



Norwood Park Historical Society

Headquartered in the Noble-Seymour-Crippen House

UPCOMING EVENTS

Game Night

Fri. March. 13th @ 6pm-11pm

Craft, Crochet & Knit Night

Fri. March 29th @ 6:30pm

“Norwood Park History”

Lecture

Tues. April 14th @ 6:30pm

Roden Library

Spring Tea

Sat., April 25th & Sun., April 26th

@ 1:30 – 3:30pm

Yard Sale

Sat., May 16th @ 8am – 3pm

2020 General Meetings

Meetings take place the 3rd Wednesday of each month, beginning at 7pm.

March 18th

April 15th

May 20th

September 16th

October 21st

(No Meetings June-August and November-January).

General Meeting ~ Wednesday, March 18th @ 7:00pm

“The Impact of Railroading on Chicago”

The first train to operate from Chicago began limited service in 1848.



175 Years of Chicago Railroad History

Since then, Chicago has evolved into a major city and railroading played a significant role in the city’s growth and development. Hop on board for a brief overview of railroads and their associated impact on Chicago by attending this informative program.

The speaker, David Daruszka, is vice president of the Blackhawk Railway Historical Society. He will discuss the sometimes non-harmonious relationship between Chicago and railroads, labor unrest associated with railroads and the impact of railroads on social change.

Two years ago the Blackhawk Railway Historical Society embarked on an effort to build a grassroots coalition to recognize and celebrate the critical role railroads played in the city’s growth. To that end the group has received two mayoral proclamations naming October “Chicago Railroad History Month”. The group continues to outreach to various organizations in order to promote 2023 as a year of celebration, and commemorate the 175th anniversary of the first train to operate in Chicago.

A brief business meeting will precede the program. Refreshments will be served. Posters will be available for purchase at the event for \$35 (Cash only please).

More information about Chicago Railroad History Month can be found at: www.crrhm.com.



Membership Reminder

We have not received 2020 membership renewals from several members. Membership is important to the continued success of the Norwood Park Historical Society and we need and appreciate your support. If you have not yet renewed for 2020, please respond now. Membership forms can be found on our website or I can e-mail one to you. If you have any questions about your membership, please contact me at membership@norwoodparkhistoricalsociety.org.

Thank you for your continued support!

~ Denise LeSeur-Waechter. Membership Chairperson



Welcome to our New
Members:

Matthew Kusar

2020 Spring Tea at NPHS

You are cordially invited to join us for the Spring Tea

Saturday, April 25th at 1:30 pm or

Sunday, April 26th at 1:30 pm

Children under 10-\$15.00 Adults-30.00

Program TBD.

Hats and Gloves are optional but always a welcome to see.

RSVP with your check to NPHS at
Norwood Park Historical Society, Attn: Spring Tea
5624 N. Newark Avenue, Chicago, IL 60631
Please RSVP by April 15th.

“Norwood Park History” Lecture at Roden Library Tuesday, April 14th @ 6:30-7:30pm

Susan Kroll, curator of the Norwood Park Historical Society, will present a video on the history and architecture of the neighborhood. Norwood Park has a rich history that includes a glacial ridge, Chicago’s oldest house, an iconic Chicago hot dog stand, the inspiration for the musical Grease and so much more. The Norwood Park community is a walkable outdoor museum of buildings representing architecture styles spanning the decades from the 1830s to today.
[Event Website](#)

Message from the President & Recap of March 18th Meeting



Happy 2020! Our first program of the year took place on February 19th with Alderman Napolitano presenting. We had a great crowd with over 50 people in attendance from all over the ward. We decided to switch the room around and have the speaker in the Summer Kitchen, which worked out great. I want to thank the Alderman for coming and speaking. It was nice to get an update on our ward. Some of the things he spoke about are listed below:

Alderman Anthony Napolitano

- No property tax increases this year.
- Frank Icuss is the rep. for the 41st Ward for the airport noise compatibility issues.
- A mailer from the Alderman’s office goes out 1-2 times per year. There is an online survey at www.chicago41.com called the Master Plan Survey.
- April 25th will be Clean & Green in the ward. 41st Ward Superintendent Mike brings a truck around to pick-up the garbage. [Clean & Green Event Website](#)
- There is a shred event on May 16th from 10am-1pm. Location is still to be determined. Electronics can be recycled but you do need to get a voucher for TV recycling. [Recycling Event Website](#)
- The 41st ward has the largest foot print which includes O’Hare Airport.
- It costs around \$71,000 to \$79,000 per street to resurface. It has to be done by budget, and the cost to resurface increases 3 to 5% every year.
- If you have a smart phone you can upload the CHI311 app. This app helps you to report issues about potholes, open hydrants, etc.

- There are 4 potholing crews that do the cold patch in winter. The hot patch is done in spring with 3 pothole crews and 1 goes to resurfacing. They clean out the hole, drop oil, asphalt and roll over to compress it by using a steamroller.
- Should you see Ward Superintendent Mike, who is our clean-up man, you can flag him down and give him work to do.
- If you know of a meeting going on in the neighborhood it can be added to the Alderman’s website if his office is notified in advance.
- The Alderman let us know that as of right now the rights for zoning are still in their hands. The Mayor has talked about taking that away, but it has not happened yet.



Alderman Napolitano with his Chief of Staff Chris Vittorio

- There is a Zoning Advisory board that meets about changing zoning requirements when there is a new project to happen in the neighborhood. They have the architect/lawyer come out with concise plans to go over with the board to get their input and approval. Zoning meetings are listed on the website and by email. The Zoning Advisory Committee has been a long-standing tradition in the 41st Ward and consists of 11 members that represent all areas of the Ward. NPHS Board of Directors member John Kwasinski is a member.

- There are 50 Alderman in the city. One change through the city is for permitting for block parties, special events as they will now go through committees.
- He spoke about the project to install special windows in homes effected by airport sound.
- Alderman told us about Flight Quite and ONCC which is O'Hare Noise Compatibility Commission. Visit their website www.oharenoise.org to find out more information about the meetings that they have.
- If you know of a new business, please let the Alderman's office know so they can check into it.



Alderman Napolitano fielded questions from participants, including board member Stan Banash

- Question about St. Thelca property – Area 51 or the archdioceses will know what will happen to the property. Right now it has RS1 (residential) zoning.
- Question about Norwood Park Preschool and the plans – Alderman said that CPS owns the property and is looking at other locations. The idea to do something on the grounds at Norwood Park School is a dead issue.
- Question about the City Farm Bill – There is an ordinance being worked on based on what the neighborhood would want, and it will be made for a dry farm.
- Question about the Highway Wall – it is not the city's responsibility but the State of Illinois. Someone asked if it will go East of Bryn Mawr & Gregory. Alderman does not know. As for graffiti it is the States responsibility to get rid of it, but if it takes too long the alderman will send his own crew to clean it when it is along city property.
- Question about the police, and increased crime – Alderman said that in accordance with CompStat the crime is not up much, but also that people are not always reporting crime to the police. If you see something suspicious, please call the police and report it.
- Questions about the CTA violence and losing our police officers – The alderman explained that when an officer has a day off, they can be asked to fill in on the CTA to help with crime. So we should not see any loss of our officers.

- Tom asked if the NPHS could buy the city out on the alley/easement that is behind our property – Napolitano said that it could be done, but to keep in mind that whatever we do may not be permanent, especially if it gets in the way of a utility truck that needs to get back there.

I think all that attended the meeting would agree that it was very informative and beneficial, and that if we held another one that they would return.

On Sunday, February 23rd Carmine Fantasia, Mary Edsey and Judy Rustemeyer attended the Chicago Volunteer Expo at the Peggy Notebaert Nature Museum. We had a booth there in hopes to find more volunteers. We got about 60 or so people to leave us their contact information and spoke with several hundred people. This Expo is a great way to get our name out and to meet other groups with whom we could partner. Thank you to Carmine and Mary for putting together all the materials for handing out to potential volunteers. I believe this was a great event and will return next year.

Over the past year I'm sure you have noticed that we have a new newsletter editor, Janette Spenny. She has been doing a terrific job with the newsletter and makes it look grand. I would like to thank her for all she does.

Our next general meeting on March 18th will be about Chicago Railroad History. Hope to see you at that meeting. ~ *Judy Rustemeyer, President*

Archives

The archives updating project is well on its way! Mary Edsey and a team of volunteers are sorting through archive boxes and preparing them to be categorized into our new archive computer program. Recently, a group of Taft students, accompanied by their gym teacher Matt Malarski, came to the Crippen House to help us with this project. If you are able to volunteer your time to assist with this project, please call or text Mary Edsey at 773-404-9402.



*Mary Edsey, Matt Malarski, and Taft students.
Photo submitted by Diane Spenny*

In memory of Stuart C. Crippen

My plans to attend the memorial services for Stuart C. Crippen were thwarted when my flight to Denver on February 7th was cancelled due to snow in Denver. The next available flight was on Sunday the 9th and that was after both services were to have taken place. My heart was there even though the rest of my body was not. The services did take place and Stuart's wife, Loretta, sent me a copy of the Saturday church service. Below is a brief biography of Stuart as printed in the program for said service. Also, the family suggested memorial contributions go to the NPHS and we have been receiving several generous checks. We would like to thank Loretta and her family for doing this and intend to do something special as a permanent memory of Stuart and his family. There will be more on this to come in the next Newsletter. ~ Tom Spenny

Stuart Crego Crippen was born March 23, 1940 in Chicago to Stuart and Agnes Crippen. He had two older sisters, Beverly and Nancy, and was surrounded by cousins, aunts and uncles. Around the time he was old enough to play, his father helped found the Norwood Park Little League and Stuart became a baseball player. He played championship games in Wrigley Field twice, in 1955 and 1956. He also played baseball at Carlton College and North Park College, where he graduated.

Stuart was married to Loretta Sramek on August 24 1968. They raised three children in Denver, Lillian (Nate) Craxe, Tyler (Sara) Crippen and Neal Crippen, and have five grandchildren: Maria, Samuel and TJ Crippen, and Anna and Cooper Craze. Stuart was a fixture in SE Denver where he operated a lawn care service for 50 years.

In October, as a result of a brain biopsy (that diagnosed stage 4 melanoma), Stuart had a brain bleed that left him paralyzed on his right side and without speech. In December, he regained a little speech and movement. It was a gift to hear him speak again.

Memorial Contributions:

Norwood Park Historical Society

The Noble Seymour Crippen House that the society owns and cares for is Stuart's childhood home in Chicago. The house was designated a City of Chicago Historical Landmark on May 11, 1988 and listed on the National Register of Historic Places on August 11, 2000. It is a multipurpose community center and is open to the public for tours. Stop by and visit if you are ever in the area.



NPWS Website Has a New Look!

Our updated website is live and available to view on smartphones, tablets, laptops & desktops!

www.norwoodparkhistoricalsociety.org

At our Holiday House Tour introduction at the Norwood Park Fieldhouse, we received several requests to put some of our videos on the website. The links to these YouTube videos are now public and can be found through our website's "[Programs & Events](#)" page:

- [NPWS House Tour Filler](#)
- [Norwood Park House Tour Introduction](#)
- [NPWS "History of Beer in Chicago"](#)

Building and Grounds Update

Construction is scheduled to start around the first of April and will be going on for a couple of months or till completed. We hope to get the parking lot done first so that there will be minimal impact on our events, rentals and general use of the house. We look forward to our improvements and are sure that they will be worth the money spent. We also hope to replace our rear entrance ramp with one made from composite decking material. We may even be able to get said materials donated and then maybe our barn carpentry crew can morph into a ramp construction crew. More on this later.

~Tom Spenny, Building Chairman

Rentals

There are no recent rentals but the Windy City Community Church will be renting our house and grounds on April 4th for their second annual Easter Egg Hunt. Check the local newspapers or visit some media sites for further information about this event or call the church office to speak to one of the organizers. Then, on April 19th at about 9am, a group of Model T Ford owners will be using our facilities for an early breakfast and a gathering place for a tour to the Wagner Farm and the Kennecott House, both in Glenview. If you like to see antique cars, this would be a good time to see Model T Fords in action. There are many 2020 dates open for potential renters but we want people to be aware that there will be limited use of the rear yard during construction so guests may need to use street parking especially during the months of April and May. If you or anyone you know is interested in booking a rental, call Diane at 773-631-5644 or email Tom at tpspenny@sbcglobal.net.

Annual Yard Sale ~ Donations & Vendor Sign-Up



Save-the-date for our annual yard sale, Saturday, May 16th from 8am-3pm. Please donate your unwanted items by placing them under the canopy next to the garage in the rear of the house.

We **DO NOT** accept the following items: TVs, Computers, Large Appliances, Mattresses, Overstuffed Furniture, Clothing or Shoes

Vendor Space Available:

\$30.00 by May 15th, send check to NPHS

\$35 after May 15th, cash only

Contact for Application:

Shirley Rustemeyer at

773-774-2838

Each vendor is responsible for their own set-up

Volunteer
Opportunities



Volunteer Positions Available

A lot of exciting changes are happening at the Norwood Park Historical Society, and that means exciting new positions for volunteers are opening-up. Many volunteer positions only require a few hours of commitment each month, some can be done at home, and many can be done on your own schedule! For more information on available positions, read-on!

Newsletter Mailing: Assemble the monthly newsletter mailing, approximately 60 copies. Time commitment: 1-2 hours per month. Contact Tom Spenny at 773-746-6363

E-Mailing and Web Technologies: Electronically mail the monthly newsletter and/or update and maintain our website. Interested persons will be trained and gain valuable skills and experience in MailChimp (email system) and/or WordPress (website system). After initial training and setup, the monthly newsletter e-blast takes about 3 hours per month. Contact Art Krumrey arthur@krumrey.net, Chair of the Technology Committee. Please indicate a few alternative times to talk for 15 minutes on the phone.

Housekeeping Coordinator: Oversee the cleanliness of the house and schedule volunteer or professional cleaning as needed. We currently have

a paid person to do cleaning in advance of rentals and this person may be able to do more on a regular basis if needed. Contact Tom Spenny at 773-746-6363

Gardening/Landscaping Coordinator: Oversee volunteer or professional gardeners and landscapers to make sure our grounds always look their best. We currently have a mowing service that comes out weekly in the mowing season. Contact Tom Spenny at 773-746-6363

Office Manager: Oversee the appearance and function of the 1st floor NPHS office by making sure it has the proper supplies, the equipment is in functioning condition and things are neatly put away and stored. Contact Tom Spenny at 773-746-6363

Volunteer Coordinator: Seek volunteers for various events, projects and other NPHS functions as needed. Make calls to members and friends from lists provided by the Society. Contact Tom Spenny at 773-746-6363

Archives: Now that the caretaker's apartment on the 2nd floor of our headquarters at the Noble-Seymour-Crippen house has been vacated, we finally have the opportunity to properly organize and catalog the collection of artifacts generously donated and acquired over many decades (as well as straighten up our office and pantry in the process).

With approximately 400 boxes of photos, books, artifacts, and documents to sort, we could really use your help with any of the following task:

- examining boxes
- data entry
- moving boxes
- moving heavy furniture
- building shelves
- organizing office supplies
- organizing the pantry
- organizing the office

Whether you are good at organizing, love to treasure hunt, or just want to lend a few hours or days of your time to help preserve history, please call or text Mary Edsey at 773-404-9402. Thank you!

Game Night ~

Friday, March. 13th 6-11pm

February game night, had a great turnout of 26 people, including 6 children. A good time was had by all with a variety of board games for the adults and crafts, puzzles and videos for the kids. It might be nice to have a dedicated child coordinator at our monthly game nights. If you are interested in such a position, give Diane Spenny a call at 773-631-5644.

Game Night Photos

Photos by Janette Spenny



The **Norwood Park Historical Society** (NPHS) publishes the NPHS Newsletter up to twelve times per year.

Send all newsletter correspondence to:

Janette Spenny, NPHS Newsletter Editor

Submission Deadline: 3rd Wednesday of each month

E-mail: janette.spenny@gmail.com

Dues:

\$20/year (Jan-Dec) Individual

\$25/year Family per mailing address

Make check payable to "Norwood Park Historical Society".

Send renewal dues and changes of address to
Denise Waechter, Membership Chairperson,
Norwood Park Historical Society,
5624 N. Newark Avenue, Chicago, IL 60631
Phone: 773-631-4633

NPHS website:

www.norwoodparkhistoricalsociety.org

NPHS Officers:

President – Judy Rustemeyer

Vice President – Harris Miller

Recording Secretary – Judy Sirvio

Treasurer – Vicki Fealey

Corresponding Secretary – Laura Banash

NPHS board of Directors (3-Year Terms):

Class of 2020

Susan Bragg, Bob Kelly & Tom Spenny

Class of 2021

Denise LeSeur-Waechter, Art Krumrey, Michael Carroll

Class of 2022

Carmine Fantasia, John Kwasinski & Cindy Wrobel