Society, our mission is to educate others about the history of the Northwest neighborhoods of Chicago. We will accomplish this through discussion at meetings, public tours and events, and dissemination of historical documents and photos through publications. Additionally, we desire to collaborate with others in the community to continue to maintain and preserve the history of our collective neighborhoods. By linking the past with the present and the future, we will provide awareness and create appreciation for our place in Chicago's and Illinois' history.

The Northwest Chicago Historical Society

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Membership:

\$15.00 per calendar year

\$10.00 for 65 years old and over

Website: nwchicagohistory.org

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Letters

Letters have been edited for clarity and space.

I found some information about the Northwest Airport that was located in Jefferson Park at Central and Milwaukee. Do you have any information on this airport?

Nick Selig - Unincorporated Naperville, IL

You are correct, there was an airport called the Northwest Airport located on Central Road and Milwaukee Avenue. The airport was later renamed Sky Ways Airport. But not in Jefferson Park, it was in Des Plaines, Illinois. The airport closed in 1942. - NWCHS

I am descended from Richard Townsend, one of the early settlers of Jefferson Township in Cook County. He arrived in 1836 along with James and Phillip Townsend (presumably brothers or cousins) and purchased a federal land grant in 1841. He and James jointly owned the 145 acres currently bounded by Laramie street on the west, Cicero on the east, Foster on the south, and the southern tip of Edgebrook Woods on the north (Bryn Mawr would be the northern road boundary if it continued thru the woods). The west fork of the north branch of the Chicago River cuts thru a small part of the northern boundary.

I am hoping you can help me with my genealogy research. Using census records and federal land purchase records, I've been able to piece together some information about this family. Can you point me in the direction of early records/documents of Jefferson Township that might provide additional detail about the Townsends? I'm primarily interested in the 1836-1880 years.

I live in, so access to the physical records is limited. I would be willing to make a trip to Chicago if I knew such records existed.

Karen Engelauf - Houston, Texas

Early Jefferson Township records (before 1889) are available at:

*Illinois Regional Archives Depository
Ronald Williams Library
Northeastern Illinois University
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Chicago, IL 60625-4699
Telephone: (773) 442-4506*

Good Luck in your search. - NWCHS

Photo of James Townsend who was a descendent of one of these early settlers. James and his brother operated a tavern on Milwaukee Avenue just north of Lawrence Avenue.



THE GREATER INDEPENDENCE PARK NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION



The Greater Independence Park Neighborhood Association (GIPNA) is a non-profit association representing the area bounded by Addison Street, Pulaski Road, Irving Park Road, and Central Park Avenue.

MISSION STATEMENT:

The Greater Independence Park Neighborhood Association (GIPNA) is dedicated to maintaining and enhancing the quality of life in the Independence Park community by involving, informing, and encouraging people to participate in matters relating to the community, and by protecting the historical, social, cultural, and architectural character of the neighborhood.

GIPNA EVENTS AND SERVICES

- The **POWCE**, bimonthly newsletter
- Farmers Market in Independence Park
- Fine Craft Fair
- Gourmet Pancake Breakfast
- Community Garage Sale
- Spring Alley Cleanup
- Community Talent Show
- *Wagway* Fest!
- Pet Registry
- Liaison to 33rd, 35th, and 39th Ward offices for nuisance issues, traffic and streetscape, and zoning issues
- School Committee to focus on improving our neighborhood schools
- E-mail Alerts for crime issues, lost pets, and other community notices
- E-mail Event Listings of all neighborhood events

2010 Farmers Markets in Independence Park
Sundays 9AM-1PM
June 13 • June 27
July 11 • July 25
August 8 • August 22
September 12 • September 26
October 10



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www.independence-park.com

GIPNA also supports the John B. Murphy Elementary School; Adopt-a-Family; Independence Park events, including Therapeutic Kids Pizza Parties, Summer Camp Scholarships, and Senior Bus Trips; 17th District Chicago Police DAC (District Advisory Committee); Irving Park Community Food Pantry; LTDA Home; Irving Park Historical Society; and numerous community gardens.

GIPNA works with the Independence Park Advisory Council and the Athletic Field Advisory Council to co-sponsor Movies in the Park. We also have helped in coordinating efforts to put an Art in My Back Yard, assisted the Independence Park Bungalow Renovation Project in its efforts to restore the Women's Building at the corner of Hamlin and Byron, and worked with CAPS (Chicago Alternative Policing Strategy) in fostering relations between the police and the community.



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Letters

The writer is a middle aged Australian, who has resided in Italy most of his adult life, trying to conclude some family genealogical research to pass on to his children and other interested family members. Our research has established a connection with the North West of your windy city and what follows may be of interest to you as my Great great paternal grandfather was a very early resident at Jefferson. I've been told that he and his family appear in the June 1850 census and are recorded as Robert and Hannah Ollerhead, both born in England and respectively 30 and 24 years of age and their then one-year-old son John. I believe Robert was noted to be a farmer with assets of 1000 dollars.

Hannah Ollerhead died shortly after the census and I suspect the cholera outbreak in Cook County at the time claimed her life but I can't be sure, as official records no longer seem to exist. Caroline Bickley, (my Great great grandmother) within 2 years of Hannah Ollerhead's death she married Robert Ollerhead in Illinois and probably on the 19th of February 1852 or in 1851.

Georgianna Bickley, married Freyer Marwood a blacksmith on May 10, 1851 in either Milwaukee or in Cook county Illinois. Certainly they had, along with her mother, brother Edmund and sister Mary Elizabeth taken up residence on land at Jefferson / Galewood.

Freyer and Georgianna Marwood continued on in Jefferson and a Bickley family historian wrote he raised horses to draw Chicago street cars. There are several references to him, or his descendants, in this period on the web: From the web site of Elmwood Park:

On January 26, 1967, the Village was paralyzed by a major snowstorm. Snow fell for twenty-nine hours and over three feet accumulated. All transportation stopped and snowdrifts were over five feet. It was the largest snow storm noted in Village history since the "Blizzard of 1878" when Farmer Marwood rescued passengers from a Chicago & Pacific line stuck in a snow drift on the Marwood Farm.

Also I read that there is a "W Marwood avenue" in the North West of Chicago which seems to have been the area of Jefferson / Galewood where Freyer and Robert had there farms. Both location names are mentioned in family oral history as well as "solid city" which I guess was a rather generic name for the growing City of Chicago.

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What I have outlined above is based on the few birth, death and census records that I have in hand and family history carried out by people unfortunately no longer with us, as well as a good component of oral history which with the spread of internet and access to historical files I have in good part been able to confirm. But much of Bickley-Ollerhead family history in Cook County Illinois is missing in part because of documents apparently destroyed in the "Great fire of Chicago."

I would appreciate any help to find information about family descendants and especially those who might be interested in family history. In particular I would like to establish; the exact location of Robert Ollerhead's farm and if Freyer Marwood bought Robert's farm or another property.

Yours truly,

Keith Olerhead - Brescia, Italy

It looks like Georgianna Bickley, married Freyer Marwood in Wisconsin because their first two children were born there. According to Freyer Marwood obit he was a resident of Mont Clare, IL since the early eighteen fifties, died in his house on January 16, 1910 at 80 years old. He is buried at Rose Hill Cemetery in Chicago. His wife Georgianna died at age 71 on December 29, 1904.

From Elmwood Park Village history, "The Blizzard of 1878" when Farmer Marwood rescued passengers from a Chicago & Pacific line stuck in a snow drift on the Marwood Farm". It looks like the Marwood farm was near Harlem & Grand Avenue, which would be the boarder of Elmwood Park and Mont Clare (Jefferson Township).

In 1920, 52 year old Merritt Marwood, Freyer's son, lived at 2318 North Harlem, across the street from Chicago on the Elmwood Park side. This is within 500 feet of the railroad tracks. This property could have been part of the earlier Marwood Farm.

I could not find a Marwood avenue at any time in Chicago, but there is one in Elmwood Park, IL and just west in River Grove, IL. It could be that Freyer Marwood's farm was in both Chicago (Galewood & Mont Clare) and Elmwood Park, which is Jefferson Township and Leyden Township.

Could the Freyer Marwood farm be on the same property as the Ollerhead farm? Maybe, but if they were not they were very close in each other. - NWCHS

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7.

Image Courtesy of St. Pat's High School



Football has been a part of Saint Patrick's High School for many years as shown in this early photo. The first football team played in 1897 and they practiced in Grant Park. CA 1900

Image Courtesy of St. Pat's High School

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IMPROVEMENT UPDATE

In the fall of 1861, a quartet of Christian Brothers welcomed a group of neighborhood boys into the newly formed St. Patrick Academy. That quiet, unassuming event would forever alter Chicago's landscape and establish a relationship surviving well into the 21st Century.

Through the Great Chicago Fire, Chicago's growth as a major American city, and into a new century, the Christian Brothers of St. Patrick Academy worked to serve a city in flux, an ever-changing demographic seeking the Brothers' mix of practical education, career preparation, and spiritual guidance.

A move to Chicago's northwest side in 1953 marked a new era in the history of Chicago's oldest all-boys Catholic high school and provided the school a modern headquarters for its work. In the face of significant societal shifts and Chicago's continued urban evolution, the mission of Saint Patrick High School never wavered.

Despite the turn of two centuries, the same no-frills mission remains today, a school intent on nurturing young men with a sense of vocation, citizenship, and civic responsibility. Given its practical objective, it comes as no surprise that Saint Patrick alumni have played an integral role in the city's ascent, many lining the ranks of Chicago's police and fire departments, directing community businesses and organizations. and providing both the muscle and mind to make Chicago "the city that works."

Through economic depressions and world wars and Chicago's growth as an international city, Saint Patrick High School has provided a safe educational environment and committed itself to fostering young men capable of contributing to their communities and city in noble, necessary ways. Proud of the work we have accomplished over the last 150 years, we continue to pursue innovative ways to make Saint Patrick an accessible option for our city's families.



The Christian Brothers near Adams Street and Des Plaines opened the original school in 1861. The early facility consists completely of these Brothers.

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Early Saint Patrick's typing class under the watchful eye of the Brother standing by the door. Student uniform was coat and tie. The photo on the back of the classroom wall and on the right is the same photo of Brother Joakim. Brother Joakim was appointed head of the school in 1902 but died suddenly at the age of 31 on November 21, 1904.

Image Courtesy of St. Pat's High School

Written on the blackboard between the cross and the shamrocks is this poem:

*May all the spring world's beauty
Bring home this thought to you
The Lord who loved the likes
12. Did ***** with them too!*



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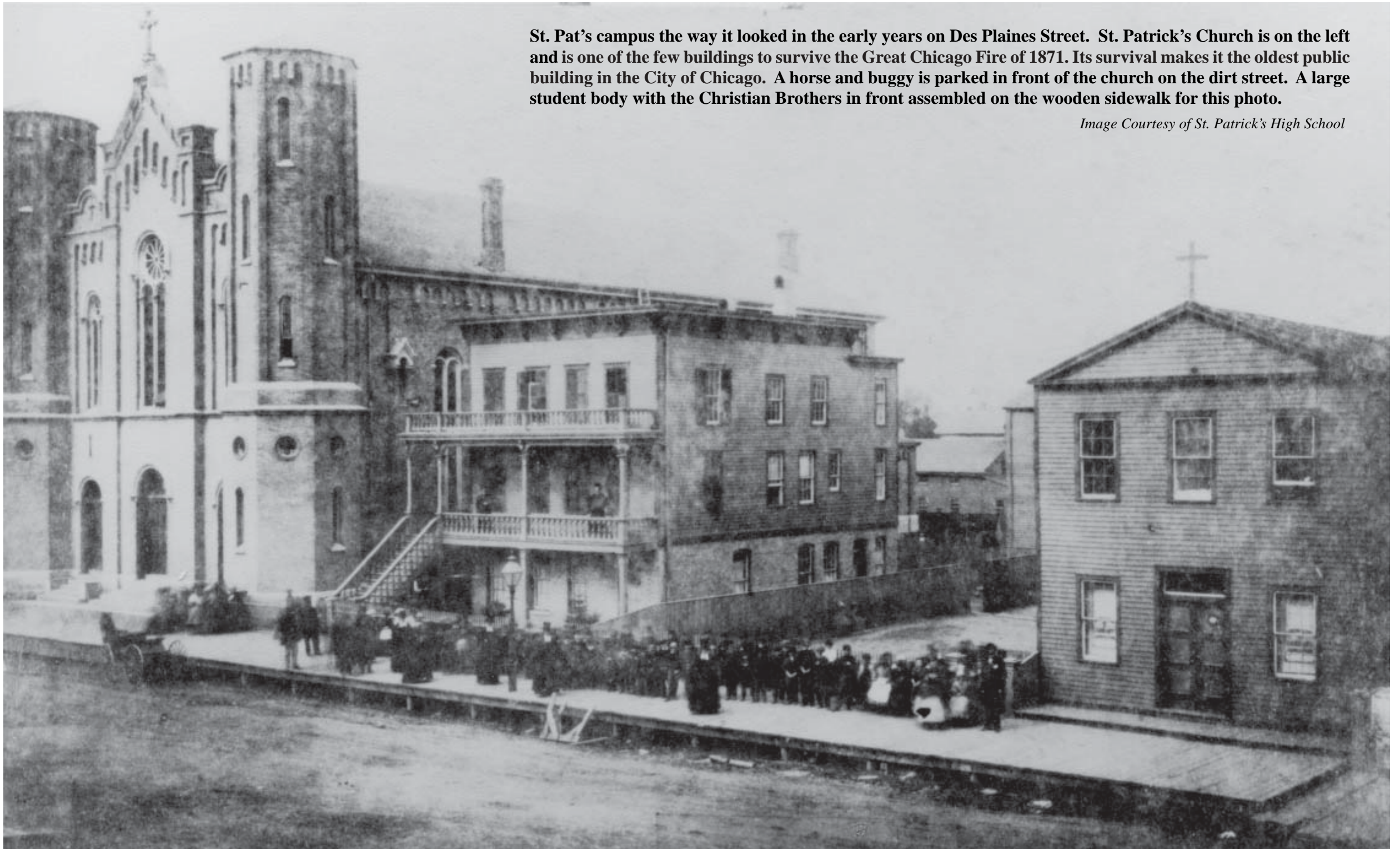
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St. Pat's campus the way it looked in the early years on Des Plaines Street. St. Patrick's Church is on the left and is one of the few buildings to survive the Great Chicago Fire of 1871. Its survival makes it the oldest public building in the City of Chicago. A horse and buggy is parked in front of the church on the dirt street. A large student body with the Christian Brothers in front assembled on the wooden sidewalk for this photo.

Image Courtesy of St. Patrick's High School



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The construction site of Saint Patrick's High School at its current location, on the northwest side. In 1953, the school moved to its present day home. An addition to the new structure was added and completed in 1956.

Images Courtesy of St. Pat's High School

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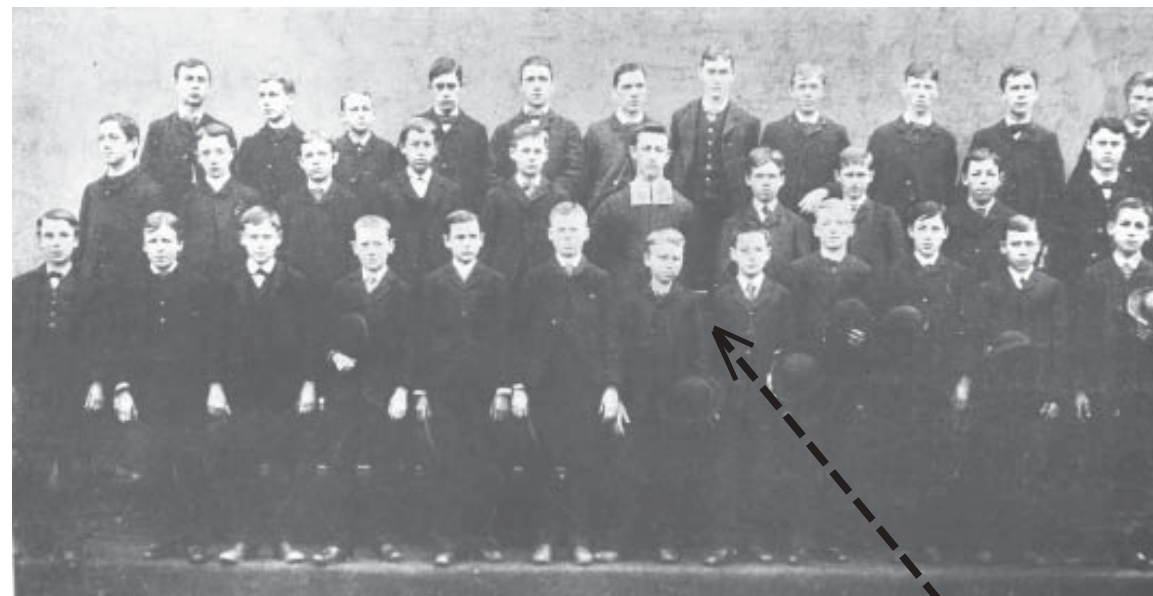
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Northwest Chicago Historical Society board member Chuck Brown has a multi-generation connection to Saint Patrick High School. The photo on the left shows his grandmother Rose Wilson and her brother Charles F. Wilson (Brother Cornelius Paul). St. Pat's class photo of 1884 shows Charles Wilson at age 16. Charles Wilson became a Christian Brother and took the name Cornelius Paul. Brother Cornelius Paul was director of Saint Patrick High School from 1921 to 1924. All of Charles Wilson's brothers, Edward, William, George, and Frank also attended Saint Patrick's Academy. Frank J. Wilson became Cook County Commissioner and committeeman for the old 41st Ward. Wilson Park on Milwaukee Avenue in Jefferson Park is named after him.



Image on left Courtesy of Chuck Brown

Image above Courtesy of St. Pat's High School

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Photo taken at the 1947 St Patrick's Alumni Dinner. NWCHS board member Chuck Brown's uncle Jim Brown at the left with dark hair and a big smile, next to him is his great uncle Brother Cornelius Paul with the glasses, across the table to the right is Chuck's uncle Austin (Buzz) Brown, and to the right of Buzz and on the far right of the photo is Chuck's grandfather, Alexander Brown, all St. Pat's graduates.

Image Courtesy of Chuck Brown

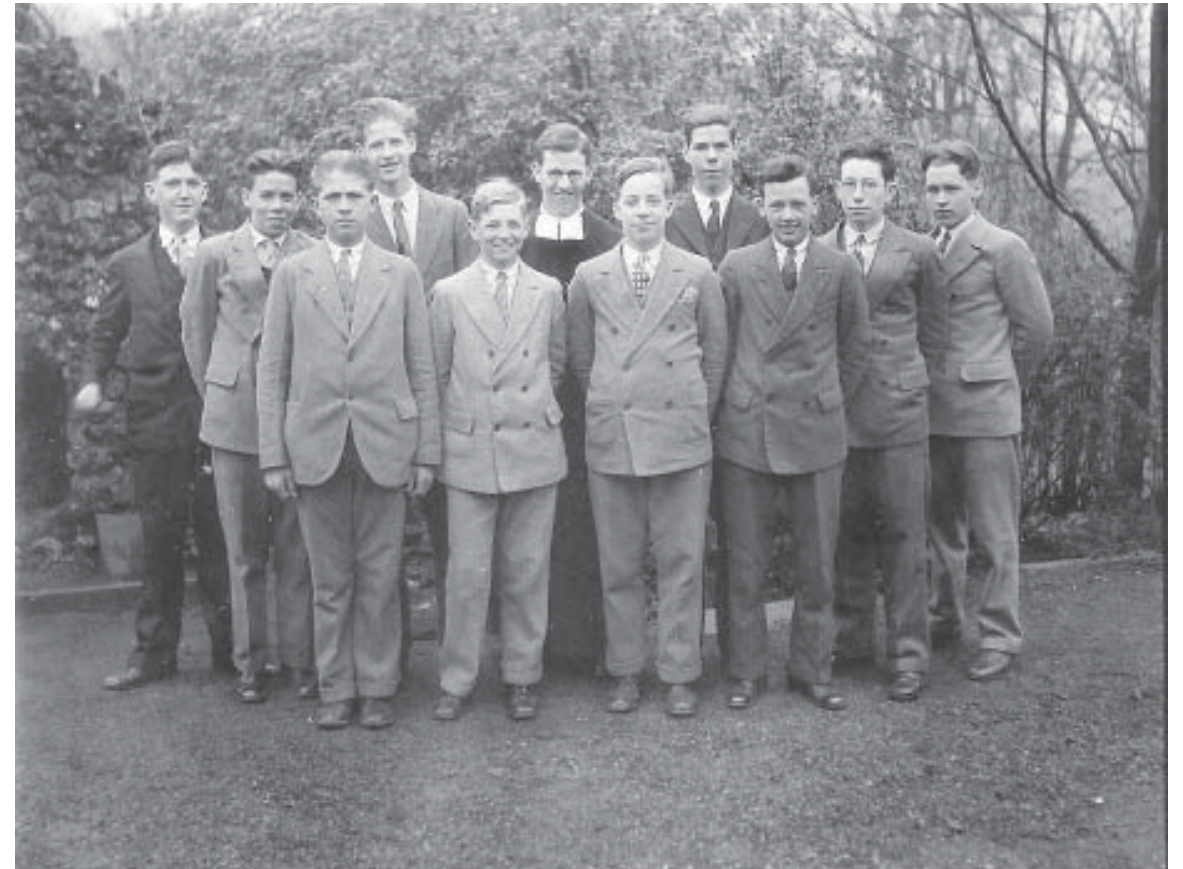
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1927 photo from the LaSalle Institute in Glencoe, Missouri of a group of St. Pat's boys. Chuck Brown's father, Frank Brown is all the way on the right. At the time Frank Brown was considering becoming a Christian Brother. *Image Courtesy of Chuck Brown*

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Chuck Brown's great uncle William P. Wilson received this ornate award at Saint Patrick's Commercial Academy on June 30, 1887. The gold medallion is on a very ornate gold chain. The photo at the left is the back of this medallion. The photo on top is the front of the medallion and reads, "Awarded to Master William P. Wilson for General Proficiency." In honor of their 150-year celebration, Chuck Brown is donating this piece to St. Pat's High School archives.

Photos by Gretchen Goode



NWCHS board member Chuck Brown's father Frank J. Brown received this award at Saint Patrick Academy in the 1923-24 school year. The gold pin is on a black ribbon, which is attached to a gold chain. Chuck Brown is donating this piece to St. Pat's High School archives.

Photo by Gretchen Goode

**Photography
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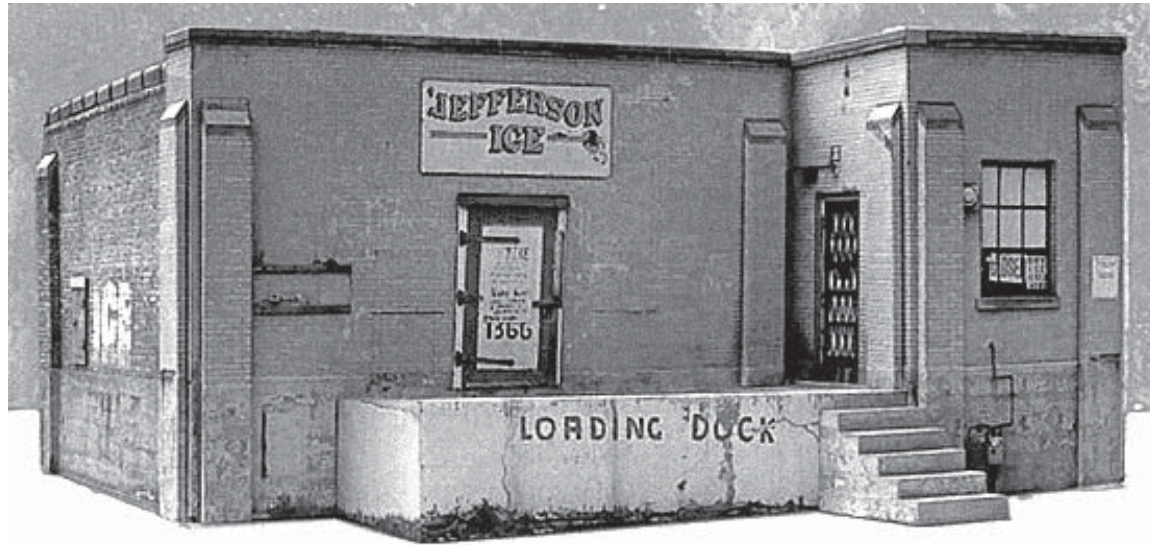
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The Jefferson Ice Company

By Frank Suerth



In the 19th century, before electricity and modern refrigeration, many Chicagoans had iceboxes in their homes to keep their food cold. A block of ice would be placed in an insulated wooden icebox. As long as the ice remained solid, the food remained cold. This icebox required vigilance; ice would need to be added regularly and pan underneath would often need to be emptied of the melted ice water. Neglecting either would result in a mess.

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Obtaining ice was simple, as many ice companies delivered via horse-drawn wagons or trucks. People would request a delivery by placing a sign in their front window, not much different then the UPS pickup request signs we now have in business windows. The driver would see the sign, stop to grab a block of ice with his ice tongs, and throw it onto his shoulder. A burlap bag or something similar would cushion the hard cold ice on his shoulder and help protect his clothing. Sometimes ice carriers would need to cart their frozen product up three flights of stairs before placing it in the empty icebox or ice delivery door. In the hot summer months, neighborhoods kids were known to grab small slivers of ice from the ice trucks and pop them into their mouths when the driver was away.

One such company was the Jefferson Ice Company. The company was started in 1865 by William Rustman, who used the name of the local town. Jefferson was not yet part of Chicago and would not be annexed until 1889. The company was incorporated in Illinois in 1887, and three of William Rustman's children, Jacob, John, and Anne, would join in ownership of the business.

In 1865, and many years after that, ice was harvested from frozen ponds and lakes. It was then stored in large warehouses, using hay and sawdust as insulation until it was sold in the summer months. The Humboldt Park lagoon was one of the first places the Jefferson Ice Company harvested ice. As the company grew, more ice was needed than could be harvested locally. Trains would bring ice to local warehouses from as far away as Powers Lake, Silver Lake, Lake Geneva, or Lake Monona in Wisconsin. The south shore of Silver Lake in Wisconsin was the location of the Rustman family's summer estate, where they would sometimes supervise the ice harvest.

The Rustman family managed the thriving business through the time of the Chicago Fire and later kept hundreds of people employed during the Great Depression, delivering ice in the summer and coal in the winter. Over the years, the Jefferson Ice Company built 23 ice warehouses in the Chicago area.

In 1933, the Jefferson Ice Company sawed blocks of ice down into cubes to be sold at the Century of Progress World's Fair. People would suck on the ice to cool down in the summer heat. This was the first marketing of ice cubes in the Chicago area.

In 1940's, the ice industry was going through rapid changes with the onset of mechanical refrigeration. Home deliveries as well as commercial uses were declining. In 1953, in an effort to diversify, Jefferson Ice purchased Scarlet Glow, a heating and air conditioning company. Jefferson Ice also opened several gas stations that they owned until the 1970's.



An early Jefferson Ice truck. The bed of the truck had sides but was open on the top. *Image Courtesy of Frank Suerth*



Photo is of the typical horse drawn ice wagon. The H. F. Winkelman Ice Company was an early competitor of the Jefferson Ice Company. The owner, Herman F. Winkelman in 1900 lived across the street from the Humboldt Park lagoon at what is now 1418 N. Kedzie.

Image Courtesy of Frank Suerth

The 1980's saw the expansion of the ice business in Convenience and Grocery stores. In 1992, the Jefferson Ice Company separated from the heating and air conditioning division, although it was still owned by the Rustman family.

Since 1992, Jefferson Ice has grown steadily and invested considerably in the modernization of its ice manufacturing facility. They have marketed their ice to grocery, convenience, and food catering businesses.

Five generations of Rustmans operated the Jefferson Ice Company, from 1865 to March 13, 2007, when the family owned operation was sold to Home City Ice of Cincinnati, Ohio. The Jefferson Ice Company is now gone, but remains an historic icon in the history of the Northwest side of Chicago.



Picture of a Jefferson Ice Company envelope that has been mail to Brand Brewing Company on Elston Avenue in 1909. No doubt the company need their ice to keep their beer cold.

Image Courtesy of Frank Suerth

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