



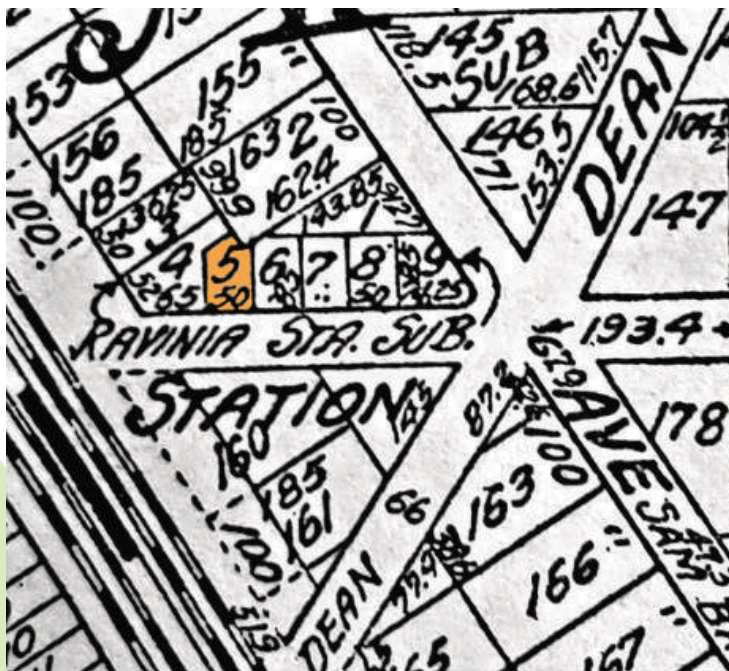
My Ravinia

The First Ravinia Business: Does it Still Exist?

By Elliott Miller

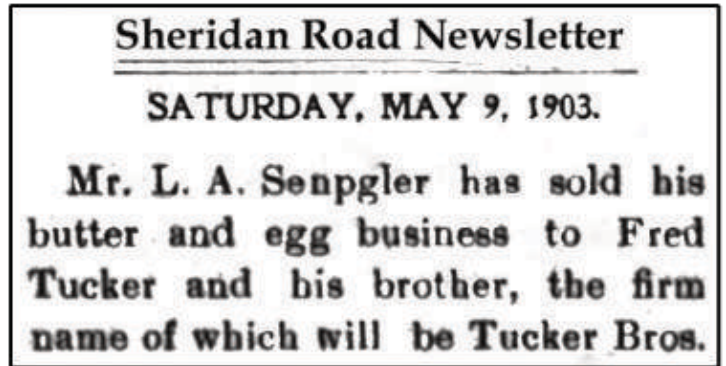
What makes a small town? A town needs houses for sure, but also businesses. When Ravinia was planned in 1873, it was intended to be a summer resort community to allow people to escape the hot, gritty streets of Chicago. Like most camp grounds, the land was left naturally wooded. The only sidewalk was a wooden one around the Ravinia train station; there were mostly gravel streets -- paved streets were nonexistent. There were no considerations for businesses. All lots, even on Roger Williams, were intended to be residential.

As time passed, the population of Ravinia increased and more people were choosing to live there full-time. Early on, the only way to purchase provisions was to buy from a Ravinia resident who stocked merchandise in their house for sale; or travel in horse and buggy to grocery stores in downtown Highland Park.



By 1905 Ravinia's first business establishment was a grocery store located on the north side of Roger Williams Ave. between St. Johns and Judson, in Lot 5 of the Ravinia Station Subdivision -- highlighted.

Eventually, the north side of the 400 block of Roger Williams was set aside for businesses. The deed's Legal Description of the grocery store lot states: "RAVINIA STATION (EX E24.05 FT) LOT 5." The other lots in the 400 block of Roger Williams were also designated as "Ravinia Station" lots from 1 to 9, which shows a commercial stretch of smaller lots had been designated probably about the year 1900.



Ravinia's business district began after the Tucker brothers bought a butter and egg farm and started the Ravinia Grocery Store as an outlet for their produce.

Around 1905, a grocery store was built on Roger Williams. This is an estimate since the Moraine Township Accessor's records only go back to the 1950s. According to Lillian Tucker, her father, George Tucker, built the first Ravinia business, a grocery store on Roger Williams Avenue.

George Tucker was born in England and came to Highland Park in about 1898. In 1901 Tucker married Carrie Finkbeinder, who was from Germany. In May of 1903, Fred Tucker and his brother George bought an egg and butter farm on Oakwood Street in Highland Park. At that time, there were only two houses and a farm on Oakwood. Both brothers ran their business for a number of years.

(Continued on page 10)

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Volunteerism is an essential piece in keeping the Ravinia Neighbors Association healthy and strong.

Consider getting involved.

Attend a meeting, visit the RNA event booth or watch the website and newsletter for ways your involvement can strengthen RNA and your neighborhood.

WELCOME, NEW RAVINIA DISTRICT BUSINESSES!

ASTRA COFFEE ROASTERS, 477 Roger Williams Avenue
THE CHUNKY SCONE: VEGAN BAKERY, 733 St. Johns Avenue

What's going on at Park Avenue Beach?

By Jean Sogin.

The Latest Update: If you walk or drive down to Park Avenue Beach in Highland Park you know the area north of the water treatment plant looks like a sea of asphalt and the beach itself is rocky and overgrown. South of the water treatment plant, the barge/breakwater by the boating ramp is disappearing into the lake. Did you used to enjoy sitting on the barge looking out at Lake Michigan? Does it seem a shame that the barge is not just unusable but destroyed?

The barge has reached the end of its life and needs to be replaced. The Park District has come up with a terrific plan – the new breakwater will do everything the old barge did, but with a longer life span and little maintenance. The project will cost over \$2.5 million, with funding from a combination of \$2 million from a long-term bond, a \$200,000 grant from the State of Illinois, and \$300,000 in donations from the community.



1. Artist's rendering of the new breakwater

The fundraising task was made easier by an anonymous donor's matching grant of \$150,000.

By the end of January 2022, the community exceeded its goal, raising \$360,000. This included a contribution from the RNA Board on behalf of its membership and individual contributions by several members of the RNA community. Based on exceeding the contribution goal, the Park Board had committed to repairing the launch ramp so it would be usable in the summer of 2022. So,

the community thought we were on track for construction of the new breakwater to begin this coming fall, with a ribbon cutting in the spring of 2023. With some luck and perseverance that is how it will work out, but there are now several new wrinkles. First, we were supposed to hear by this past March if we got that \$200,000 grant from the State of Illinois. Instead, we may not hear about that until this coming fall. Second, the bids have come in higher than anticipated, and Third, the Park Board is asking the community to raise an additional \$200,000 by the end of April, 2022.

If we don't get the grant or we don't get the donations, we hope the Park Board will choose to go ahead with the project anyway, and use money from their Capital Fund. It is clear the breakwater has widespread support, far beyond a group of boaters. More than 500 people have donated, and it's not likely that the cost will go down if they choose to wait a year or two. I think the Park Board Commissioners recognize that if they want to continue to have the opportunity for safe boating in Highland Park, the new breakwater is essential. If you would like to help, you can email the Park Board Commissioners at rhejnowski@pdhp.org and tell them that, even if you are not a boater, you think it's important that we continue to have the opportunity to boat and the breakwater will be enjoyed by more than just boaters. To donate, go to the Park's Foundation website at <https://www.pfhpil.org>.

A History : What do you do if you live in Highland Park and want to own a boat? One possibility is to own lakefront property. In this photo from about 1900, you can see the remains of private piers that individual owners of lakefront property had built. Even if you had the money for a lakefront estate, Lake Michigan will grind down your pier in short order.

The solution, as true today as it was before the first World War is to form a club. With a club there will be people around to help launch boats and sailing is safer if there is more than one boat out on the water. But sails are heavy, life jackets are bulky; you want a place to store equipment and you want a place to socialize. So, the first clubhouse at Park Avenue Beach was built in

(Continued on page 15)

Replacement Process Under Way for 92-Year Old Ravinia Fire Station

By Jeffrey Stern

Nostalgia can go only so far when it comes to providing modern-day fire and ambulance service. When the Fire Department is called to extinguish a fire in someone's home or business, or to take an ill or injured person to the hospital, the quaintness of the local fire station isn't important. What is needed and expected is a quick response from well-trained personnel, using up-to-date equipment to handle the emergency.

Highland Park was fortunate to have had leaders who planned and financed the construction of its City Hall, water filtration plant, water tower and Ravinia Fire Station, among other facilities, before the Great Depression was triggered in 1929. While they served the city well in their time, today's fire and ambulance services require larger space, not just for the apparatus, but for ongoing training purposes as well.

Just as the cars of the late 1920s may have included the most powerful and finely designed for that period, those that have lasted to this day are likely to be found in museums or someone's garage, taken on the road only in good weather, and often only as far as a local



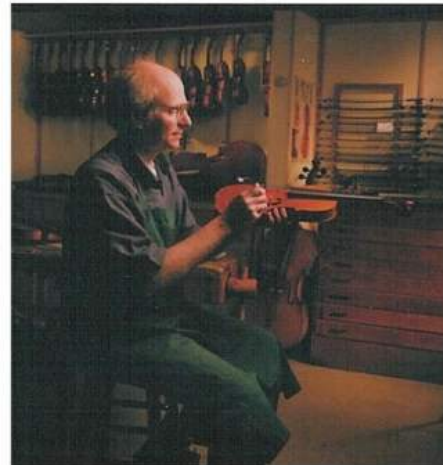
The Temporary Ravinia Firehouse

antique car show or to participate in a parade. In Ravinia, modern fire apparatus has gotten bigger, while the fire-station seems to have shrunk in comparison.



The New Ravinia Fire Station

(Continued on page 17)



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**CELEBRATING
10 YEARS IN
RAVINIA
2012 - 2022**



An Ode to Happy Sushi

By Izzy Tolpin

The Ravinia district has a plethora of amazing businesses, but one that stands out is Happy Sushi. When I was little my family decided to eat at Happy Sushi, a local Japanese restaurant on Roger Williams. Since I had no clue what to order, my mom decided to get me an avocado roll. The rolls looked abnormal to young me, since I was used to good old American food. Eventually, I built up the courage and shoved a roll in my mouth. At that moment I fell in love. My mouth felt like it tasted heaven. I even dipped them in soy sauce and devoured the remaining rolls in five seconds. Ever since that day, I would ask to have my birthday dinner at Happy Sushi every year. Yes, I became a sushi addict. I mean who doesn't like soft, savory fish surrounded by or on top of sticky rice that's been cooked to perfection? My favorites on the Happy Sushi menu are the Yakuza roll, seafood udon noodle soup, rainbow roll and, of course, strawberry Ramune soda.

When I found out that the Ravinia Neighbors Association wanted a HPHS student to write an article about Happy Sushi, I was ecstatic and immediately took the opportunity. I interviewed Jeff Lee, a manager/cook of Happy Sushi who has worked there for five years. Jeff and his dad took over Happy Sushi in 2017 and changed the entire restaurant, from the menu items to remodeling the interior. They have worked at restaurants for a while and wanted to have their own. So, they looked into local restaurants and found Happy Sushi, which seemed to feel right, based on the location. Jeff and his father really liked the Ravinia neighborhood and decided this was the right place for them to pursue their dream of owning a restaurant.

Their most popular item is rice crackers, which are popular with young children and the elderly. Jeff's favorite sushi roll is the fire dragon. If you're a fan of crab and love spicy food I would highly recommend trying this delectable roll. Not only is there a large selection of specialty sushi rolls, but also cooked items from the kitchen, including Korean specialties and spicy ramen. Happy Sushi uses fresh, organic ingredients to make their mouthwatering food and sauces. All sauces are made from scratch, from the spicy mayo to the teriyaki sauce.

Many of Happy Sushi's customers come from the neighborhood, but they also have customers from Glencoe, Northbrook, Highwood, Wheeling and Deerfield. From 5pm-7pm on a weekend, you will find Happy Sushi packed with orders from hungry customers waiting to get some delicious fresh food in their mouths. Happy Sushi also provides school lunches for the middle and elementary schools. I remember in Edgewood Middle School when I ordered hot lunch I would sneak out of class and sprint down the halls and down the stairs to get a tempura shrimp roll before the lines got too big. Now that I'm in high school, I miss having Happy Sushi for a special school lunch.

Before we ended the interview Jeff said he had something to add. "The owner and I want to mention to all of the Ravinia neighborhood, the customers and people around, we just want to say thank you to them and that we appreciate everyone's patience, not just for us but for other restaurants that are short staffed. We are blessed and thankful that our customers are willing to wait to pick up our food. It goes a long way to help us." I was happy to hear that the customers are understanding and supportive of local businesses at a time that has been difficult for them. Happy Sushi is my favorite restaurant, and I hope they stay open for years to come. ■

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Photography Becomes A True Art with Jeff Cohen Behind the Camera

By Jeffrey Stern

If you like what you are doing, there's no reason to stop just because you are getting older. That's why Jeff Cohen remains enthusiastic about keeping his creative photography and design studio an integral part of the Ravinia Business District as he looks back at a decade of business on Roger Williams Avenue across from Jens Jensen Park.

Photography wasn't really on his radar when he majored in economics at Syracuse University after growing up in Wilmette and graduating from New Trier High School. Fresh out of Syracuse, he had a job lined up in New York City as a copy writer in advertising, but chose instead to travel west and see the country first.

Life, Look and the Saturday Evening Post were much in vogue when he was a boy, and Cohen became fascinated by the variety of photographs that filled their pages. He attributes that exposure to the eventual direction of his career, which seemed to begin when he



signed up for a basic photo class in his last semester at Syracuse.

From that experience and his memories of studying those glossy magazines, he realized that creating images through photography was the career he really wanted to pursue. Returning home after graduation, he soon found a job as a photo assistant in Playboy Magazine's Chicago office. One thing led to another, and three years later he moved to San Francisco, where he operated his own photo studio for the next seven.

Chicago remained in his blood, however, and he came back to the city for another job with Playboy, becoming an editor on the publishing side for a magazine that at one point was being sold in 27 countries. And it was here in Highland Park that he settled with his wife Gayle, raising two boys and a girl, and ultimately becoming grandparents to seven.

The east wall of Cohen's studio is filled with photos, which are mostly of children, but you won't find any that are specially dressed or statically posed. He prefers to catch his subjects in their everyday outfits, and as if they are ready to head out to a playground or athletic field. One of his most prized photos is of five young first cousins standing abreast, but otherwise barely even paying attention to the photographer.

Cohen refers to his style of photography as design-oriented, with his subjects fitting into a square frame. In developing ways to set himself off from other photographers, he has gotten tips from such renowned artists in the field as Annie Leibovitz, who used to stop by the studio he ran in San Francisco.

Like entrepreneurs in other fields, Cohen had to adapt to conditions that developed as a result of the pandemic. He used to get a number of requests for formal portraits from executives in the city. That's beginning to come back, but now he does more with families. Another big challenge is the competition from mobile devices. Today everyone can capture friends and family in spontaneous settings at a moment's notice. The big difference is Cohen can provide a quality of work that few can match. ■

What is Astra Coffee Roasters?

By Michael Babian

Astra Coffee Roasters is a new coffeehouse and coffee roasting company set to open this spring in Highland Park. “Our dream is to become a central coffeehouse where the locals can come and call it their second home, while offering the potential for guests to buy fresh-roasted coffee or espresso to brew at their own home,” said co-owner Kristin Lerner. With this in mind, she and her business partner Emmy Kocemba are very excited to have found their starting location in the heart of Ravinia. Their plan eventually is to have books available to read, and games available to play, all while their guests are enjoying a delicious cup of artisan coffee. “Our goal is to partner with local businesses to incorporate fresh pastries and loose-leaf tea into the coffeehouse as well!” Kristin said.

How did they come up with the business name?

The name “Astra” came from a phrase in Latin meaning “through hardships to the stars.” Both owners felt that the name and the logo of a female warrior in the stars worked together to represent the individual journeys, strengths, and challenges that made Astra Coffee Roasters a reality.

How did Astra come to be?

The company itself was founded by Lerner and Kocemba in 2021. However, the inspiration began in their college years. They met when Kristin worked in the campus coffee shop and would make Emmy her daily lattes. The ten-year journey from there to opening Astra Coffee Roasters took both owners down different paths. Emmy took ownership of a contracting business in Chicago and started a family. Kristin gained experience as a professional barista, trainer and manager at an upscale coffeehouse and roasting company in California. Although they lived in separate states throughout those years, their shared interests and hobbies helped them maintain a strong friendship. It was their shared love for coffee that led to Kristin moving to Chicago to start the great adventure of opening this new business together.

What makes Astra Coffee Roasters unique?

Aside from fresh roasting all their coffees in-house, a portion of the beans they wish to brew, and sell are from Cafe Femeninos in Peru and Colombia. Cafe Femenino

is an organization of female coffee producers who have created a never-before-existing market for women in the coffee world. They have been able to utilize coffee as an important vehicle for social change in their communities. Although Astra Coffee will have a wide selection of organic and fair-trade coffee beans available from around the world, Kristin and Emmy are seeking to partner with Cafe Femenino. They want the coffeehouse to be able to make a difference, not just in the community of Highland Park, but also on a global scale.

What would you like our audience to know?

With her enthusiasm building at the prospect of getting their business under way, Kristin said, “We are very excited to become part of the Highland Park community, and to be opening our first business location here in Ravinia at 477 Roger Williams Avenue. Keep an eye out for our grand opening later this spring.” ■



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A Tribute to Baker Boys Bakery

By Shruthi Potocek

Baker Boys – to some of us, it’s where we captured mental pictures of our little ones gleaming over a cup of vanilla ice cream. To others, it’s where we remedied our stress with a delicious, perfectly shaped cupcake. And for some, it’s where grandparents took their grandkids for special treats on a Saturday morning, creating memories to last a lifetime.

When the news came out several months ago that the doors of Baker Boys were closing, it rocked the community around us. The sentiment was one of sadness, and to many this was symbolic of so much more – it was anger and frustration at this global pandemic in all that it was taking away from us and our families.

Alexandra Sasha Zoric, the last owner of our beloved Baker Boys, took time to share her fond memories of her 3-year experience. During years of a career in pharmaceutical market research, Sasha was a longtime customer of Baker Boys. Her aunt lived in Glencoe and Sasha worked in Deerfield, so Ravinia was an integral part of her life. Ironically, the original owners of Baker Boys (Pastry Chef Jordan Rappaport and Peter Rauser), were looking to sell the business at the same time Sasha was looking to tap into her entrepreneurial spirit. In early 2019 the deal was done, and Sasha took over running the bakery. Sasha had high hopes to reaching even a larger customer base and was looking forward to possibly even supplying Ravinia Festival.

Little did Sasha know that just a year later the world would be hit with a global pandemic that would shake up the economy and the healthcare system in almost indescribable ways. By 2021 staffing was becoming a clear issue and keeping up with demand posed a real challenge. She would be faced with days where, despite Baker Boys being closed, customers would be waiting outside on the street hoping to place an order. Sasha knew the product was good, and the demand was extremely healthy – but the one thing that was out of her control was the one thing that ultimately led to her decision to close the doors – a worker shortage. Ultimately, it just became too challenging to be a solo owner. Being on her feet for 12 to 14 hours took a real toll, and despite the community being incredibly

supportive and good to her, it was just too hard to keep supplying. Sasha had so many regulars, so many people she knew by name. Making this decision was just so hard to do.

Interestingly, Sasha was more interested in the entrepreneurial aspect of owning Baker Boys and wasn’t a baker herself. She knew how to bake but left the true skills with Jordan, who remained the pastry chef and mastermind behind all the recipes. While Sasha did bring a few products to the menu, like the delicious quiche and key lime tarts or the offering of a variety of flavors, she found that there just wasn’t time to come up with anything particularly new.

Sasha spoke about some of her fondest memories as owner of Baker Boys. During the pandemic a school asked her to participate on a Zoom call in which she was able to interact with two different classes. Some of the students had drawn pictures of Baker Boys and were telling her what they liked best from the mouth-watering menu. She hung the pictures up in the store to preserve the memory. In another instance, she recalled a customer and his grandchildren buying her a new clock when hers failed to work any longer. They even put the Baker Boys logo on the clock!

Right before the shop closed for good, the dear customer, aka grandpa, visited and gave her photos of the kids. Their personal ritual was one in which he’d ask his grandkids “What time is it?” and the excited grandkids would shout “It’s Baker Boys time!” Hearing this made Sasha emotional and touched that she was able to bring such an experience to this kind family. Yet another grateful occurrence in Sasha’s mind was that she was able to partner with a charity to provide reduced prices on cupcakes to raise money for its foundation – not just once but twice!

When asked what she would do differently if she could do it again, Sasha explained that maybe next time she’d go into the venture with a partner. She’s proud that she was able to come into the business with no experience

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The First Ravinia Business: Does it Still Exist? (cont'd)

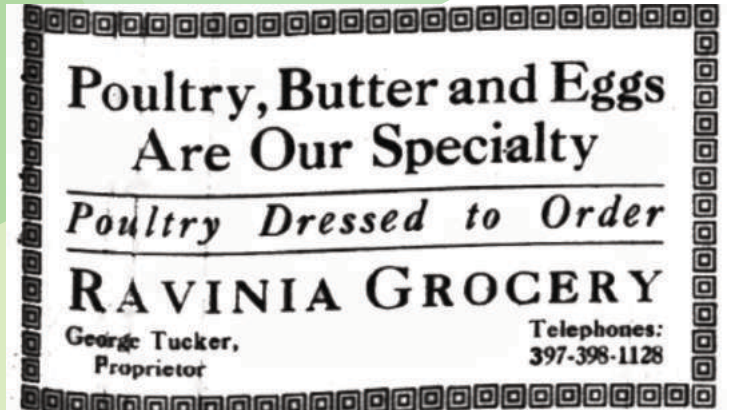
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George Tucker with his children Lillian and Lloyd in front of his Grocery and Meat Market on the 400 block of Roger Williams Ave. – the first business establishment in Ravinia. Date unknown. Note there are no other businesses on either side of the store. Photo courtesy of the Highland Park Archives and Local History Collection.

According to an interview with Lillian Tucker, she says about her father George, “He operated with a horse and wagon and served the big homes from Lake Forest along the North Shore down to Winnetka. He dreaded going down to Winnetka because of Hubbard Woods Hill. He had to be sure the horses were properly shod or else they would never make that hill with the wagon.”

George Tucker apparently had the bulk of the responsibility of running the grocery store was primarily that of George Tucker, since his name is on the store awning and in advertisements. The Ravinia grocery and meat market was an outlet for their produce and general grocery merchandise.



George Tucker advertisement, November 1919

The Cowell Disasters

For a short time, in 1910-11, the Tuckers apparently rented out the store and the apartment above to Charles Cowell and family who ran the store. Cowell was living above the store with his wife Minnie and their eight children. At that time the Ravinia post office was operated in the grocery store with Charles Cowell as the Ravinia postmaster.



Charles Cowell and his son Raymond in front of the Ravinia Grocery & Market, c. 1911, Courtesy Matthew & MaryAnn Crawley (Martinsburg, WV)

(Continued on page 11)

The First Ravinia Business: Does it Still Exist? (cont'd)

(Continued from page 10)

1911 was a disastrous year for the shop, and for the Cowells. First the post office was looted by burglars. Then an outbreak of scarlet fever was traced to Cowell's grocery. Seven of their eight children became sick, their schools were shut, and the contents of the grocery were removed and burned. The mail at the store was fumigated and transferred to the Highland Park Post Office, and the post office in the shop was closed and removed from the store. Not surprisingly, the Cowells' hurriedly left Highland Park and the grocery store reverted back to George Tucker, who ran the grocery into the early 1920s.

The Cowell Disasters of 1911

SHUT HIGHLAND PARK SCHOOLS IN FIGHT ON SCARLET FEVER.

Postoffice at Ravinia Temporarily Suspended When Postmaster's Seven Children Are Taken Ill.

Two schools in Highland Park were closed yesterday and the postoffice at Ravinia was ordered suspended temporarily, in an effort to prevent a spread of scarlet fever.

Seven children of Charles Cowell postmaster at Ravinia, are ill with the disease and it is feared infection may have been spread in groceries and other foodstuffs sent out from the Cowell store, in which the postoffice is located.

A meeting of the Highland Park...

North-Shore News Letter Jan 28 1911 p. 1

SEIZE AND BURN TO END EPIDEMIC

Grocery Store Cleaned Out to Eliminate Scarlet Fever in North Suburbs.

CLAMP LID ON RAVINIA.

Residences Closed; Surveillance Is Maintained Over Evanston Schools.

In order to halt the scarlet fever epidemic in Ravinia, Highland Park, and Evanston the contents of Charles Cowell's grocery at Ravinia were seized yesterday and burned and the door of every residence of that suburb virtually closed and sealed.

Dr. E. M. Sengels of Highland Park...

Chicago Tribune, March 11, 1911, p. 4

RAVINIA POST OFFICE IS LOOTED BY BURGLARS.

The post office at Ravinia, just south of Highland Park, was entered Monday night and money and stamps to the value of nearly \$100 was taken, including a part of the money in the cash drawer of the store of Charles Cowell, in which the post office is located.

About a month ago, a fire was started by some unknown origin in the part of the store occupied by the post office. The men gained entrance to the post

< North Shore News-Letter, 28 Jan 1911, p. 1

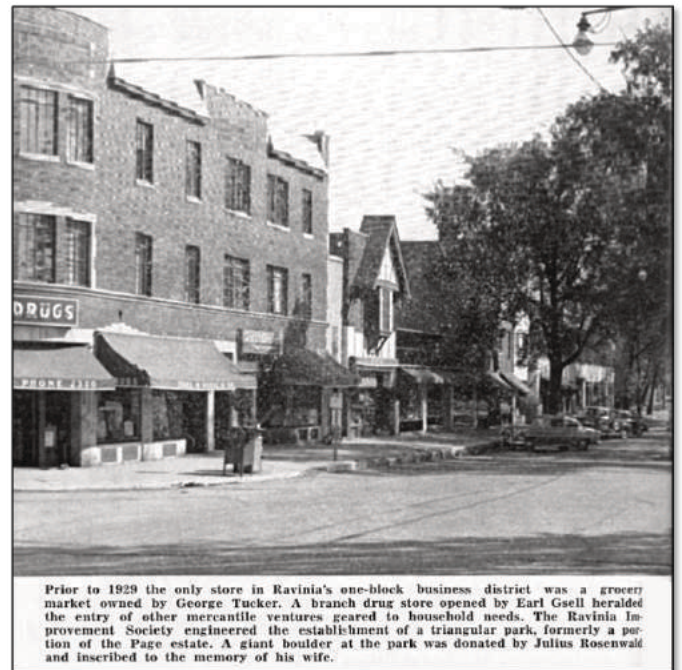
A Dramatic Transformation

By 1924 a man by the name of Arthur Boettcher (Pronounced Betcher) took over the grocery store. Little is known about Mr. Boettcher except that he was president of the board of a Northshore theatrical organization. It was also about that time that a new grocery was built on Roger Williams and the original grocery building underwent a massive alteration. In the 1920s, there seemed to be a desire to transform drab brick boxes into something more architecturally attractive. The ca. 1905 brick storefront received a radical transformation into a Swiss chalet-style facade. The same thing happened to the

Fletcher building in downtown Highland Park at that time. This facade transition seemed to occur about 1924. After the modifications, the store seemed to have a new lease on life.



Harry (left) and Red Aldridge in front of stores in the 400 block Roger Williams Ave, March 10, 1931. Harry Aldridge ran the grocery store at that time. Photo Courtesy Alfred Aldridge



Prior to 1929 the only store in Ravinia's one-block business district was a grocery market owned by George Tucker. A branch drug store opened by Earl Gsell heralded the entry of other mercantile ventures geared to household needs. The Ravinia Improvement Society engineered the establishment of a triangular park, formerly a portion of the Page estate. A giant boulder at the park was donated by Julius Rosenwald and inscribed to the memory of his wife.

Roger Williams Avenue looking east from St. Johns. Gselle's pharmacy was on the corner, and the former Ravinia Grocery store with its new façade is to the right. Photo source: Wittelle, Marvyn. "Pioneer to Commuter," Rotary Club of Highland Park, 1958, p. 192

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The First Ravinia Business: Does it Still Exist? (cont'd)

(Continued from page 11)

Ravinia Finally Becomes a Small Town

By the 1940s Ravinia businesses caught up with most small towns – in addition to a new grocery store there was Gselle's pharmacy, Husenetter's hardware store, Art Olson's men's clothing store, a shoe store, and even a Pure Oil gas and auto service station. Witty's "Ice Cream Kitchen" had opened on the corner of Roger Williams and Judson in 1926. George B. Winter, who operated several grocery stores in Evanston, and Wilmette in the 1930s and early 1940s, opened one in Ravinia. Ravinia had finally become a small town with all the attributes of a small town.



By 1950 Roger Williams Avenue was a thriving business district with a variety of shops and mature parkway trees. Photo source: City of Highland Park planning Department.

Ravinia Gets a Beloved Restaurant: George "Bud" Shelton Jr.'s Ravinia Grill

Bud and Mayme Shelton ran their restaurant in the renovated grocery store building on Roger Williams from 1945 to not long after Bud's death in 1993. Bud bought the former Ravinia Grocery building for his restaurant. The following are excerpts from Shirlee Bernstein's interview of Bud Shelton, July 21, 1988:

My father's father, John Shelton, was from England. He served throughout the west in the Indian Wars and ended up at Fort Sheridan as a Sergeant Major. As a civilian

, he became the Post Finance Officer and was reputed to have saved a bank from a run by insisting on leaving the post money in it. My father's mother came from Germany. She was a Wettemire. She lived on Moraine Dr. in the second house from Highwood Avenue, which is still standing.

In 1945, father bought 481 Roger Williams, and in 1949 I became the sole owner of Shelton's.

At our first place a hamburger was 10 cents and a Hamburger Special with fries and coleslaw was 15 cents. Then it went up to 27 cents. Our tax and maintenance has gone up so much that we were not making much money. Last year I cleared \$800 for the entire year. I have to borrow against my Visa card. I'd like to visit my sister for a week and do other things. Sometimes I say, "What am I doing this for?" But you see the people and you see the kids that you love and you say, "I can't leave this."



Bud Shelton's Grill, 1950s. Bud Shelton is sweeping the sidewalk in front of his restaurant.

We had the equivalent of the first McDonalds in the area. I had the idea of opening several restaurants and making the food at one location but my dad didn't think it wouldn't work. This was long before McDonalds.

We peel and slice our own potatoes for fries. The people know when we use frozen potatoes. They say "These

aren't your fries." I have kids who come in and say, "You have the best fries in the world." It tickles me to no end.

Highland Park has grown in size since the old days, there are so many more cars. There are many more foreign

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The First Ravinia Business: Does it Still Exist? (cont'd)

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people, like Mexicans. They're all nice people. The other business people on Roger Williams, they try to do a good job; and that's the main thing--try to do right by the customers. Ravinia is the garden spot of the country. It's where everything's close by and yet it's comfortably green and nice.

Regular diners at Shelton's included the then Mayor Dan Pierce. Bud's Grill was a popular hangout for school students with a little lunch money in their pockets seeking an after-class hangout.

Ravinia lost a tradition and a wonderful soul when Bud Shelton died in December, 1993. The restaurant continued for a while under Bud's wife and son "Chip," but Mayme was slowing down with age and the restaurant was eventually closed and put up for sale in 2014.

Bud Shelton's reminiscences from an Interview by Shirlee Bernstein, July 21, 1988:

Little Danny Simon and his father come in -- he's not in school yet. I say "Danny, what would you like." And I write it down. "Do you want orange juice?" and he'll say "Yeah." So I write it down. "Do you want scrambled eggs?" "Yeah." "What else do you want?" And he says, "I want a donut instead of roll." And after he gets through and I take his father's order I give him the ticket and I say, "Now you know where to put it." And he puts it up in the window and says 'Order!'"

They love it; they're a part of it. And now I've got some of the kids trained to take their dishes back. They love it because they're part of the organization.

More from Bud Shelton's reminiscences:

Eleven guys flew in from Hollywood for the 100th anniversary reunion of Highland Park High School and they decided to come to Shelton's:

- John Rappaport: a writer and producer, known for the movie M*A*S*H.
- Jeff Buhai: writer of *Revenge of the Nerds* with Zacharias.



One scene from John Hughes' 1983 movie "Risky Business" was shot in Shelton's Grill. That's Bud Shelton, above, behind the counter of his restaurant.

- Brian Levant: producer of *Happy Days* TV show.
- Allen Carr (in those days he was Alan Solomon): Called the "Counselor to the Stars," was a "career doctor" to many movie stars.
- Danny Zacharias: He's a medical doctor, the head of a trauma unit in New York. He came in with his wife and child. When Danny saw that I was busy in the back, he took his hat and coat off, put on an apron, and went back and helped me just like he did when he was a kid. It was the greatest thing I've ever seen and it just tickled me to no end. And everyone saw him and they were real happy.

One day Shirley, my waitress, was sick and I was all alone and I could hardly hobble around. I said "Kids, you're going to have to come back here if you want to

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The First Ravinia Business: Does it Still Exist? (cont'd)

(Continued from page 13)

get fed and take your orders down and put your names down and I'll holler your names out and you can come and pick up your order when it's ready." And I said to one of the bigger kids, "Do you know how to make drinks?" "Yeah, sure." So I said "OK, you can make the drinks." And I said "When you're done you can put your dishes back there." Those kids just loved it. They felt like they were a part of the place.



Sally's Nuts, right. The glass blocks above the windows were removed and new windows were installed.

Sally's Nuts

For a short time, the building housed the Hub and Spoke Café. The owners of that café entirely renovated the interior of the restaurant including its kitchen.

Then, Sally's Nuts opened in 2020. According to Sally Schoch, "I love the shop because it keeps me busy and I'm surrounded by good people. I laugh my head off at work each day." According to Sally's son Brandon, "It's a very happy place, our shop, with a lot of that having to do with the presence of Sal." So here's another shop that brings pleasure to owner and patron alike. But in the end, the original Ravinia grocery building is a far cry architecturally and in terms of its business from the way it was back in 1910, and that's OK. ■

A promotional graphic for Sally's Nuts. At the top, a banner asks "WHICH RAVINIA FESTIVAL CONCERTS ARE YOU MARKING ON YOUR CALENDAR?". Below this is the "Sally's Nuts" logo in orange script, followed by the text "sweet & salty nuts • snacks • sweets". The center features three images: a bowl of fruit (apples, grapes, oranges), a jar of nuts, and a tray of nut-based treats. At the bottom, a white box contains the text: "WE CAN'T WAIT FOR A SUMMER OF SNACKING, TAKING IN THE TUNES & MAKING NEW MEMORIES UNDER THE STARS!". Below this box is the address "481 Roger Williams Ave. | 847.748.8947" and the website "Visit SallysNuts.com For Current Hours".

A logo for North Shore Massage & Bodywork, LLC. It features a stylized treble clef in black, set against a circular background with a colorful, abstract pattern of blue, green, yellow, and red. To the right of the logo is the business name and contact information.

**North Shore Massage
& Bodywork, LLC**
Jessie Shastal, Owner/LMT/BCTMB
1811 St Johns Ave, Suite 203
Highland Park, IL 60035
(847)-505-3005
northshoremassageandbodywork@gmail.com

What's going on at Park Avenue Beach? (cont'd)

(Continued fro page 3)

1914. There were no paid life guards and the club house was used not only by recreational sailors but also by the Young Men's Life Saving Service who were the volunteer Life Guards. Mostly the club members were high school boys and the club disappeared in the twenties.

In the thirties there was renewed interest in sailing and with the construction of the water treatment plant, Park Avenue Beach effectively was divided into two distinct area, the north area, known as Park Avenue Beach and the south area, known as Central Avenue Beach. One was used as the swimming beach and the other was the sailing beach, but which one was which changed over time. In 1933 the City remodeled the clubhouse for the newly formed North Shore Yacht Club on the South Beach. But by 1938 has moved it to the North Beach with the understanding that the club would continue to provide lifeguard service for the swimmers at Central Avenue Beach. Twenty years later it flipped back again.

In the early sixties' the Park District eliminated swimming at Park Avenue Beach and Rosewood became the city's swimming beach with life guards and a bath house. That move opened the opportunity for improved power boating from Park Avenue Beach. A concrete ramp was built going straight east out into the lake and the North Beach became boat storage. But without some kind of protected cove, the only time when it was easy to launch was if there was a west wind or no wind at all.



2. Lake Michigan is hard on structures. Ruined piers, circa 1990

To solve this problem in August, 1963 the City and the Park District bought the 195-foot barge that had been brought in to construct the new water intake valve for the water treatment plant. The project to sink the barge was approved by the Army Corps of Engineers. But it didn't work as planned and just two months later it was clear that the area behind the barge was filling up with sand and the ramp could only be used by boats that could manage shallow water. It took more than a year to get the barge removed.



3. The breakwater is for more than boats!

The sailing members of the North Shore Yacht Club were probably disappointed that the barge didn't work out. The barge created a protected cove making it easier to launch and the fact that the cove was shallower than expected wasn't a problem for small sailboats. With a centerboard that can be lifted up they can float in just a few inches of water. Furthermore, In the 1950's and 60's sail boat construction was switching away from wood to lighter weight fiberglass making the small craft easier to launch.

In 1980 the Park District again brought in a barge to create a protected cove to facilitate boat launching. This time it was successful – the problem of the launch area filling up with sand was solved by annual dredging.

In addition to protecting the launch ramp, the barge had some other important benefits. The top of the barge was

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What's going on at Park Avenue Beach? (cont'd)

(Continued from page 15)

covered with a thin layer of concrete, allowing non-boaters to walk, fish or just sit and enjoy the lake. The protected cove reduced beach erosion and made it easier to launch boats from the sand. This made the Yacht Club's Learn to Sail program more successful; it's disappointing to sign up for lessons and not be able to get on the water because the wind is coming from the wrong direction. The safer easier launching also allowed the Yacht Club to expand its teaching program to high school students.

The expected life of the barge was only about 20 years. Just as lake Michigan destroyed the piers in the 19th century, the waves and ice also wear away at today's materials. But with careful annual maintenance, inspecting the outer shell and welding new steel on to cover any area that had been compromised, the barge had a much longer life.

If this maintenance schedule had continued it is possible that we would not be needing a new breakwater today. Unfortunately, that was not the case; the regular welding repairs stopped in about 2006.

The gradual disintegration of the barge from 2006 to the present is not the only setback that boating at Park Avenue Beach has experienced in recent years. In 2013 the entire South Beach area was closed to accommodate the heavy equipment and construction materials brought in for water treatment plant's renovation. (It's important to remember that the North Beach is directly owned by the Park District, whereas the Water Treatment Plant and the South Beach are owned by the City of Highland Park. The City leases the South Beach to the Park District.) That year there was no power boat launching and the Yacht Club worked out of a storage container on the North Beach.

After the Water Treatment Plant re-opened the City decided that for security reasons the narrow, one-way road at the foot of the bluff, just west of the water plant could no longer be used by the public. The Park District thought that road was essential to the circular road system that allowed boats on trailers to easily access the launch ramp and there was talk of eliminating power boating entirely. Fortunately, the City made improvements to the roads on the north and east side of

the water plant and power boats could continue to launch. However, many boaters concluded that Park Avenue Beach was no longer an attractive place to store and launch their boats and instead of making a temporary relocation they permanently moved away. In 2021 the concrete launch ramp was unusable the entire boating season and more boaters made alternate arrangements.

Some people thought the Yacht Club would not be adversely affected if power boating was eliminated and were surprised when the sailing community strongly supported the power boaters. The Yacht Club's reasoning was that having power boaters on the lake makes non-motorized boating a much safer activity. If you run into trouble, it's quite likely that someone will notice and tow you in or rescue you. It might be the Fire Department's Boat that launches from Park Avenue but even more likely it will be a recreational boater or one of the Yacht Club's safety boats. For that tremendously improved safety, in the Yacht Club's view it was worth the inconvenience of having large boats on trailers sometimes blocking the road in or out. The Yacht Club and the power boating community banded together. Together with the City and the Park District, a way was found to keep the boat ramp open.

In the years since the barge was put in, boating there has become more diverse, both in terms of equipment and people. It used to be that people thought only of power boats and sailboats. Now there are jet skis, kayaks, stand up paddleboards and even an outrigger canoe that launch from the site. It used to be that most of the boaters were middle aged men. Now there are women, high school students and senior citizens out on the water. The club owns sunfish, 420's, Barnetts, a Hobi Catamaran, kayaks and stand-up paddleboards for all certified members to use. These expanded opportunities might not have been possible without a breakwater. The new breakwater will allow power boats to return to Park Avenue Beach, making boating a safer experience for everyone. ■

Photo Credits:

1. Park District of Highland Park
2. Jesse Lowe Smith Collection of the Highland Park historical Society
3. Neesa Sweet

Replacement Process Under Way for 92-Year Old Ravinia Fire Station (cont'd)

(Continued from page 4)

Where there were once separate doors with a brick divider between positions for the apparatus of that time, modern, larger equipment required strengthening the support for the second floor, removing the divider, and providing a single door for the engine and ambulance-parked side by side. Ultimately, when returning to quarters, side mirrors had to be folded back to keep the vehicles from snagging each other while being backed in.

Now you can understand a major part of the reason a new, larger house is needed. The fact that both Engine 32 and Ambulance 32 will still have to serve both sides of the Metra tracks, using the same Roger Williams Avenue crossing, it was apparent that the existing site of the old fire station was the most suitable place for a new one. It just meant a considerably larger facility had to be designed to fit the same footprint.

To house the engine and ambulance and their crews while the old fire station is demolished and the new one is built, the Park District has allowed temporary modular quarters to be set up at the north end of Brown Park across Burton Avenue from the old station. For about 15 months, as of March 10, that's where fire crews will live while their apparatus is housed in a two-door, paved and heated garage-like facility.

Fire Chief Joe Schrage noted that besides the traditional requirements of a modern fire station, the input of the firefighter/paramedics who will be manning the new facility was solicited as part of the planning process. The fire house at 692 Burton has served the Ravinia community as effectively as possible for more than 92 years. "The new fire station will be constructed efficiently and in a timely manner," Schrage said, "and it will provide an efficient delivery of services for many decades to come." ■



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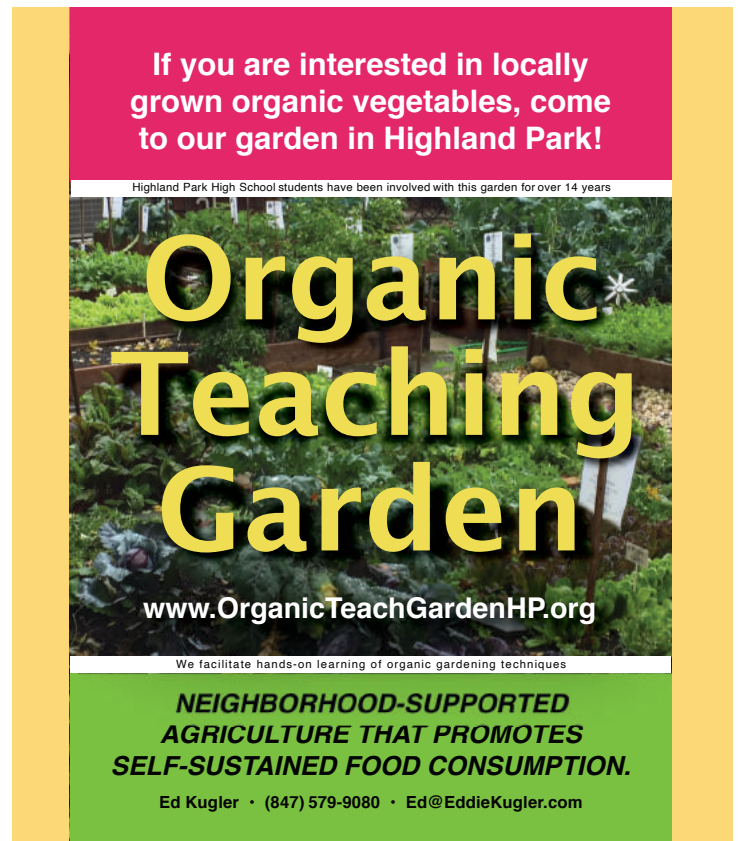
A Tribute to Baker Boys Bakery (Cont'd)

(Continued from page 9)

and keep it going seamlessly, even adding a few new features such as allowing customers to order scones and muffins. Even during the pandemic, Baker Boys was only down 20%, not too shabby compared to many other businesses out there.

Nowadays, Sasha is evaluating her options, deciding if going back into the corporate world is what's next for her. She has sold off her equipment from Baker Boys and is taking care of her health and well-being. When asked if she'd consider going back into the entrepreneurial world, her answer: "Never say never."

Sasha, if you're reading this, the Ravinia and broader Highland Park community thanks the original Baker Boys owners and you for all that you brought to us. It goes beyond a single cupcake or a dozen cookies – it's the memories that flood our hearts and minds. ■



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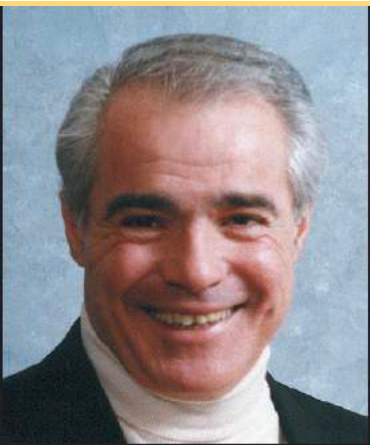
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If you have questions, please contact Doug Purington: doug.purington@att.net.

Regular RNA meetings are normally held on the first or second Tuesday of every month.

**Our next meeting is to be in-person as well as virtual via conference call
on Tuesday, May 10th**