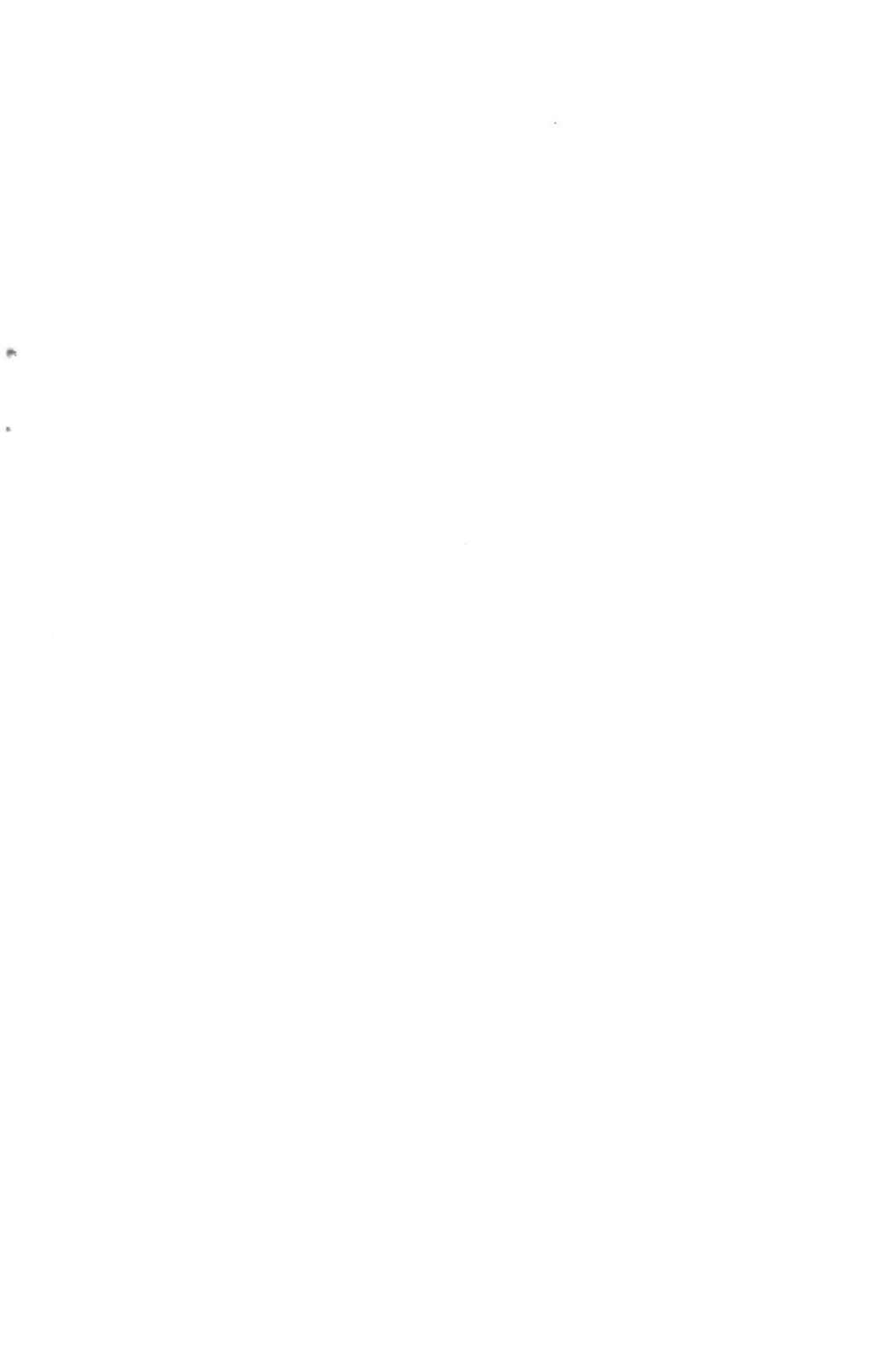


# NORTH MAYFAIR





**A  
HISTORICAL  
ACCOUNT  
OF  
NORTH MAYFAIR**

Published by the North Mayfair Improvement Association  
in the Bicentennial Year of 1976.

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“Closely linked to the idea of community is the idea of participation . . . Participation preserves the vitality of institutions and nurtures a healthy relationship between the individual and society. When people for whatever reason - oppression or laziness or complacency take no part in their institutions, the institutions themselves decay at an accelerating rate . . . ”

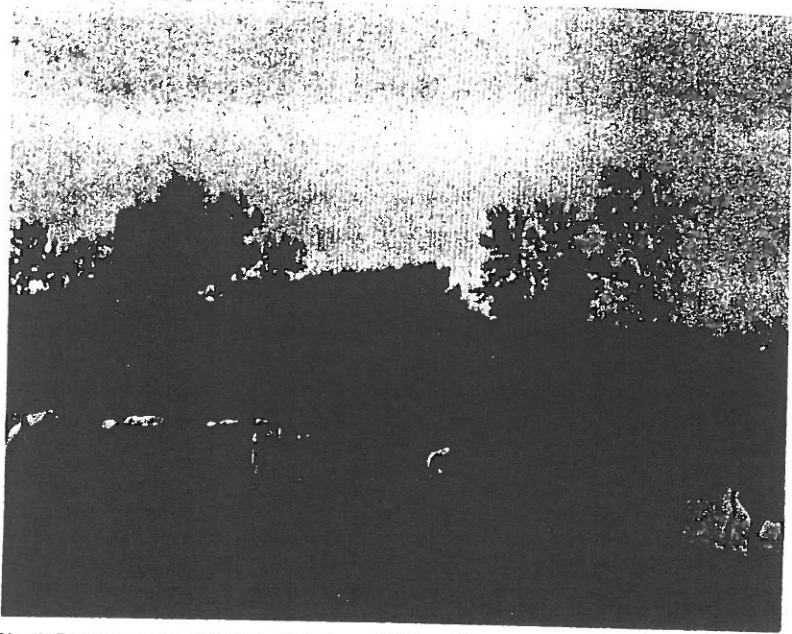
John W. Gardner

Former Secretary of Health,  
Education and Welfare

**NORTH MAYFAIR  
A COMMUNITY OF NEIGHBORS,  
NOT STRANGERS  
by Edward Kuhn, President 1975**

This booklet is the result of a community's awareness of itself. Its purpose is to remind the many, many, long time residents in this Bicentennial Year, of all the things they and their neighbors lived through to make this neighborhood what it is today. It will help the new residents realize that this neighborhood has had problems in the past, has problems now and will have problems in the future. These problems are solvable when the community works together, and working together increases our awareness of each other and helps develop the neighborhood pride that keeps our community stable.

It is hoped that people thinking of buying a home will see that the area encompassed by Foster, Lawrence, Pulaski and Cicero Avenues has much to offer and is worth serious consideration as a pleasant place to live.



**North Branch of the Chicago River from Erickson Farm in 1889.**

**Railway Trestle in La Bagh Woods early 1900's.**



## Early History

Today, North Mayfair is a fully-packed corner in the urban area of metropolitan Chicago, and it lies under the skyways of the busiest airport in the world, O'Hare Field. North Mayfair is six thousand people. It is homes, streets and alleys laced together with telephone and electrical wires. It is cars, buses, stores, businesses, sidewalks, lawns backyards and kids. But once it was an open prairie, full of natural beauty, untouched by development. Fifty eight species of wildlife nibbled the foliage, and the river that edged its northern boundary was clear and clean.

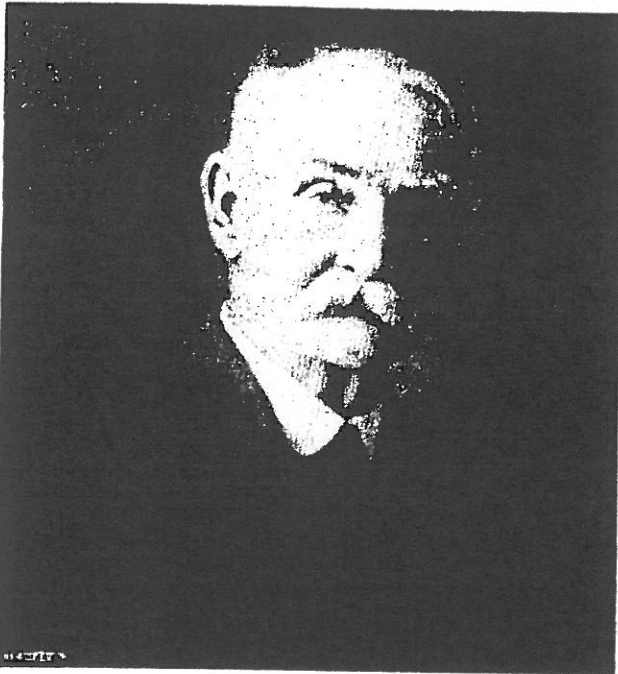
North Mayfair belonged to the Pottawatomie Indians. As the United States developed, the settlers came west with their wagon trains. Soon, the stronger culture of the white man pushed aside the simple life style of the Indians, and the winds of change blew the prairies into truck farms, and the truck farms into subdivisions and bungalows, and the river that still edges the northern boundary of North Mayfair became polluted.

When we look back, we find that the earliest history of North Mayfair is necessarily intertwined with that of adjoining areas. North Mayfair was not defined as a neighborhood until the North Mayfair Improvement Association was formed in 1929.

Among the first white men in this general area were Joliet and Marquette, who were here in 1673. One hundred and thirty years later, in 1803, Fort Dearborn was built, and thirty years after that, in September of 1833, the United States signed an important treaty with the Pottawatomie Indians. However, there must have been earlier negotiations with the Indians because, from 1816 to 1835, there was an Indian reservation in nearby Edgebrook.

In the treaty of 1833, special grants were given to some Indians. Billy Caldwell (also known as Chief Sauganash) was among them. There is a stone and plaque commemorating these treaties with the Indians at Caldwell and Rogers Avenues in Sauganash, were a huge elm tree once stood. This plaque was placed there by the Chicago Historical Society. (The plaque was stolen recently by vandals, but the stone is intact.

Chief Sauganash was an important person in that bygone era. He was the son of an Irish officer in the British Service, and his mother was a Pottawatomie princess. He acted as an intermediary between the Indians and the Government. Later, in payment for this service, the Government built a house for him on Wabash Avenue, on the land now occupied by the Holy Name Cathedral. Caldwell Avenue and the community of Sauganash were named after him.

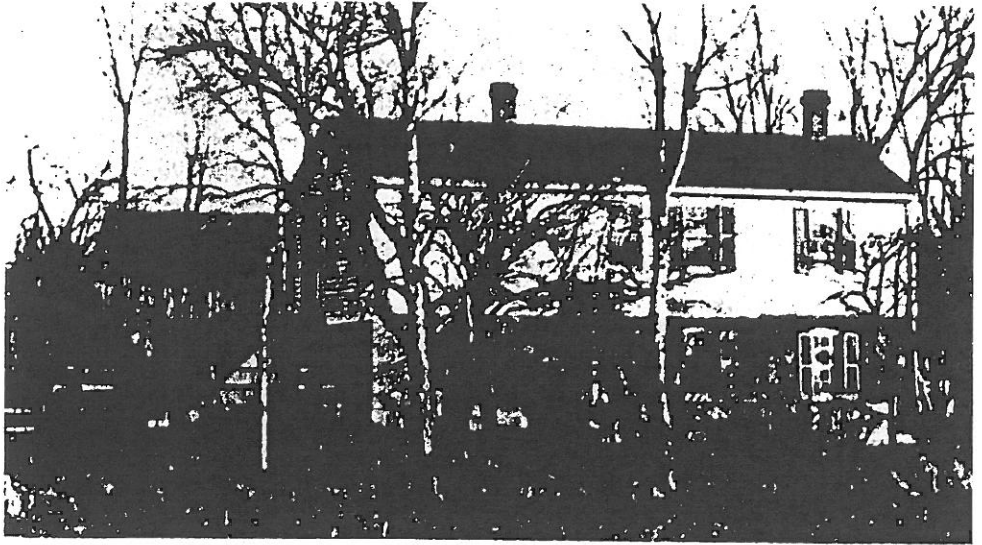


*WM. H. SPIKINGS*

Among the early settlers in our area was William Harding, who was given a land grant in 1800. He was the grandfather of W. H. Spikings who was the first white person to be born in this general area, in a home that stood about where the Eugene Fieldhouse is today. He was born in 1848. Later, this W. H. Spikings built a sixteen room mansion that looked like a southern home from "Gone With the Wind" at Ainslie Street and Pulaski Road. The house was set back from the



street with a spacious lawn around it, and the whole area was enclosed by an iron picket fence. Every brick in this huge house was kilned by Mr. Spikings. The Spiking family was active in civic affairs and helped to establish the Mayfair Presbyterian Church.



**Erickson Farmhouse Located in the 5100 Block of North Kostner Avenue.**

Other early settlers in the area were James McGrane who opened a tavern in 1842 at the intersection of Lawrence and Elston Avenues. Mr. Peter Ericson had a homestead from the year 1850 on Kostner Avenue near Foster Avenue. He was a prosperous farmer, and his daughter Jennie became a teacher at the "Little Red School House" located for many years at Kostner and Lawrence Avenues.

In 1889, North Mayfair, then a part of Jefferson Township, was annexed to the City of Chicago. After the era of the early settlers and the truck farms, subdividers bought tracts of land. Streets, sidewalks and bungalows appeared and North Mayfair took on its present day appearance.

## The North Mayfair Improvement Association

In 1929, Gustave Reich and twenty-three of his neighbors founded the North Mayfair Improvement Association. In 1932, they combined with the Albany Park West End Improvement Association. The first meetings of the Association were held in the old band shell which was the first building in Gompers Park. It stood in the valley where the football field is now. Later, meetings were held in the Park District bungalows at Kolmar and Carmen Avenues. When the Gompers Park fieldhouse was built, the meetings were moved there.

In April of 1936, when Mr. Alex Rochow was president, the first issue of the "Improver" was published. For thirty-eight years, Mr. Rochow served as its Editor; this is an unparalleled contribution to the community when it is realized that behind each and every issue there was the pulling together of information, countless telephone calls, printing and mailing details, and doubtlessly other untold problems.

Mr. Rochow was a staunch supporter of the now disbanded Garden Club of Mayfair for more than twenty-five years. In April of 1960, his name was placed on the Gompers Park Honor Roll for his contributions to our community, and he continued to contribute his interest, talents, and time for an additional fifteen years.

When the Association started a snow plowing service, Mr. Rochow was on the committee. Many times this elderly gentleman could be seen guiding the snow plow up and down the streets with his white Studebaker. In the summer he was often on his knees tending the flowers on the grounds of the beautiful Presbyterian Church.

In reviewing back copies of the "Improver" for the preparation of our community history book, it was apparent that Mr. Rochow, had preserved a valuable record of community life. These "Improvers" span the years from the Great Depression and show the social attitudes, the patriotism and life-style of a middle class American community. Community life as it was affected by larger social concerns such as the Depression, WPA, World War II, the draft, and the housing shortage is recorded in a way that would otherwise have been lost.

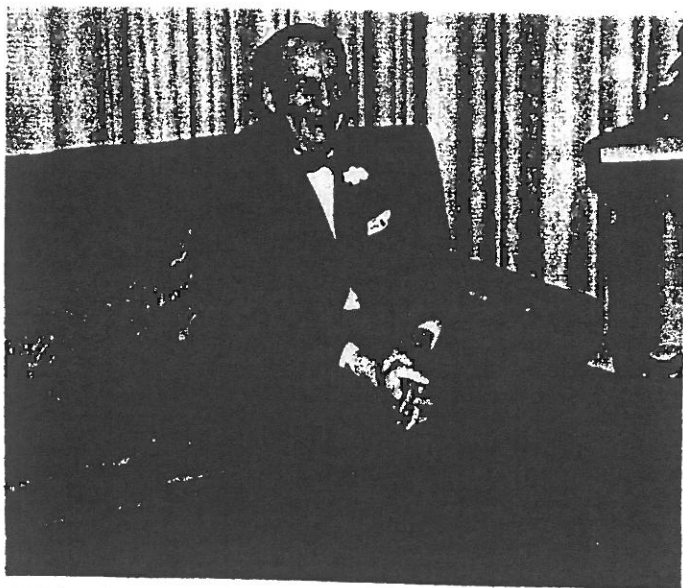
The Chicago Historical Society has recognized the value of these "Improvers" and they will officially become part of the permanent records of the City of Chicago when they are donated to the Society after the history book is completed.

North Mayfair also had a "Poet Laureate." Mr. Frank T. Rounds was a frequent contributor of homespun poetry to the "Improver." He was born in Rushville, Indiana, and he was a boyhood friend of James Whitcomb Riley.

Mr. Rounds was also a tireless worker for the Association and served as its delegate to the Northwest Federation of Improvement Clubs.

In an interview on his eighty-third birthday, he made this remarkable statement. "I must say that the past twenty years have been the happiest in my life. We have a happy home surrounded by many friends. My work these past years for our community and fellowmen has been interesting, and I hope the Good Lord will give me a few more years to live that I may continue to do good for all." He lived to be ninety-three.

#### A. C. ROCHOW



Civic Leader and Editor of the Improver for Thirty-eight Years.

## PAST PRESIDENTS

The following is a list of the past presidents of our Association. All of these men and women have given outstanding service to our community. They have given unselfishly of their time, organizational abilities and efforts. The North Mayfair Improvement Association's continued success and continuity is the direct result of their efforts and of countless others who supported their work.

- |                           |                          |
|---------------------------|--------------------------|
| *1929 Gustav Reich        | 1953 Max Haack           |
| *1930 Benjamin A. Toleson | 1954 Matt Schiller       |
| *1931 Earle J. Orther     | *1955 Ray Kirchwehm      |
| *1932 Gustav Bjurnstrom   | 1956 Joseph E. Hammer    |
| *1933 Edward L. Barr      | 1957 Herman Uding        |
| *1934 Irwin C. Reiff      | 1958 Roy Lundin          |
| *1935 Arthur C. Bruns     | 1959 Joseph Waltz        |
| *1936 Alex C. Rochow      | 1960 Russell E. Johnson  |
| 1937 Charles C. Porter    | 1961 Joseph Traum        |
| *1938 John C. Benson      | 1962 John Huska          |
| 1939 Sidney S. Doe        | 1963 Stewart Archambault |
| *1940 Samuel M. Sopocy    | *1964 D. Victor Nuzzo    |
| *1941 Paul A. Pape        | 1965 Rudolph Amrich      |
| *1942 George Dalacker     | *1966 Harry Sehlhorst    |
| 1943 Walter C. Regard     | 1967 Peter Auler         |
| 1944 R. Chase Phipps      | 1968 Edward Lawdan       |
| *1945 Henry G. Kelly      | 1969 William C. Jones    |
| *1946 Karl Sauer          | 1970 Ronald Pryer        |
| *1947 Jack G. Dinschel    | 1971 Edward A. Klipo     |
| 1948 Harry H. Larkner     | 1972 Nick Altintop       |
| *1949 Harold V. Jacobs    | 1973 Joseph Cicero       |
| 1950 Arthur F. Krohn      | 1974 Ruth Melson         |
| *1951 Arthur C. Schultz   | 1975 Edward Kuhn         |
| *1952 James R. Adkins     | 1976 James McCarthy      |
- \*deceased at time of print.

## ADVERTISING IN THE IMPROVER — A TWO WAY STREET

Advertising started in the Improver in the April, 1942 issue. The first six years of the Improver did not carry advertising. This advertising benefits the advertiser by increasing his patronage, and it benefits the community because it helps pay for the printing and mailing of the Improver.

Our community needs good stores and services located on Lawrence, Pulaski and Elston. They make it convenient to shop nearby. Please patronize them whenever possible.

Frank T. Rounds wrote a poem on this subject. It applies today, as it did years ago when he wrote it.

### PATRONIZE OUR MERCHANTS

Patronize our merchants who advertise  
In the North Mayfair Improver and be wise.  
Why pay a fare to go to the loop  
When they down there don't give a whoop.

Our Mayfair merchants, you know them all.  
They're our neighbors so give them a call.  
For with them the money you spend  
Will come back to you some day again.

For we know you all believe in unity  
So stand by your Mayfair community.  
Meet them with a smile; let that be your aim.  
Won't be long calling you by your first name.

Our merchants are fair; they are just.  
Just the kind we all can trust,  
So read the ads, what they advertise  
In The North Mayfair Improver and be wise.

## TRANSPORTATION

In the very earliest days of Chicago, there were only two roads leading to the north. One was Greenbay Road and the other was Elston Road, formerly an old Indian trail up the Des Plaines valley.

Later, Elston Road (also called Lower Road) and Milwaukee Road (also called Upper Road) became plank toll roads. They provided access for the farmers to the central city, when they brought their produce to market across the wooden planks. If there had been no plank roads, the farmers would have had to pick their way over the ruts and bumps of the open prairies.

Since these toll roads were in operation for many years, thousands of dollars were collected in tolls. There was a tollgate at Milwaukee and Lawrence Avenues called Snell's Tollgate.

The first streetcars on Lawrence Avenue appeared in 1896. The Ravenswood Elevated Lines were started in 1907. Recently after sixty-seven years of use, the original terminal building at Lawrence and Kimball Avenues was replaced by a modern building.

It took twelve years of effort by people in the North Mayfair Improvement Association, in concert with other groups, to transform Foster Avenue from a footpath to a busy arterial street. Finally, three bridges were built over the river. After many meetings of community groups, bus service was begun in July of 1937.

In December of 1951, the fourteen miles of the Edens Highway to Lake Cook Road was opened, providing an easy access to the northern suburbs. Later, the Northwest Expressway, now called the Kennedy Expressway, was built. More recently, transportation to the Loop was greatly improved by rapid transit service in the median strip of the Kennedy Expressway from the Jefferson Park Terminal.

## WORLD WAR II AND THE ARMY BUGLE

Five days after Pearl Harbor, the Mayfair Committee of Civil Defense was organized. There was a fear that bombs could be dropped on Chicago by long-range planes that could

be refueled in Greenland. During a planned blackout practice, all the lights in North Mayfair were effectively extinguished except the gas-lit lamp posts on Keeler, Kilbourn and Keating Avenues. At the time, this was potentially dangerous, but it is amusing today. After this incident the North Mayfair Improvement Association pressured the city to electrify these posts.

The Civil Defense Committee promoted metal and salvage drives. They arranged for victory gardens which were rented at \$1.75 per plot at the Chicago Pump Plant site on Foster Avenue and the Salvation Army grounds on Kedvale Avenue. They also held a huge War Bond Rally in Gompers Park in September of 1943.

Draft Board #58 was located at 4409 W. Lawrence Avenue. During the course of the War, twenty-five different civic, social and church organizations, including the North Mayfair Improvement Association contributed time and money to give the inductees a breakfast, cigarettes, and a copy of the Bible just before they left for camp.

In 1941, the War Department secured the use of a strip of land extending west of the boundary (old tennis courts) of Gompers Park to the Chicago Northwestern railroad tracks to use for an army camp. It was to be used for recreational purposes by the Sixth Corps Area and was built to accommodate 500 to 1000 soldiers. The commander was Major C.A. Hatfield. There was a formal dedication ceremony on September 4, 1941.

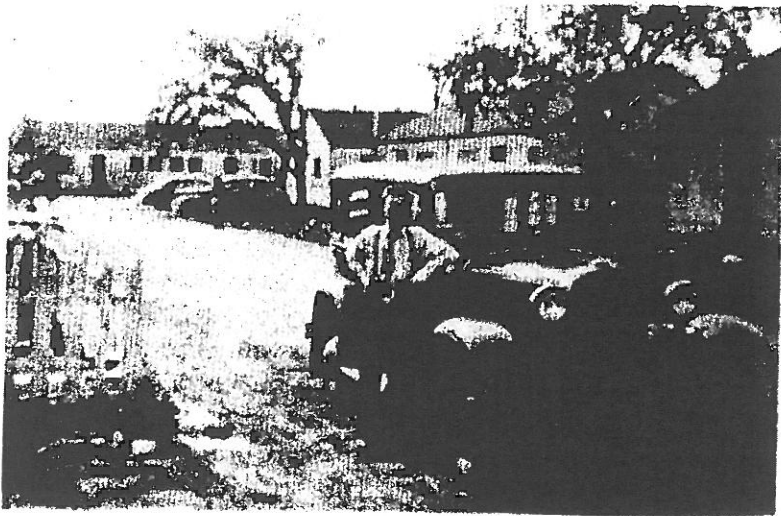
The camp was not successful for recreational purposes, perhaps because it was too far from the downtown area. In January of 1942, it was converted to the use of the military police. The tents were replaced by wooden barracks which were ready for occupancy in January of 1943.

It was renamed Camp Foster and was guarded day and night by sentries. A bugle blew each morning and evening. The women of North Mayfair baked cakes and cookies for the soldiers and delivered them to the camp once a month. Later the camp was again renamed. This time it was called Camp Sauganash.

After the War, the North Mayfair Improvement Association tried to get the land annexed to Gompers Park. However, the United States Government, because of the acute housing shortage, had other plans for the property. It was converted to one hundred and eighty-five veteran housing units. The first veterans moved in during December of 1946. One-room facilities rented for \$27.50 per month; 2 rooms rented for \$32.50; and three rooms for \$37.50. The buildings were portable and were heated by coal stoves. They had been used before in Kingsford Heights, Indiana, and Seneca, Illinois.

Veteran housing regulations required that one-tenth of the units be rented to non-whites. This qualification was accepted by our neighborhood, and for eight years black children held hands with white children in Palmer School.

Now the land is part of the Forest Preserve District, but if you look in the thicket next to the old tennis courts you will find one of the support beams for the military obstacle training course. This is the last remnant of the army camp and the bugles that blew in North Mayfair.



**This is a picture of the Veterans' Housing Project. Mr. Stewart Archambault is the man in the foreground. He lived in the project and later bought a home in North Mayfair. He was the president of the Association in 1963.**



Gompers Park, one of the nicest parks in Chicago, contains over thirty-nine acres of land. It is situated in a river bank area on contoured land with slight hills and valleys that are used for sledding in the wintertime. There is a natural pond in the south section.

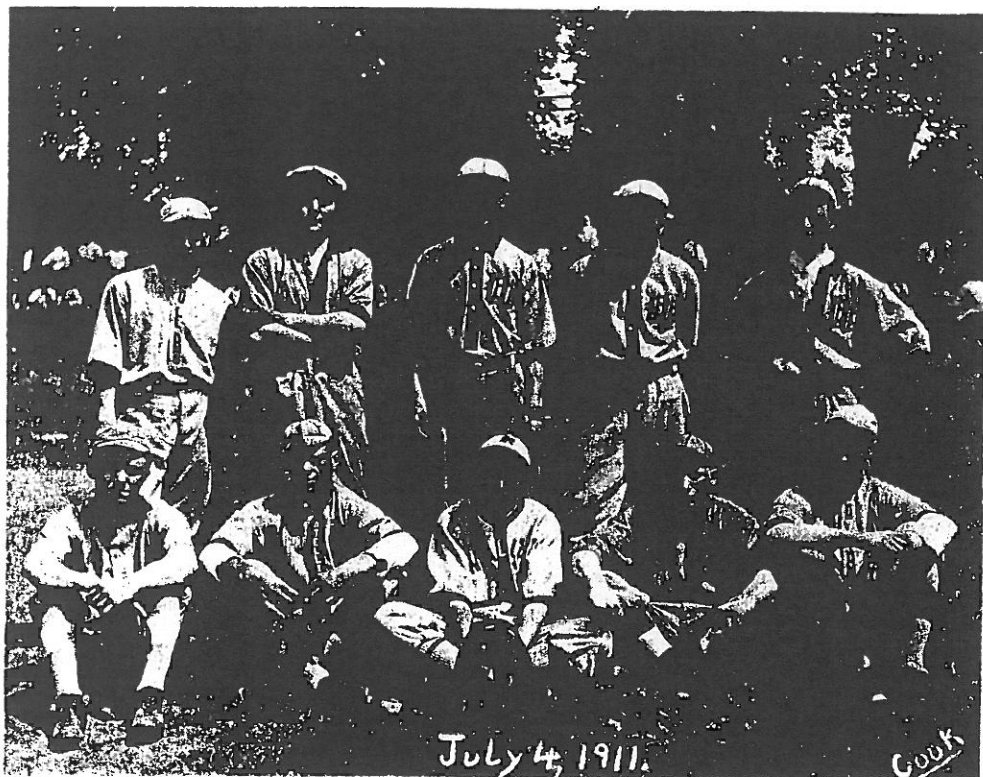
At first, this park was called Matson Park. It was named after Samuel Matson who resided at 5041 N. Kostner Avenue. He was a superintendent of the Park District and was also Deputy County Recorder. Later, the park was renamed for another Sam, Samuel Gompers, the labor leader.

For several years, the North Mayfair Improvement Association tried to get traffic lights on Foster Avenue so the park would be more accessible. This was accomplished. A detailed plan to build a pedestrian overpass was aborted, even after an ordinance was passed by the City Council. It was felt that traffic lights alone would solve the problem.

In 1938, the Park District secured the land south of Foster Avenue from the Forest Preserve District. Shortly afterwards, as a WPA project during the Depression, south Gompers Park was landscaped. Three hundred men worked on it, and a half million dollars was spent. The result was an excellent planting of evergreens, mulberry, crabapple and pine trees and shrubs. A rustic bridge was built over the pond. Five deluxe tennis courts with inlaid concrete lines were built. During this project, construction headquarters houses stood where the parking lot is now, next to the tennis courts.

The very first building in Gompers Park was the old two-level bandshell which stood in the valley in north Gompers Park next to the football field. The first meetings of the North Mayfair Improvement Association were held there. Old-timers will remember the cannon that stood at the top of the hill for many years. It was a German cannon that was captured in France in World War I. In World War II, it was taken down and used for scrap metal.

Another small park in our area is the Kolmar Play Lot at Kolmar and Carmen. The two bungalows adjoining it at 5056 and 5052 Kolmar Avenue were originally park District property, but they were sold to private owners.



Baseball team from our neighborhood. Picture was taken on July 4, 1911. Players pictured are: Ray Bishop, George Haberer, Vernon Loucks, Edward Ball, Harold Darmouth, Rube Johnson, Sam Mitchell, Charles H. Avichouser, Harry Fauret.

## THE OLD CANNON — by Frank T. Rounds

The old cannon in Gompers Park  
Will be removed and taken apart.  
And sent across the deep, blue sea,  
To help put the Japs on their Jap O knees.

It will be loaded with shot and shell  
And send those Japs down to —— well.  
It did its share in War Number One,  
And many a battle for us it has won.

So we will miss it from Gompers Park,  
But we know its shooting will hit the mark,  
And clean those Japs from off the earth,  
And give them all that we are worth.

And with our soldiers our flag will wave,  
The good, old cannon will surely blaze,  
Over Japan, yes, Berlin and Rome.  
Then our boys victorious coming marching home.

And what a greeting we will give them.  
It will be more than just stratagem.  
Nothing on earth will ever compare,  
When the war is over, over there.

## THE THREE "R's"

The building called the "Little Red Schoolhouse" stood on the corner of Kostner and Lawrence Avenues for many years. It was there that Miss Jennie Ericson of the pioneer family taught.

This building was also a community center as well as a school. When the Mayfair School and Palmer School were built, this building became obsolete. In 1935, it was leased to the Mayfair Lutheran Church, and their congregation used it as a house of worship for several years.



Attempts were made to use the building for a library later on. But the library board refused this plan, saying the building was not suitable. In December of 1939, "The Little Red Schoolhouse" was torn down by the WPA. But the childhood-memories of many Mayfair residents lingered on, and a big reunion was held in November of 1949 and again in 1951.

Palmer School became "Our School" when it opened in 1925. Mr. Frederick Mussehl was its first long-term principal. Mr. Theodore Wallschlaeger is its principal at the present time.

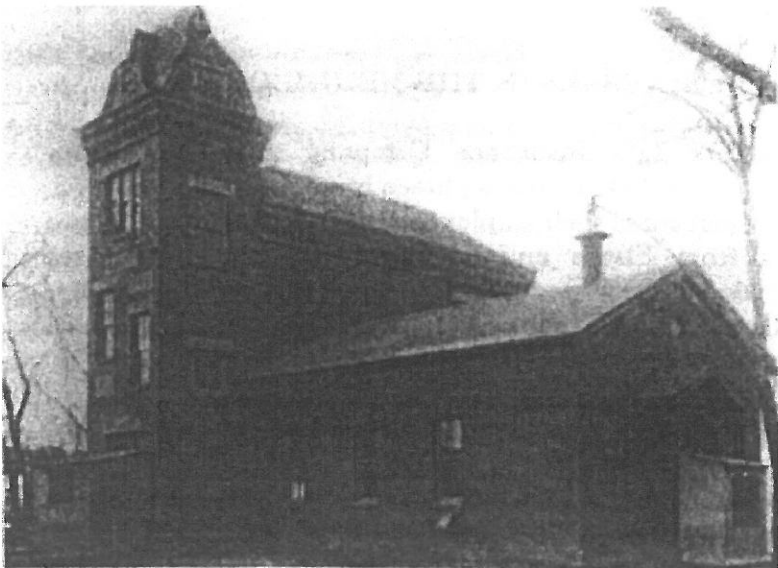
Catholic education has continued to be available at St. Edwards Church. Many North Mayfair families have educated their children at "St. Ed's."

## THE MAYFAIR SUB-BRANCH

The Chicago Public Library system did not automatically provide our area with library facilities. As early as 1938, interested people in North Mayfair started to work to get our own library. Mayor Kelly ordered a survey of the needs of this area, but the project dragged on. After the Mayfair Lutheran Church discontinued holding services in the "Little Red Schoolhouse" at Kostner and Lawrence Avenues, an effort was made to use this building as a library, but the Board of Directors of the library rejected this idea.

Local residents, including the Palmer PTA, continued to press for this needed facility. Actually, the books and the furniture for the branch library were arranged for before a site was selected. When a restaurant moved out of 4750 North Kenneth Avenue, the space was converted into a library. The library was dedicated on October 3, 1942, after four years of community effort.

Again, after strenuous unflagging efforts of concerned parents and community groups, this branch library was moved to Keeler and Lawrence Avenues. It was completely refurbished and adequate lighting was installed. This was accomplished in September of 1974.



LITTLE RED SCHOOLHOUSE

## CHURCHES

Within the boundaries of the North Mayfair area, there is at present only one church building, the Mayfair Presbyterian Church. This is the church that the pioneer Spikings family helped start when Mrs. Minnie Spikings began a Sunday School for the children of Bohemian families who moved into the area when the Bohemian National Cemetery was built. The church's original building was located at Harding and Ainslie Avenues. Then it moved to Keeler and Ainslie Avenues and later to its present location on Ainslie and Kostner Avenues.

From 1928 to 1949, there was a frame church building on the corner of Kildare and Ainslie Avenues. This was the Ainslie Baptist Church. Some of us will remember the Reverend John Herrmann, a dark, curly haired man who was a friendly neighbor to us for some fifteen years. Later this congregation relocated at Elston and Foster Avenues.

Other churches that serve our area, but are not within our boundaries, are the Mayfair Lutheran Church, St. Edwards Catholic Church, Mayfair United Methodist and many others.

## BUSINESSES IN THE NEIGHBORHOOD

Bankers Life Insurance Company grew from fifty employees in 1941 to over eighteen hundred in 1953. In 1953, eighty percent of their employees lived within a radius of two miles from Elston and Lawrence Avenues. Forty-three percent of them were handicapped or elderly. Today, Bankers Life & Casualty Company of Chicago is the second largest stock, accident and health insurance company in the world. The sales force alone numbers thirty-five hundred. The sole owner is John Donald MacArthur, the third richest man in the United States. The collective value of the company is one and one half billion dollars.

The operation of this business in our neighborhood has been a continuing problem in terms of zoning, volume of people and traffic. Bankers has continued to gobble up houses and stores. The resulting hodgepodge of buildings

will be a big white elephant headache to the neighborhood, if they should ever decide to move. Although we have had some cooperation from them in regard to complaints of noise and litter, it behooves us to continually remind the company that they have a social responsibility to this neighborhood. Lately, the exteriors of some of their buildings have been attractively painted.

Investors Savings and Loan operated their business for many years on the corner of Keeler and Lawrence Avenues. In 1957 they built a handsome building on the corner of Kostner and Lawrence Avenues where the "Little Red School House" once stood. When they merged with Hoyne Savings, Bankers Life took over their building.

Another large business in the neighborhood is First Distributors at Lawrence Avenue and Pulaski Road. This business too, has posed problems, especially for people who live on adjoining streets.

## AN EVALUATION OF NORTH MAYFAIR

1. Is North Mayfair a stable community?

Answer: Many families have been in this area for a long time. There are children in Palmer School who are the third generation to attend.

2. Are property values on the upgrade in North Mayfair?

Answer: Property has continued to increase in value since the 1930's. At the present time houses sell as soon as they are put up for sale.

3. What is the state of repair of the homes?

Answer: Generally, all the homes are well built. They have good brick work and hard cement foundations. Roofs, gutters, painting and landscaping have been kept up, and the houses are structurally sound.

4. Are there schools nearby?

Answer: Palmer School (Chicago Public School) can be reached without crossing busy streets, for most families. Parochial education is available at St. Edwards, (Catholic), St. Johns Lutheran, Tabor Lutheran and Arie Crown (Jewish).

5. What kind of transportation is available?

Answer: North Mayfair is a short bus ride away from the excellent Jefferson Park CTA terminal. From that point it is



17 minutes to downtown Chicago. The entrance ramp on Foster Avenue to Edens Highway makes all points north of here easily accessible by automobile, and the Kennedy Expressway provides a diagonal automobile connection to other areas of Chicago and to the interstate highways.

6. What colleges and universities are nearby?

Answer: North Mayfair is within walking and biking distance from North Park College and Northeastern Illinois University.

7. Are there flooding problems in the area?

Answer: Generally, due to the fact that there is no parkland (viz - cemeteries and Gompers Park) and a major sewer is under Lawrence Avenue, the majority of homes have been completely free of flooding problems since they were built.

8. What recreational areas are nearby?

Answer: Gompers Park contains 39 acres of land, an attractive fieldhouse, ball diamonds, lagoon for fishing, five excellent cement tennis courts and an outdoor swimming pool. The park district offers drama classes, sewing and handicraft, square dancing, gym, wrestling, chess, volleyball and basketball instruction. LaBagh Woods is within walking distance and contains 600 acres of land.

9. What churches are nearby?

Answer: There are Presbyterian, Lutheran, Baptist, Catholic and many others within walking distance.

10. Are there libraries in the area?

Answer: The Mayfair sub-branch of the Chicago Public Library is located at Keeler and Lawrence. For most residents this can be reached without crossing busy streets. The Hild Library (Regional) is the largest public library in Chicago aside from the main library on Michigan Avenue. This is a short bus ride away and is located on Lincoln Avenue near Sunnyside.

## THE SALVATION ARMY REPORT

by James R. Shouba

Editor's Note: The Booth Memorial Maternity Hospital at 5040 N. Pulaski occupies a land site of approximately six and a half acres. For many years the Salvation Army who operates the hospital has been good neighbors to us in North Mayfair, and they have accomplished their social work in quiet dignity. Older residents in North Mayfair will remember when the community used the Kedvale side of their property for baseball and football games. The area was called Hardings' Field. Later, the community used the area for Victory Gardens. The following account of a recent dialogue with the "Army" is included in this history book because it illustrates in detail, how cooperative action on the part of citizens can affect events. No community need be the victim of happenstance planning. Due to the foresight, dedication and involvement of neighbors near the site, North Mayfair was able to prevent a high density development from glutting our community.

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Our neighborhood's interest in the Booth Memorial Maternity Hospital started in 1941 when we began cutting the weeds on the Kedvale end of their property. During World War II permission was obtained from the Salvation Army who operate the hospital, to increase our mowing operations and to use this portion of their land for Victory Gardens.

In the 1950's the property was enclosed by a six foot chain link fence, dubbed, "Our Iron Curtain". This put an end to the Victory Gardens and the mowing operations.

In 1964 the Salvation Army prepared plans for a million dollar addition to the hospital, if the city approved rezoning from R2 and R3 to R4. Also considered was a one story, eight apartment staff building to be built adjacent to the hospital. The North Mayfair Improvement Association and nearby neighbors were concerned that if the whole site was rezoned to R4, three story apartment buildings could be built. Therefore, it was proposed that only the land east of Karlov Avenue be rezoned to R4, and the land west of Karlov remain R2. (single family residence) This was proposed by the neighbors and accepted by the Salvation Army and the zoning board. The construction was completed in 1966.

In October 1972 the Salvation Army presented a plan to build a thirty story Senior Citizen Housing Complex to the 225 members present at the NMIA meeting. This proposal was unanimously rejected.

Two months later in December, the Salvation Army proposed a new plan consisting of an open quadrangle of buildings, three and four stories high containing 220 rental units. This would have created a high density condition for the neighborhood, in an area zoned for single family residences. This proposal was rejected by the Association in March 1973. Also at this meeting, the Association voted to match funds collected from the property owners immediately adjacent to the site, who had been advised they would need money for legal fees to effectively oppose the expansion.

A series of meetings was held for the "immediate neighbors" to discuss the above issues and at that time several attorneys explained the legal aspects of opposing the project. By September 1973, \$1,660 was collected from twenty-one concerned property owners and deposited in the Northwest National Bank. The NMIA set aside matching funds.

After many meetings of the neighbors and pressured by the thoughtful objections they raised, in January 1974, the Salvation Army shelved plans for the high density project and launched plans to build an Extended Nursing Care

Facility. Again, after many meetings and much citizen effort their Site D plan was found to be the least objectionable. This plan allowed the Salvation Army to retain the existing eight apartment staff building valued at \$150,000. A portion of the proposed new Extended Care Nursing Home would be placed on R2 zoned property. The west face of the building would be kept 270 feet east of Kedvale Avenue. A parking lot with spaces for forty-three cars was planned directly west of the building. The west edge of this lot would be 160 feet from Kedvale Avenue. No entrances would be from Kedvale Avenue. All vehicles would enter and exit from Pulaski Road. An emergency only entrance, restricted to Police and Fire Department vehicles and ambulances, would be from the north end of Karlov Avenue.

This plan was accepted at the NMIA October, 1974 meeting, providing that Colonel Miller of the Salvation Army would state in a letter to the Association that the Site Plan D represented the Salvation Army's complete plans for the property. This plan was also subject to the approval of the Planned Unit development, a city agency.

Then neighbors immediately near the project received notices by registered mail that the Salvation Army was applying for a zoning change. The Zoning Committee of the City Council met on January 28, 1975 and voted to recommend the request to the full city council.

In May 1975, we learned that the Salvation Army's plans for their project were being shelved for the present because of the state of the economy. This means, however, that the project is "not dead, only dormant".

The funds collected from the concerned neighbors (\$1,660. plus interest) were returned to them in July, 1975. There had been no need to use this money. The matching funds supplied by the NMIA were restored to the Association's general treasury.

This happy ending of the "Salvation Army Resistance Movement" points up the advantage of maintaining and personally supporting our local civic associations. It shows how strong we can be when we are united at the grass-roots level.

## POINTS OF INTEREST FOR NEIGHBORHOOD BICENTENNIAL WALK

1. There are metal support bars, that were part of the United States Army obstacle training course from World War II, hidden in the thicket north of the old tennis courts in Gompers Park. They are near the path by the river.

2. Toward the north of the tract of Forest Preserve land, that is east of the railroad tracks on Foster Avenue are patches of pavement from the United States Army Camp and the Veterans' Housing Project. Pipes from the sewage system are underneath the ground, and there are manhole covers throughout the area.

3. A stone, authenticated by the Chicago Historical Society and once marked by a placque that has been stolen, is at the intersection of Caldwell and Rogers Avenues in nearby Sauganash. This is the site of a large elm tree called "Treaty Elm", where treaties were signed between the Pottawatomie Indians and the United States government.

4. In the 4900 block of Lowell Avenue, on the west side of the street, the second house from the alley that parallels Ainslie, is a house that was formerly the clubhouse for the Irving Golf Club that was once here in North Mayfair.

5. If you look carefully at the sidewalk in the 5100 block of Tripp Avenue, on the east side of the street, you may see hoof prints from a cow, reportedly owned by Mr. Joseph Tichy, a longtime resident of North Mayfair.

6. At the corner of Keeler and Lawrence, across Keeler from the library is the base of a column that once stood at the entrance to Keeler.

Note: Group leaders of Brownies, Boy Scouts, Campfire Girls, etc., should find a Bicentennial Walk an interesting project.

## INFORMATION FROM 1970 CENSUS PERTAINING TO NORTH MAYFAIR

Note: all this information was taken from the official United States Census compilations. Tract 1404 applies directly and exclusively to our boundaries.

Total Population    6,123    (white 6,087)

Males	2,868
Females	3,255
Families	1,738

Total Housing Units	2,199	(1794 of these units were
Single Family	1,102	built before 1939)
Double Family	601	
More than two units	496	

Median income for family	\$12,497
Median income for individual	4,933.

Note: 15 families have incomes over \$50,000.

698 married women who have husbands present are working.

81 women with children under 6 are working

## Automobile Ownership

1,259 households have one automobile  
343 households have two automobiles  
52 households have 3 or more automobiles  
498 households have no automobiles

## Ethnic Characteristics

3,360 Native born of native born  
2,012 Native of foreign or mixed parentage  
751 Foreign born

## Nationalities Represented

United Kingdom	122	Czechoslovakia	237	Canada	91
Ireland	112	Austria	99	Mexico	15
Sweden	199	Hungary	102	Spain	83
Germany	521	U.S.S.R.	78	Other	511
Poland	409	Italy	267		

Percentage of high school graduates 49.8%

## Means of Transportation

Total Workers	2,722
Automobile	1,718
Bus	360
Subway-Railroad	222
Walked	334
Work at home	34
Other	54

**CHRONOLOGICAL STORY OF NORTH MAYFAIR**  
**From Pages of the "Improver"**  
**compiled by Joseph Waltz**

**March 13, 1929** — The North Mayfair Improvement Association was organized in the home of its first president, Gustave Reich, at 4816 N. Kentucky Avenue. The twenty-three property owners present at the meeting formed the nucleus of an organization which has grown steadily in membership and influence almost every year since then to the present day.

Originally the Association confined its activities to the area west of approximately Kostner Avenue. The area to the east was served by the old Albany Park West End Improvement Association. After about five years the two associations merged and furnished the N.M.I.A. with its boundaries, which are still in effect today, namely - Foster, Lawrence, Cicero and Pulaski.

The membership growth can be perceived by these five year anniversary totals which we were able to gather from the "Improver" pages. By 1944 the membership totaled 350; in 1949, the twentieth anniversary, the number reached 500; 1954 - 600; 1959 - 750; 1964 - 1,100; 1969 1,400; and in 1974, the forty-fifth year, it amounted to 1,450. The annual dues were \$1.00 in 1930, \$2.00 in 1960 and \$3.00 after 1970.

**August, 1933** — Foster Avenue is opened for traffic. Ben S. Herbert of 5140 N. Kilbourn Avenue, chairman of the N.M.I.A. transportation committee for three years, spearheaded the drive to convince state and local authorities to build the bridges and pave the once dirt footpath. Foster Avenue thus became an important transportation artery from Harlem Avenue to Lake Michigan. After his years of effort, Mr. Herbert passed away just two months before the opening ceremonies.



**March, 1938** — South Gompers area added to Gompers Park.

**March, 1938** — Stop and go lights erected at Cicero and Foster.

**April, 1938** — The W.P.A. project of paving Kimberly Avenue from Elston to Carmen Avenues is in process.

**January 30, 1939** — Heavy snowfall, over 15 inches, ties up traffic. Snow plow cost - \$38.00.

**March, 1939** — A building material yard for the then vacant ½ block of Foster Avenue between Kolmar and the railroad tracks is blocked by the Association.

**April, 1939** — Mayfair Lutheran Church constructs a new building at Lawrence and Lowell, leaving the red brick schoolhouse at Kostner and Lawrence which it had been renting for several years.

**September, 1939** — Strenuous objections by the N.M.I.A. and twelve other organizations prevent a garbage loading facility at Wilson and Cicero.

**February, 1940** — The little red brick schoolhouse, Kostner and Lawrence, is unexpectedly torn down by a W.P.A. wrecking crew, eliminating its use as a much-sought for library branch. It served as a grammar school for 70 years until 1926.

**April, 1940** — A rash of vandalism causes distribution of reward notices to members of N.M.I.A. and other protection efforts. Decals promise \$25.00 reward for arrest and conviction of criminals.

**June, 1940** — The Cicero-Wilson garbage platform proposal crops up again and is vigorously opposed.

**June, 1940** — The new addition to Gompers Park south of Foster is nearly completed and is publicly acclaimed for its natural scenic beauty.

**December 4, 1940** — New street lights on Foster Avenue turned on in official ceremony. It was a N.M.I.A. goal for over 3½ years.

**May, 1941** — Paul Pape, of 5121 Kolmar and 13th president of N.M.I.A., and Ben Gorny, 4933 N. Lowell, zoning chairman, lead opposition against a request to change the zoning of the Erickson farm land (including 5100 block of Kenneth and the east side of 5100 Kilbourn) from single family to multiple apartment status. Also opposed was a proposal to change 4500 block of Foster to industrial zoning.

**September, 1941** — The forest preserve land north of Foster to the river and between C.N.W. railroad and Kostner Avenue is dedicated as a U.S. Army Recreation Camp. Originally intended for weekend leaves, accommodating up to 1,000 soldiers, it later was used for family housing for servicemen. Past president, E. L. Barr, 5135 Kolmar, was M.C. at the ceremonies which were attended by Mayor Edward J. Kelly, Clayton F. Smith, President of County Board of Commissioners, and officials of the U.S. Defense Department.

**December 3, 1941** — George F. Dalacker, 4932 Kildare, is elected president of N.M.I.A. for 1942. War is declared on December 7, 1941, against Japan and Germany.

**December 12, 1941** — Five days after the Pearl Harbor attack, a civilian defense mass meeting is held at Gompers Park Field House. A committee consisting of representatives from 21 civic, religious, and fraternal groups in Mayfair picks N.M.I.A. past president C. O. Porter of 4860 N. Kilpatrick as chairman of Mayfair Civilian Defense.

**February, 1942** — A huge Civilian Defense patriotic rally is held at Palmer School auditorium. The overflow attendance was estimated at 750 persons. Mayfair is very active in cooperating in all phases of the war effort. A list of some of the organizations and activities includes: Draft Board #58, 4409 Lawrence; Mayfair Civilian Defense Committee, 4419 Lawrence; Induction Ceremony Committee, 4413 Lawrence; War Relief Unit of Gompers Park; Victory gardens sponsored by the Garden Club of Mayfair; Paper, metal scrap and grease collection drives; War bond and Stamp sales. The North Mayfair Improvement Association cooperated 100% with every organization and program needed for this country's defense. The Association's officers and members provided a major part of the leadership in these critical times. The "Improver" is the main source of information and the communicator to North Mayfair residents, and its editors, A. C. Rochow and E. L. Barr, make every effort to inform the community of its boys in service. All local groups concerned with the health, comfort and morale of the men and women in service were assisted in every possible way by publicity, information and recognition in the pages of the Improver.

**March, 1942** — The Gompers Park War Relief Unit was organized six weeks after Pearl Harbor. With a membership of up to 60 women it meets each Wednesday to make quilts, gloves, sweaters, parachutes, drapes, etc. for the war effort. The articles are distributed by the Red Cross, Blue Jackets and Salvation Army.

**April, 1942** — Kick-off of War bond and Stamp campaign with a parade scheduled on May 12. Walter B. Nitsche is appointed Commander of Mayfair Civilian Defense, succeeding C. O. Porter.

**April, 1942** — The "Improver" makes advertising space available to local member-merchants.

**May, 1942** — The north branch of Chicago River is cleaned up. Project is made possible through the united efforts of Albany Park North End Improvement Association, the North Park Property Owners, The North Mayfair Improvement Association, Alderman H. L. Brody, 39th ward and Alderman Jos. Ross, 40th ward.

**October 3, 1942** — Open-house dedication of the new Mayfair library branch at 4750 N. Kenneth. Sixteen local Mayfair organizations participated in the ceremonies, culminating nearly a decade of suggesting, urging and demanding by the community. Past president, E. L. Barr, was the leader of the drive.

**December, 1942** — North Mayfair Community House at Kolmar and Carmen closed due to war-time conservation of fuel and shortage of park attendants. It had also been damaged and subject to vandalism by teen-age groups.

**December 17, 1942** — Electric street lamps turned on in the last three streets in North Mayfair still using gas lights. These streets were the 5100 blocks of Keeler, Kilbourn and Keating.

**January 17, 1943** — Army Recreation Camp at Foster and Kilbourn is renamed "Camp Foster" and will be the home of 763rd Battalion Military Police.

**January, 1943** — Total membership of the N.M.I.A. stands at 320 compared to 271 members January, 1942.

**May, 1943** — Mrs. O. H. Timm, Conservation Chairman of O.C.D. (Office of Civilian Defense), reports the Mayfair community has the best record of any community in the collection of fats and grease.

**September, 1943** — A vigilante committee of 14 eighth grade boys is appointed by principal Frederick O. Mussehl to guard Palmer School against vandalism and broken windows.

**November 14, 1943** — A 50 foot flag pole on the north-east corner on Ainslie and Kostner is dedicated to honor the men and women serving our country.

**May, 1944** — Burglary ring which had committed a series of burglaries in North Mayfair is broken up with arrest and conviction of nine individuals. Frank Rounds, whose home was one of those broken into, testified at the trials and later was given the \$25.00 award offered by the N.M.I.A. for arrest and conviction of criminals.

**June, 1944** — The Improver makes every effort to print news of service men and women, and mails copies to boys overseas whenever possible.

**July, 1944** — "The Induction Ceremony Committee" working in cooperation with Draft Board #58 marks two years of service. It was formed in June, 1942 to properly send off new inductees leaving for camp. The first officers included past president E. L. Barr as chairman and Mrs. Edward L. Shafran, 4948 N. Kostner, as secretary. In November, 1942, Clarence G. Garasha, was made chairman. The committee received help and donations from 25 different religious and civic organizations in the area and used them to provide a good breakfast, gift packages, a Bible and a short prayer by one of our pastors. Alderman Brody, Joe Menghi, the barber, and volunteers from various clubs would report at #58 at 6:00 A.M. 2 to 4 times a month to set things up and when an extra large group left at one time, a brass band was used. In the first two years 1,491 boys were given this little extra send-off as a token of our community's appreciation and good wishes.

**January 20, 1945** — The Mayfair Zone 12 Club of the Office of Civilian Defense holds a gala fund raising dance at Rivoli Ballroom. The local unit, according to one report, is 6th highest in the nation in War Bond sales based on assets of the community.

**May, 1945** — A beautiful model of the Palmer School was made by 15 students and dedicated to the memory of 11 graduates of Palmer who lost their lives in the war. At that time there were 292 Palmer alumni who served in U.S. forces.

**December, 1945** — War ends and the U.S. Army Camp, at Foster and Kilbourn, is discontinued and the land is transferred to the Chicago Housing Authority for the use of ex-G.I.'s with families. The first of 185 portable units are now ready for occupancy and the keys are presented to the first two tenants. City and local officials, along with reporters and photographers from leading newspapers, witness the dedication. Rental was \$27.50 per month, for one room and \$37.50 for three room apartments.

**January 22, 1946** — Three local girls, members of an all-girl orchestra, entertaining in U.S.O. shows in Korea and Japan, had a very nearly fatal air plane accident. The small plane in which they were flying hit an air pocket and fell into the ocean near Yokohama. All were rescued, just minutes before the plane sank. The girls from Mayfair were Laura Mae Daniels, Irene Steuerbaut and Sylvia Rothbaum.

**March, 1946** — With World War II over, the North Mayfair Improver, each month, is filled with news of returning servicemen, reunions and home-comings. War-time committees are disbanded, shortages relieved and renewed attention is given to community improvements. Also, many appeals are made for food, clothing and medicine for homeless refugees in war-torn countries of Europe and Asia.

**September, 1946** — Civilian Defense units liquidated. Gas masks, helmets, fire extinguishers distributed to individual O.C.D. members and wardens.

**October, 1946** — Cicero Avenue bus line extended from Montrose to Devon. The N.M.I.A. has fought for this service since 1937.

**November 15, 1946** — Eighteenth annual dance and card party of the N.M.I.A. held at Rivoli Ballroom, Elston and Montrose. This event held each year to help defray expenses of the Association.

**November 15, 1946** — Frank T. Rounds, of 5016 Lowell Ave., North Mayfair's own poet, celebrates his 80th birthday. He has been contributing his own compositions to the "Improver" almost every month since 1941.

**December, 1946** — Past president George F. Dalacker, membership chairman for 1946, sets a record for 134 new members in 1 year. Total membership exceeds 500 for the first time.

**March, 1947** — A mail box is placed on the corner of Lowell and Argyle, as a result of petitions signed by 350 neighbors.

**April, 1947** — The Garden Club of Mayfair holds its April meeting at the new Sidney S. Doe Floral Conservatory, 4821 Elston.

**April, 1947** — The North Mayfair Women's Community Club holds its 18th Birthday celebration at Tally Ho Tea Room, in Park Ridge, on March 27. This very active club was almost like the distaff side of the N.M.I.A., which is also 18 years old. Many of the women's club presidents were wives of the Associations founders and officers, the first president in each, Mr. Gustave Reich and Mrs. Barbara Reich.

**April, 1947** — The Ainslie Street Baptist Church, located on the Northwest corner of Kildare and Ainslie Avenues, dedicate a new church building at Foster Avenue, near Elston. The old church was later remodelled and used as a private residence.

**May 9, 1947** — William Wehofer, Jr., who lived in the Sauganash Homes Project, at Foster and Kilbourn Avenues, was drowned in a nearby river. He was just two years of age.

**September, 1947** — The North West Council and the Chicago Motor Club endorse a pedestrian overpass on Foster Avenue to Gompers Park, and Alderman H. L. Brody introduces an ordinance for same in the City Council. The estimated cost of construction of the bridge was \$20,000 dollars. After considerable discussion and deliberation, by the North Mayfair Improvement Association, it was voted down, in November of 1947. The reasons given for their ultimate decision were: the overpass would encourage the increasing of speeds of traffic on Foster Avenue; it would be unsightly, and costly to build and maintain. Synchronized traffic lights on Kilbourn and Tripp Avenues were suggested.

**November, 1947** — The Mayfair Lions Club is organized, with Sidney S. Doe, as its first President. Other neighborhood organizations and their presiding officers included: Mrs. Harold Sher, President of the Palmer P.T.A., Arthur J. Dittman, President of the Garden Club of Mayfair and Mrs. William D. Solt, President of the North Mayfair Women's Community Club.

**December, 1947** — The Mayfair Men's Community Bowling League is in its eighth season and has become one of the recreational and social highlights of the week in Mayfair. The eighteen teams, sponsored by local businessmen, are manned by ninety livewires.

**January 16, 1948** — The Mayfair Lions Club receives its charter, while enjoying a banquet, at the Tom O Shanger Country Club. Sidney S. Doe, presided, with six hundred guests in attendance. Frank Damm, the Membership Chairman, along with his hard-working committee, succeeded in obtaining a record one hundred and seven charter members for the newly formed club, which was to play an important part in Mayfair activities for many years to come.



**March 25, 1948** — Alex C. Rochow, Editor of the "Improver", is hospitalized and after numerous X-rays and blood tests, a blood clot is discovered on the brain. A skilled and extremely delicate surgical operation corrected the difficulty and he was back on the job again by May. Alex remained as editor until Spring of 1975, when he passed away. Harry H. Larkner, President of North Mayfair Improvement Association, and Charles Vana, Advertising Manager, edited the "Improver" while Mr. Rochow was recuperating.

**May, 1948** — The Kid's Fun Club is organized by Gustav Carlson, E. L. Barr, Frank T. Rounds, Herb Philander and Joseph Waltz, who provided the projector for the movies shown. Amateur shows and games are also planned to entertain the youngsters every Saturday afternoon.

**September, 1948** — There is considerable controversy about existing plans for the Northwest and Edens Expressways. The Reverend Armand Guerrero, pastor of the Mayfair Methodist Church, Wilson and Knox Avenues, leads fight to shorten the length and reduce the width of these roads. Alternate plans are presented to Commissioner V. E. Gunlock.

**October, 1948** — A restrictive covenant project, being studied by the Association, was subsequently dropped because they were declared illegal by the United States Supreme Court. The special fund accumulated for this purpose was used to pay for legal and administrative expenses. The recorded covenants were ineffective.

**October 24, 1948** — A corner stone was laid for the new Mayfair Presbyterian Church building, at Kostner and Ainslie Avenues. Dr. William McInnes, is the Pastor.

**November 26, 1948** — Mr. and Mrs. Myron T. Monsen, of 4841 N. Lowell Avenue, and another couple, enroute to Florida, were killed in a private plane crash over Missouri.

**November 13, 1949** — The new sanctuary for the Mayfair Presbyterian Church, at the corner of Kostner and Ainslie Avenues, is opened. Dedication Services will be held on April 23, 1950.

**November 16, 1949** — Three hundred and fifty former students of the Little Red Brick School hold a reunion and form a permanent organization. Edward Gregor is the President, William Spikings is the Treasurer, and Charles Burmeister is a Director.

**February 1, 1950** — The North Mayfair Improvement Association regular meeting date is changed from the first Monday to the first Wednesday of every month. Arthur F. Krohn is the twenty-second president.

**May, 1950** — Alderman H. L. Brody attends the North Mayfair Improvement Association meeting and spent more than an hour answering pertinent questions from interested members of our community. The proposed installation of Traffic Lights on Foster Avenue, as promised by Mayor Kennelly a year ago, have been delayed by the specifications of the State Highway Department, however, it now appears that all problems have been cleared and work on this project should begin soon.

**June, 1950** — Frederick O. Mussehl, Principal of the John M. Palmer School, retires after 22 years of dedicated service. Theodore W. Wallschlaeger is appointed to succeed Mr. Mussehl.

**October 4, 1950** — Margaret O'Brien, child film star, becomes Honorary member of Girl Scout Troop #499. Miss O'Brien and the Girl Scouts appear on Don McNeil's television show, "Breakfast Club." The Mayfair Lions are sponsors of the Girl Scouts and Mrs. Joseph Waltz is their Leader.

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**June 22, 1951** — Frank A. Damm, of 4915 N. Kilpatrick Avenue, succumbed to a heart attack. Mr. Damm was a Past President of the Mayfair Lions, Membership chairman of the North Mayfair Improvement Association and an active leader in all community affairs and charities. His untimely death came as a shock and a tremendous loss to all who knew him.

**October 17, 1951** — John M. Palmer School marks the 25th anniversary of its opening at a filled to capacity P.T.A. meeting, in the Auditorium. Dr. Harold Hunt, Superintendent of Schools, Chicago Board of Education, was the keynote speaker, at this special evening program.

Frederick Mussehl, former Principal for 22 years of this quarter century, retired to California a year ago and was succeeded by Mr. Theodore W. Wallschlaeger.

The P.T.A. Past Presidents, the majority of whom served for the maximum of two year terms, in the school's 25 years, included the Mesdames F.J. Smejkal, A.T. Selby, Frank A. Damm, W. Spackman, R.F. Greening, R.E. Daniels, Karl Sauer, John Strong, S.G. Dinschel, E.L. Shafron, B.S. Herbert, A.C. Meyers, Harold Sher, C.R. Olsen, and the present Officer, Mrs. Joseph Waltz, who conducted this memorable meeting of an historic milestone.

**December 20, 1951** — The Edens Expressway is opened for traffic, from Foster Avenue, north to County Line Road. It is fourteen miles in length, has three traffic lanes, in each direction, and no traffic lights on the entire span of roadway.

It required two years of actual construction, at a cost of 23 million dollars.

**January, 1952** — The Pulaski Road bus turn-around, at Montrose and Elston Avenues, causes serious traffic congestion and much criticism of its operation. The routing around the Pulaski-Montrose-Elston triangle creates traffic tie-ups on all three thoroughfares. An off the street turn-around for Pulaski Road buses at Foster Avenue, was

proposed in 1951, but, was vetoed by Alderman Raymond Jacobs, due to the strong feelings against the proposal by the residents of the Bryn Mawr and Sauganash Communities.

**May, 1952** — The location of the Pulaski Road bus turn-around was finally settled, after six months of discussions and arguments concerning the suggested proposal. The originally proposed off the streets site, just north of the Bohemian Home for the Aged and 200 feet south of Foster Avenue, next to the river, was decided upon. The turn-around will be in operation by September, 1952.

**May, 1952** — Many complaints were voiced by neighbors and the Palmer School personnel, concerning the unsightliness of the vacant land, north of Carmen Avenue, between Kilbourn and Kostner Avenues west alley. The area was being used as a dumping ground for such debris as, rocks, branches, bottles and other rubbish. A crew of North Mayfair Improvement Association members, armed with rakes and shovels tackled the job and eliminated the eyesore, on a Sunday in April. The volunteer workers included: James Adkins, the president of North Mayfair Improvement Association, A.C. Rochow, Matt Schiller, Max Haack, Fred Koester, Ralph McIntyre and Kenneth Uding, pinch-hitting for his father, Herman, who was sick. Mr. T.W. Wallschlaeger, Palmer Principal, was very pleased with the members' efforts and co-operation, and in a thank you note said this would encourage the Student Council to use as one of their projects the maintenance and work necessary to keep the school and its surroundings clean and beautiful.

**May, 1952** — Mayfair Library reports that 43,565 books were circulated in the year of 1951. Miss Inez Ader, the Librarian, reveals that 3,000 active readers were registered.

**September, 1952** — The Reverend Robert C. Hubbard is the new minister of the Mayfair Presbyterian Church. Former Pastor, Dr. McInnes left to serve as minister of the Union Church of Lake Bluff. He had officiated as the first minister of Mayfair Presbyterian for twenty-six years.

**September, 1952** — Al Marchese is appointed as Supervisor of Gompers Park. He replaced Fred Brodda, who held the position since 1943. Al was a former opera singer, a wrestling referee and had years of experience as a park supervisor.

**December, 1952** — William Pauli, of 5139 N. Kolmar Avenue, Financial Secretary and Membership chairman of North Mayfair Improvement Association, reported that at the end of 1952 there were 560 paid members in the Association. Since taking over the office of Financial Secretary in 1951, Mr. Pauli had been a dedicated and untiring working in seeking out new members and collecting the annual dues of \$1.00. He employed every possible avenue he could in tracking down prospective members. It was not unusual for him to make a dozen calls or more, if necessary, to add a new member or retain one on our roster. Upon completion of his two year term in 1952, through careful application and perseverance, Mr. Pauli had compiled a record of 216 new members and maintained the collection of dues to almost 100%. The average loss of members, due to leaving the neighborhood and resignation, is approximately 65 each year.

**January, 1953** — Max A. Haack, 4154 Argyle, the newly installed president of North Mayfair Improvement Association, has set up the following goals to be accomplished: A solution to the Cicero-Foster Avenue bottleneck, caused by the newly opened Edens Superhighway; Standardization of speed limits on Foster Avenue; Relocation of traffic lights on Foster and Kostner Avenues, to benefit users of Gompers Park Fieldhouse; Parking restrictions on Foster Avenue, adjacent to Gompers Park, on Sundays and Holidays; Adequate parking facilities in the vicinity of Kostner and Lawrence Avenues, and full utilization of all Gompers Park facilities.

**January 23, 1953** — A change in zoning is requested by Bankers for area bounded by Kenneth, Gunnison, Elston and Lawrence Avenues. The demolition of resident apart-

ment buildings and construction of a large office building was considered but, irate neighbors voiced their objections to the plan and the entire proceedings were filed, which in effect, kills it. At a subsequent North Mayfair Improvement Association meeting, the Association voted to oppose any change in zoning governing type of building for that area.

**May, 1953** — Parking of Banker's employees on residential streets is becoming more objectional to our neighbors. Zoning variation, to permit parking at 4750-60 Elston Avenue, is granted to Bankers Life and Casualty Company. The company has grown from 50 employees in 1941 to 1,807 people in their employ at this time.

**August 13, 1953** — Zoning variation was requested for the vacant property on the south side of Foster Avenue, from Kilbourn to the alley west of Kostner Avenue. The owner plans to erect a six-story apartment building along the Foster Avenue frontage, while the balance of the land, south to Carmen Avenue, would remain single family zoning. Four hundred property owners of North Mayfair signed a petition opposing the change, presenting it to Alderman Raymond Jacobs, who was a member of the zoning committee. A brief hearing was held and the requested change was ordered filed by the committee.

**September, 1953** — Four North Mayfair streets - Keeler, Tripp, Kildare and Lowell, were used as a trial section and changed to handle one-way traffic only. After a short time, the residents of these streets accepted and approved of the change.

**October, 1953** — Work has begun on the first fifteen of forty-five homes to be built on the old Erickson farm land. These fifteen are ranch-type homes on Kilbourn Avenue. The six-story apartment plan was abandoned as the owner did not want to oppose the neighbor's wishes to retain its single family zoning. The homes, to be constructed on Kenneth Avenue, have been delayed until a new main sewer is installed.

**December 1953** — William Pauli, Financial Secretary, reports a record total of 602 paid up members, including 91 new members and minus 30 who were removed from the roster.

Retiring President, Max Haack, was successful in accomplishing all but one of the goals he had listed in the January 1953 "Improver". The relocation of traffic lights on Foster and Kostner Avenues failed to transpire, during his term of Office.

**February 1, 1954** — Miss Jennie Erickson, 5130 N. Kostner, is dead at the age of ninety-six. She was the only remaining member of the Erickson family, who settled here in 1871, and whose farm land encompassed most of the territory between Lawrence Avenue and the river and including the area between Cicero and Pulaski Road. Her two brothers, Peter and William Erickson, preceded her in death within the past ten years.

Miss Erickson had been a teacher in the little red brick school house, at Kostner and Lawrence Avenues, for many years.

**April, 1954** — The north-west corner of Kostner and Lawrence Avenues, leased by the Jewel Tea Company, had become a weed filled dumping ground, creating a blight in the neighborhood. A letter was sent by the Association, to the Jewel Tea Company, informing them of the unsightly conditions in their parkway and asking for their cooperation in alleviating the problem. No acknowledgment of the letter was received and a second letter was then dispatched to their main office. It wasn't until the contents of the letters were published in the "Improver" that the Jewel organization decided that action was imminent.

The parkway was completely cemented, thus eliminating another bad situation. Negotiations with the Jewel Tea Co. were ably dealt with by R.J. Kirchwehm, Vice President of North Mayfair Improvement Association.



**September 4, 1954** — Karl Sauer, 4904 N. Keeler Avenue, Seventeenth President of the North Mayfair Improvement Association in 1946, has passed away. He served as President of the North West Federation of Improvement Clubs for several years as a delegate from our Association, and also, as President of the former Albany Park West End Improvement Association, before its merger with North Mayfair. Mr. Sauer had been very active in civic affairs for more than twenty years.

**December, 1954** — Judy Hammer, 19 year old daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Joseph E. Hammer, 5154 N. Keeler Avenue, was stricken with Polio.

**December, 1954** — The Chicago Park District sells the samll park, located at Keeler, Argyle and Kedvale Avenues, to a contractor who will build six bungalows on that property. The paving of the alley between Keeler and Kedvale Avenues, which was blocked for many years by the Chicago Park District, can now be accomplished.

**January, 1955** — The John M. Palmer P.T.A., presided over by Mrs. B.L. Weissman of 4937 N. Lowell Avenue, has a membership of 700 people. Among some of the activities in its busy schedule each year is the Annual Christmas Pageant, the Home-making Forum, Parent Education Sessions, A Kitchen Band, the Mothers Singers and Rummage Sales, and also maintaining an open line of communication and cooperation among the parents and teachers, for the benefit of the children.

**March, 1955** — The Sauganash Court Veterans Housing Project, situated at Kilbourn and Foster Avenues, is being phased out. Demolition of the Housing Project, originally scheduled for March, 1955, has been moved up to November. The area was used as a Rest Camp, for our Armed Forces, in 1941. In 1943, it became the home base of the 763rd Battalion of the Military Police. The property was then transferred to the Chicago Housing Authority, in December of 1945, and

portable homes were put up for 185 families. Intended as a temporary relief of the housing shortage, they remained in use for almost ten years. Because of deteriorating conditions and its slum-like appearance, the Association requested that the property be restored to park land.

**April, 1955** — Richard J. Daley was elected the Mayor of Chicago and George Buckley is the new Alderman of the 39th Ward, on February 22nd of this year. Mr. Buckley attended a North Mayfair Improvement Association meeting and assured us of his complete co-operation. Raymond J. Kirchwehm, the 27th President of the North Mayfair Improvement Association, who resided at 4944 N. Kenneth Avenue, proposes installation of a swimming pool, a baseball diamond and/or parking facilities for the land previously used by the Housing Project.

**May, 1955** — Signs, indicating a two hour parking limit, have been installed on many of the streets between Lowell and Kilbourn and Argyle and Lawrence Avenues. Members have complained that the employees of Bankers' continue to use these streets for all day parking. The Traffic Division is notified of this abuse and asked to explain the lack of proper enforcements.

**June, 1955** — Association members are urged to send strong letters of protest. to Dan Ryan, Cook County Commissioner, and Governor William Stratton, opposing a planned toll 'gate on the North West Expressway, at Montrose Avenue, requiring a ten cent toll, and an additional toll of twenty-five cents at River Road.

**September, 1955** — Foster Avenue is resurfaced from Sheridan Road to Avondale Avenue, and broken curbs are repaired. The North Mayfair Improvement Association had voiced numerous complaints concerning the rough concrete and large pot-holes in the pavement, mainly near Kolmar Avenue and under the Chicago and Northwestern Railway viaduct.

**October, 1955** — The Association objects strenuously to the construction of a Gas Station, at the southeast corner of Elston and Lawrence Avenues. Residents in the neighborhood had no knowledge of a suit filed for a declaratory judgement, giving relief to the building ordinance requirements and zoning restrictions. Joseph E. Hammer, Secretary of the Association, was instructed to determine which city official had maneuvered the deal, without the usual petitions and a public notice for frontage and tank consents.

**November, 1955** — Paving and street lighting of Kenneth Avenue, from Carmen Avenue to Foster Avenue, is completed. The Association, in response to wishes of the residents, approves a resolution requesting Alderman H. Buckley to do what is necessary to change Kostner and Kenneth Avenues, in Mayfair, into One Way streets.

**February 5, 1956** — Mayfair Lutheran Church, on North Lowell Avenue, celebrates its 25th Anniversary. Services were conducted jointly by The Reverend Paul Luther Sealing, the current pastor, and The Reverend Carl N. Busse, the congregations' first, and only other pastor, until 1944.

**March, 1956** — The Illinois State Toll Highway Commission has decided to build the Expressway, from Cicero and Wilson to the O'Hare Airport, and then sell it to the County, to be used as a Freeway. This appeases the objections to the proposed toll road plan for the north-west section of Chicago, and much of the opposition subsides.

**March, 1956** — The one remaining portable building of the Sauganash Veteran's Housing Project, at Kilbour and Foster Avenues, is removed. Requests, by the Association, to transfer the land to Gompers Park, as a part of the Chicago park District, was denied by the Cook County Forest Preserve District.

**September 15, 1956** — Charles F. Vana, Advertising Manager of the Improver since May 1944, passed away at 69 years of age. His two sons, Richard T. and Charles J., were distinguished by their heroic service in World War II.

Intense interest in people and community, enabled Mr. Vana to become an excellent news reporter, and his many articles and his "North Mayfair Flashes" column in the "Improver", concerning clubs, families and current happenings in North Mayfair were eagerly read and enjoyed by a great many people in the neighborhood.

**November, 1956** — Plans for the North West Expressway and the Eden's Superhighway, have been disclosed by the Cook County Highway Engineers. Excavation has begun and detours are set up. Opposition to the width and routing of the Expressways, due to possible and expected loss of homes and many businesses, has subsided.

**December, 1956** — The Mayfair Lions set up their third annual Christmas Tree Lane in the vacant lot, at the corner of Kostner and Lawrence Avenues. The profits, engrossed by the tree sales, are used to promote community programs and charities, namely, help for the Blind and to finance elementary school athletic tournaments.

**March, 1957** — A parking lot, slated for 5081-83 N. Kimberly Avenue, is opposed by the neighbors.

**May, 1957** — The City Council grants permission to Banker's Life and Casualty Company, at 4444 N. Lawrence Avenue, to construct a 4000 cubic feet vault, under the alley in the back of their property. An annual rental, of One Hundred and Fifty Dollars, is to be paid to the city. The alley must remain open for public use.

**June, 1957** — The south east corner of Kostner and Lawrence Avenues, is the location of the Investor's Savings and Loan Company's new office building.

**November, 1957** — After two years of prodding by the Association, Kenneth and Kostner Avenues are changed to One Way streets, between Foster and Lawrence Avenues. The final six months of the delay was caused by a production bottleneck in the city sign department. New lights are installed on North Mayfair streets.

**November, 1957** — The State of Illinois reveals plans to condemn the Forest Preserve land at Kilbourn and Foster Avenues, previously occupied by the Veteran's Housing Project, for use as a motor vehicle inspection and driver's license testing lanes. Vehement objections by the Improvement Association causes the Secretary of State to abandon the plans, in January 1958. The structure was eventually built on Elston Avenue, south of Bryn Mawr.

**December, 1957** — Al Marchese, Gompers Park Supervisor, obtains a warm-up shelter for ice skaters.

**January, 1958** — Miss Shirley Sunagel is elected to the office of secretary of North mayfair Improvement Association, becoming the first female to take an office in the Association.

Roy Lundin, 4911 N. Kenneth Avenue, our 28th President of the Association, deplors the conversion of many stores and residential buildings into office and storage places by Banker's Life Company.

**June 27, 1958** — George F. Dalacker, the 14th President of North Mayfair Improvement Association, passed away.

**January, 1959** — Joseph Waltz, the 31st President of North Mayfair Improvement Association, is installed by Bernard Molay, Past President of North-West Federation of Improvement Clubs and Vice-President of Greater North West Citizen's Traffic Safety Council.

Total membership, after 30 years, is approximately 750 people.

**March, 1959** — The newly elected Alderman in our Ward, Phillip Shapiro, has promised his aid in getting the broken curbs in our community replaced. Anthony Laurino is Mr. Shapiro's capable and hard working secretary.

**May, 1959** — The North Mayfair Improvement Association held a very successful social and card party, at Gompers Park, to help replenish its treasury.

**June, 1959** — The summer concerts are discontinued in Gompers Park, due to a lack of interest in the music and competition of ball games being played during the concerts.

**July 29, 1959** — A large crowd of SRO capacity attend a special meeting at Gompers Park. The Improvement Association called the meeting, which had in attendance, Alderman Phillip A. Shapiro and Mr. John Mac Arthur of Banker's Life and Casualty Company, to inquire about possible expansion plans and/or zoning variations. No further plans for any zoning changes or expansion were indicated by Mac Arthur.

**September, 1959** — Our North Mayfair poet, Frank T. Rounds, of 5016 N. Lowell Avenue, died on June 20, 1959, at the age of ninety-three years. He and his wife were dedicated participants in community and civic endeavors. Mr. Rounds was an active member of the North Mayfair Improvement Association for more than twenty years, serving in many capacities. He was our delegate to the Northwest Area Council of the Chicago Motor Club for seventeen years, in which he held various offices including the presidency.

Through the years, talented Frank Rounds contributed more than one hundred and twenty-five poems, some humorous, others reminiscent of past memories, and even a number reflecting protest, but albeit, most humane in text.

His poems brightened the pages of the "Improver" almost every month from April 1940, "Are You An Active Member?" to the June 1957 issue which carried an ode to fathers,

“Remember Father’s Day.” Many others were concentrated on the Association and its officers and interesting tales, in verse, concerning his childhood days in Indiana. The October 1945 copy of the “Improver” contained an example of his philosophy of life and ready sense of humor in a poem titled, “The Monkey’s Disgrace.”

### THE MONKEY’S DISGRACE

Three monkeys sat in a coconut tree  
Discussing things as they’re said to be,  
Said one to the other, now listen you two  
There’s a certain rumor that can’t be true.

That man descended from our noble race.  
The very idea to me is a disgrace;  
That no monkey ever deserted his wife,  
Starved her babies or ruined her life.

And have never known a mother monk  
To leave her babies with others to bunk,  
Or pass them on from one to another  
Till they scarcely knew who is their mother.

And another thing you will never see  
A monk build a fence around a coconut tree  
And let the coconuts go to waste,  
And forbidding all other monks to taste.

Why if I put a fence around a tree,  
Starvation will force you to steal from me.  
Here’s another think a monk won’t do,  
Go out at night and get a stew.

Or use a gun or a club or knife  
And to take some other monkey’s life.  
Yes man descended, O the ornery cuss,  
But, brother, he didn’t descend from us!

**September, 1959** — Mayfair Lutheran Church, Lawrence and Lowell Avenues, celebrates dedication of new church building. Benjamin L. Toleson, Past President of North Mayfair Improvement Association, was chairman of the building committee. The Reverend Paul L. Sealing is the pastor of Mayfair Lutheran Church.

**December 27, 1959** — Edward L. Barr, of 5135 N. Kolmar Avenue, Charter Member and the third President of North Mayfair Improvement Association, died at the age of 85 years. He was co-editor of the "Improver", in its early years. A branch library for Mayfair was obtained in 1940, as a result of his persistent drive and resourceful leadership.

**January, 1960** — Al Marchese, Gompers Park Supervisor, maintains a full schedule of activities at the park in addition to being very active in civic affairs. He inaugurates the Gompers park Honor Roll with monthly articles in the "Improver", giving recognition to community leaders.

**July, 1960** — Traffic Lights have been installed at Keeler and Foster Avenues. The Association had been seeking and requesting traffic lights at Tripp and Foster Avenues.

**August, 1960** — Alderman Phillip A. Shapiro sponsors the annual Youth Day at Gompers Park. This is the fourth year this gala festival for young people has been sponsored by the 39th ward alderman.

**September, 1960** — A motion was made by the Past-President Joseph E. Hammer and passed by the members present at the September meeting to make a detailed survey of all the basement, attic and cut-up apartments in our area which are in violation of the zoning ordinances. It was reported in the following issue of the Improver.

**October, 1960** — A very large turnout of members attended the October meeting. After much discussion they voted to



rescind the survey motion of the previous month. They also voted that any similar issue or motion of such importance must be published in the Improver prior to the meeting and before a vote is taken.

**October, 1960** — After several years of construction and detours, the Expressway is opened to traffic, from the Loop to the O'Hare Airport. The cost was estimated to be Two Hundred Million Dollars.

**November, 1960** — New and brighter street lights are installed on Foster Avenue.

**January, 1961** — The North Mayfair Improvement Association Constitution is revised. Membership dues raised from one dollar to two dollars annually.

**March, 1961** — William Pauli, of 5139 N. Kolmar Avenue, is honored for excellent service, in excess of ten years, as Membership Chairman and Financial Secretary, of the North Mayfair Improvement Association. A record 710 new members were enrolled and thousands of dollars in dues were personally collected, through his efforts, until his retirement from active civic duties. A handsome plaque of appreciation and a box of his favorite cigars were presented to him at a dinner, attended by Officers, and Past Presidents of the North Mayfair Improvement Association, Alderman Shillip Shapiro, the Reverend Robert Hubbard, Al Marchese, Gompers Park Supervisor, and many others who admired his prowess as a dedicated servant of our Improvement Association. NOTE: Mr. Pauli passed away, on November 5, 1962, at the age of seventy-eight.

**April, 1961** — Zoning change of two vacant lots at 5081 N. Kimberly Avenue, for use as a parking lot, is requested. The members voted to oppose the change.

**December, 1961** — Joseph Waltz, Financial Secretary of North Mayfair Improvement Association, confirms a report

of 263 new members added to the Association's roster, in one year, as a result of an intensive re-cruitment effort.

**March, 1962** — Mayfair Presbyterian Church, Kostner and Ainslie Avenues, celebrates its Fortieth Anniversary.

**April, 1962** — Erection of warehouse at 5070 Kimberly is protested. Investigation discloses that the building is permissible under the existing zoning specifications on that property. However, 20 feet of the traveling crane structure is too close to the lot line; also, the building permit is missing and will be looked into.

**April, 1962** — Week-end parking on the streets adjacent to Gompers Park was thoroughly discussed. Nearby residents are unhappy because they are unable to park near their homes. Removal of "No Parking" signs on Foster Ave. was proposed, but was defeated by a majority vote of members at the meeting.

**December, 1962** — A motion was passed at the November meeting to provide for snowplowing of the streets of our neighborhood after heavy snowfalls. An additional collection of \$2.00 per resident would be kept in a separate account for snowplowing expenses only. A very active committee headed by A.C. Rochow and Mrs. Irene Reich is in charge.

**January, 1963** — Stewart Archambault is installed as the 35th president N.M.I.A. He lives at 4953 N. Kostner. Rev. Robert C. Hubbard is the installing officer. Joseph Waltz, financial secretary, reports that membership passed the 1000 mark in December, with 99% of their annual dues paid in 1962.

**October, 1963** — Property owners at Lowell and Foster Avenues asked for a zoning change to permit reopening of the unused refreshment stand at that location. Their request was denied, mainly because of additional danger to children

crossing Foster Ave. from the park for snacks.

**January, 1964** — Park Supervisor, Al Marchese reports that a heated shelter for ice skaters has been built in Gompers Park to replace one destroyed by fire.

**February, 1964** — The 4800 block of Kentucky is made one-way, in response to a petition circulated by Mrs. Raymond Targos, residing at 4837 in that block. (Signatures of at least 51% of the property owners are needed on such a petition.)

**June, 1964** — A.C. Rochow and Joseph Waltz are given plaques of appreciation from the N.M.I.A. for “outstanding contributions” to the community and the association.

**July, 1964** — The Joseph Waltzes of 4908 N. Kostner have their yard converted into a Japanese garden, in time for their silver anniversary. In September, 1964, weekends they will have “open gates” for their neighbors, and all Mayfairites are welcome to come in and visit.

**October, 1964** — Alden Press, 5050 Kimberly Ave., is fined \$400.00 for allowing nauseating odors to escape from their plant.

**November, 1964** — A safety campaign to try to curb speeding and other violations is discussed. A postage paid card that can be filled in with the necessary information concerning a violation was printed. Cdr. John McInerney of Albany Park Police Station attends the association meeting and agrees to cooperate with the campaign

**December, 1964** — The North Mayfair Snow Plow Committee decides to cancel the \$2.00 extra assessment in 1965. It is agreed that the regular \$2.00 dues payment will produce sufficient income to cover the snow removal expense as long as each one of the 1100 members pays his share. This eliminated the extra work of duplicate collections.

**January, 1965** — Rudolph A. Amrich, 5037 N. Kilbourn Ave., is installed as 37th President of North Mayfair Improvement Association. Plans are to be formed for the "Mayfair Milestone Days" celebrating the 75th anniversary of the area's incorporation into the city of Chicago. The Mayfair Lions Club is sponsoring the week-long celebration and all the organizations in Mayfair are invited to participate in it. Arthur J. Dittman, 5022 N. Lowell, President of the Mayfair Lions is organizer of the festival which takes place June 1 to June 6.

**May, 1965** — A motion to increase the annual dues of N.M.I.A. members from \$2.00 to \$3.00, to cover the cost of heavy snowfalls, was tabled at the request of Financial Secretary who felt that efficient dues collection from 1200 or more members would keep the treasury's balance in good shape for the next few years and amply cover all expected expenses.

**May, 1965** — Plans are progressing for the big celebration on Mayfair Milestone Days. On Wednesday, June 2, the N.M.I.A. program at the Palmer School assembly hall will feature the "International Pageant," with folk dancers and singers representing local ethnic groups. Minerva Liberatore and Past President Russell E. Johnson will be co-MC's. A beautiful float is ordered for the Mayfair Milestone parade on Sunday, June 6. A search will be made for a married couple with the longest residence (more than 43 years) in North Mayfair, and a 6-year old boy and girl will be picked to serve as Master and Miss North Mayfair. ("Mayfair Milestone Days" proved to be a huge success.)

**May 18, 1965** — Anthony C. Laurino, 4938 N. Kenneth Ave., a vice-president of N.M.I.A., is elected alderman of the 39th ward. He had been secretary to Alderman Shapiro, who was appointed to the federal judiciary.

**June, 1965** — Stop-and-go lights were installed at the Pulaski-Argyle corner, and were approved for the Lawrence-

Keeler corner. A zoning change allowing construction of two 9-apartment buildings at Lawrence and Kildare, on the northeast corner, was approved at the May meeting.

**October, 1965** — The Wolff coal business at Elston and Kimberly is discontinued. Alden Press, 5060 Kimberly, plans to lease the coal yard, to build additional storage space and loading docks. It was asked to send an officer to our meeting to answer questions about air pollution, parking provisions, and litter left by its employees. Jerome Spier, executive vice-president, came and tried to answer the many complaints of nearby residents. No satisfactory solution to the parking problem was reached, but promises were made as to eliminating air pollution, odors, litter, and truck traffic complaints by Alden.

**December, 1965** — A dedication ceremony was held on November 9, at the 5100 block of Keating Ave., for the new curbs, pavement, and parking area for 175 cars on unused land along the Edens Expressway, leased from the city — all completed and ready for use. Skil Corp. paid the entire bill. Attending were several corporate officers, Alderman Laurino, A.C. Rochow, Joseph Waltz, 39th ward superintendent, Frank Rizzo, and neighboring residents.

**December, 1965** — The Chicago Motor Club asks the opinion of N.M.I.A. on a proposed north-south expressway. After a discussion at the November meeting, a motion was passed to go on record against a north-south expressway.

**May, 1966** — A Little League baseball team for Gompers Park boys 9 to 12 years old is organized by Al Marchese and Bill Wiggins, physical instructor.

**June, 1966** — After 14 years as Gompers Park supervisor, Al Marchese is promoted to area supervisor on the far south side. His years in our community were filled with his accomplishments, and his cooperation in many civic

activities. His "Gompers Park Honor Roll", a series of articles appearing in the "Improver" for several years, gave recognition to past and current leaders of North Mayfair for outstanding service. He always expressed his appreciation, to youths and adults alike, whenever he learned of their contributions of time, energy, or resources for the welfare and well-being of their fellow men. Robert Kreutzer is assigned as the new supervisor of Gompers Park.

**October, 1966** — After being sought for many years, "courtesy" crosswalks were installed on Foster Ave. between Keeler and Kilbourn. A change was requested in the Edens Expressway exit at Foster, to permit both left and right hand turns.

**November, 1966** — Two-hour parking limit signs are erected at the 5000 block on Kimberly Ave. Noise and a nauseating odor from Alden Press is still a problem for that neighborhood.

**January 26, 1967** — Peter Auler, 4941 N. Kilpatrick is installed president. A record 23-inch snowfall buries Chicago for almost a week.

**February, 1967** — Brighter lights are installed in all North Mayfair alleys.

**February, 1967** — Two requests of the Association are denied by the State Highway Department: the removal of the Foster and Keeler Ave. traffic signal to Foster and Tripp Ave., and the reconstruction of the Foster Ave. exit from Edens to permit a left turn also.

**March, 1967** — Our association approves a scholarship award contest for high school graduates whose parents are Association members. \$150 will be sent to the college chosen by the winning entrant, to further his education. The award is increased to \$300.00 in later years.

**April, 1967** — By order of the Illinois S & L commissioner, the Investors Savings & Loan Association, at Lawrence and Kostner, is merged into the Hoyne Savings & Loan. Its building and parking lot at that location are bought by Bankers Life & Casualty Co.

**November 17, 1967** — A special mass meeting, sponsored by the North Mayfair Improvement Association, and in conjunction with the newly formed North River Commission, was held at the Sokol Community Center, Elston and Kilbourn Avenues, to arouse community action in the fight against blight. Congressman Roman Pucinski, Alderman Anthony C. Laurino, and Dr. J. William Fredericksen, the chairman of the North River Commission, addressed a capacity crowd of three hundred neighbors.

**April, 1968** — The street lights of North Mayfair have been replaced with new lights of greater intensity.

**May, 1968** — Edward Lawdan, of 4917 N. Kedvale Avenue, is the Fortieth President of the North Mayfair Improvement Association. A Block Representative Team is organized to assist in collecting annual dues and to serve as a communication link between the members and the officers. Fifty Block Captains, one for each block in North Mayfair, are assigned to represent the 1,406 members in the Association.

**June 4, 1968** — Due to continued decrease in membership, the North Mayfair Women's Community Club is disbanded, after almost forty years of philanthropic service to our community. This very active group met for many years at the little Field house, at Kolmar and Carmen Avenues, until the end of World War II, whereupon they moved to new quarters at Gompers Park and continued their diligent efforts in community affairs until the present time. At the final meeting of the Club, it was decided upon by all present, to donate its remaining assets of nearly One Hundred Dollars, equally to The Booth Memorial Hospital, the U.S.O., and the Dixon Home.

**June, 1968** — The Mayfair Lions promote patriotism by presenting a large American flag and staff, as a welcoming gift to each new resident in Mayfair.

**December, 1968** — The Association investigates the possibility of snow-plowing the sidewalks, in addition to the street plowing of North Mayfair. A 42" snow blower has been purchased for this purpose.

**April, 1969** — Approximately one hundred snow plow contributors are added to the membership roster of the Association, raising the total membership to a colossal 1,520 members. The annual dues will be increased to Three Dollars, beginning at the start of 1970.

**May, 1969** — The Rolaway Bowling Lanes, on Pulaski Road, purchased by the First Distributors, will be razed and a new catalog and discount store will be built on the site.

**June, 1969** — The Fortieth Anniversary of the North Mayfair Improvement Association is observed at the June 4th meeting with a capacity attendance. Sixteen of the twenty-four remaining Past Presidents were present. William C. Jones, of 4912 N. Kostner Avenue, current and its Forty-first President, conducted this memorable anniversary meeting.

**September 10, 1969** — The Mayfair Civic Association is organized for the area south of Lawrence Avenue and between Pulaski Road and Cicero Avenue.

**September, 1969** — Past President Edward Lawdan, is appointed "Mini-Beat" police captain of North Mayfair, to work with the Albany Park police.

**December, 1969** — At the Chicago City Council, an appropriation of \$15,190.90 has been approved to allow the traffic signal at Keeler and Foster Avenues to be moved up to Tripp and Foster Avenues.



**January, 1970** — Action was taken when, after considerable prodding by the Association and irate neighbors, First Distributors, at 4900 N. Pulaski Road, agrees to build a loading dock facing Pulaski Road. Delivery trucks, obstructing the alley east of Keystone Avenue, had become a real nuisance to area residents.

**January, 1970** — The John M. Palmer P.T.A. establishes a Block Parent Program in the vicinity of the school. Homes displaying orange colored signs in a window, indicating assistance and help is available to any student in distress.

**February 6, 1970** — Ten years of untiring efforts were realized in a traffic lighting ceremony when Alderman Anthony C. Laurino triggered the switch that activated the lights at Tripp and Foster Avenues. Other notable figures in attendance were, Commander Tom Hayes, of the Albany Park Police Station, and Improvement Association Past Presidents, Alex C. Rochow, Rudolph Amrich, Herman Uding and Peter Auler.

**March, 1970** — The Mayfair Lions, in co-operation with the Illinois Society for the Prevention of Blindness, arranges Pre-School Visual Screening Tests for all three to six year olds living in Mayfair.

**April, 1970** — Residents in the Lawrence Avenue area, annoyed and some-what anxious about the constant, rumbling noise heard in the vicinity, are advised the din is caused by blasting and excavating underground in preparation for the huge storm sewers to be installed in a tunnel, fifteen feet in diameter and two hundred feet below the ground.

**May, 1970** — The Admiral Theater, on Lawrence Avenue, under fire for showing porno-type movies, has agreed to feature family-oriented movies and Saturday matinees for children on a one month trial basis.

**May 3, 1970** — The North River Commission is reorganized at a meeting held in the auditorium of the Northeastern Illinois State College, Bryn Mawr and St. Louis Avenues. Three Hundred and Fifty delegates from fifty-five North side organizations were present. Joseph B. Cicero, of 4900 N. Kildare Avenue and Edward A. Klipo, of 4837 N. Kedvale Avenue, led the North Mayfair Improvement Association group of twelve delegates. The North River Commission is an umbrella organization, extending west to Cicero Avenue. Their primary interests include enforcing building codes to prevent blight; a youth counselling and referral program; a design center to assist individuals desiring to remodel their homes, and to provide a forum for community groups to discuss urban problems when dealing with agencies of the city and state governing powers.

**November, 1970** — The Alden Press is fined \$1,150.00 for air pollution.

**November, 1970** — Mayfair Presbyterian Church builds a new parsonage, replacing the former home at 4342 W. Ainslie Street. Expected occupancy of the new quarters, by The Reverend C. Hubbard and family, has been set for March, 1971. Pastor Hubbard has officiated in this church since 1952.

**December 9, 1970** — The Chicago Board of Education issues a directive to the public schools, including Palmer School, containing suggestions for organizing a local school council. The group, consisting of businessmen, tax payers, civic organizations, as well as the parents of students, would be expected to advise the local school on the many issues of mutual interest. An organization meeting, to form the John M. Palmer School Council, is scheduled for February, 1971.

**March, 1971** — Powerful, new flood lights are installed near the top of all four sides of Palmer School, in an effort to discourage costly vandalism.

**April, 1971** — The Chicago Housing Authority releases a list of possible sites for CHA public housing, which is met with considerable opposition from local citizenry.

**May, 1971** — In the interest of pollution control, a glass bottle collection program is formed. Michael Waltz, of 4984 N. Kolmar Avenue, is in charge of this civic project.

**June, 1971** — The week of June 7th to June 13th, 1971, promises to be an eventful one, when the Mayfair Lions sponsor a second Mayfair Milestone Days Celebration.

An Art Fair, in Little Joe's restaurant Parking lot, a Hobby Talent and Flower Show at Gompers Park, a Bake Sale, and the sale of American Flags, by the Mayfair Lions Club, will be a segment of the highlights planned for this exciting week.

Added attractions will include the "Teen Queen" contest, a project of the North Mayfair Improvement Association. The winner will be presented at a special June meeting of the Improvement Association, to be held in the Palmer School auditorium; the 1971 North Mayfair Improvement Association's Scholarship Award will also be announced at the June meeting. A dinner dance, at Antoine's, on Elston Avenue, is scheduled as a segment of an evening's entertainment, along with an outstanding portrayal of Abraham Lincoln, by a talented Mayfairite, Dick Blake of 4824 N. Keeler Avenue.

Sunday, June 13th, the final day of the week's festivities, will be climaxed with a parade, through North and South Mayfair, featuring a seventy-five piece marching band and a number of interesting floats. A Country Style Fair, set up in Banker's parking lots, will be the scene of the gala finale.

The Mayfair Lions Club will donate all proceeds realized from the Milestone Days Celebration, to the welfare of the community and activities for the Blind.

**July 4, 1971** — Residents in the 4800 block of N. Kildare Avenue hold their first Block Party.

**September, 1971** — Block Parties are in vogue now and our neighbors in the 4800 block of N. Lowell Avenue, and in the 4800 and 4900 blocks of N. Keystone Avenue, enjoy their first round of Block Parties.

**September, 1971** — In a Soil Conservation Program, one hundred Boy Scouts and fifty adults, work to clean up the Gompers Park Lagoon. Five truck loads of debris and litter were removed by Troops #3811, 3907, 811 and 2907. Thomas R. Timm, initiated and was co-ordinator of this effort.

**November, 1971** — The Sokol Lodge #306, at Elston and Kilbourn Avenues, observes its Seventy Fifth Anniversary with a gala program and dinner in its community hall. Their gymnastic drills and dance performances have been shown on television.

**February, 1972** — Two forced entries and vandalism at Palmer School, spurs action to protect the school property. The Palmer School Council and the P.T.A. unite to organize a vigilante patrol of community volunteers, led by Robert Goral, of 5132 N. Kilbourn Avenue.

**February, 1972** — Displaying "For Sale Signs" on residential property is prohibited by the City of Chicago. The "Improver" offers free publicity to any local property owner wishing to sell his home.

**March, 1972** — New tennis courts approved for Gompers Park by the Chicago Park District, have been rejected by members of the Improvement Association, at the December, 1971 meeting.

**May, 1972** — The founding of the Mayfair Presbyterian Church, Kostner and Ainslie Avenues, has attained a Fiftieth Anniversary.

**June, 1972** — The Improvement Association plans a picnic in Gompers Park, to be held on June 25th. Competitive

games, prizes and music will be available to all members and their families.

Alex C. Rochow, was the recipient of a beautiful plaque for forty-four years of faithful membership in the North Mayfair Improvement Association, and exceptional service to the community.

**October, 1972** — As a result of strong objections by the North Mayfair Improvement Association, a proposal by the Salvation Army to erect a thirty story Hi-Rise building on the vacant property, west of the Booth Memorial Hospital, for senior citizens, was discarded. The Three-Hundred and Sixty apartment structure was to cost an estimated Eight Million Dollars.

**February, 1973** — The Executive Board of the North Mayfair Improvement Association has agreed to form a committee, whose purpose is to gather and compile pertinent information concerned with history of North Mayfair.

**May, 1973** — Juvenile delinquency and neighborhood vandalism is subject of much discussion.

**July 1, 1973** — The North Mayfair Improvement Association hosts its second annual picnic, for members and families, at Gompers Park. Vice President, Robert Cripe, chairman of the picnic committee, has planned a full program of activities and fun for all interested participants.

**August, 1973** — New outdoor swimming pool for Gompers Park is dedicated. It measures 75' long by 42' wide and holds 15,000 gallons of water. Robert Kreutzer, Gompers Park Supervisor since 1966 deserves credit for an excellent job.

**October, 1973** — Much discussion about Anti-Crosstown and what action to take on it. N.M.I.A. President, Joseph B. Cicero, and the executive board recommend that the N.M.I.A. should not become affiliated with the Citizen's Action Program (CAP) at the price of surrendering our

autonomy on local issues and city-wide problems not related to the Cross-town Expressway. The members upheld the recommendation at the regular October meeting by a 51 to 47 vote.

**November, 1973** — The 5100 block of N. Kilbourn Ave., one of the few remaining W.P.A. streets, gets sewers, curbs and a new pavement.

**December, 1973** — A new issue arises concerning Municipal Tuberculosis Sanitarium being phased out and converted into a huge shopping center and condominium complex.

**January, 1974** — Installation of Ruth Melson, 4850 Keystone, as first woman president of N.M.I.A. Our association joins with other community groups to oppose the M.T.S. shopping center, and petition the North River Commission to help keep the M.T.S. for public recreational and health purposes. Edward Kuhn is appointed Chairman of the M.T.S. committee for N.M.I.A.

**February, 1974** — The Chicago Parental School is being phased out and the land area is taken over by the Northeastern Illinois University.

**April, 1974** — Alderman Anthony Laurino, 39th Ward Committeeman receives the Gompers Park Sportsman's Trophy for exceptional sponsorship and support of athletic events and tournaments of all kinds.

**May, 1974** — The small park at Kolmar and Carmen is refurbished with swings and other equipment suitable for small children through the effort of Alderman Laurino. Neighbors are asked to help him keep vandals from spoiling this nice kiddy's retreat.

**May, 1974** — The Mayfair United Methodist Church, Wilson and Kilpatrick, sponsors a teen-age project for vacation time-designing and painting a huge mural on their West wall facing the expressway and obtaining supervision from established artists or a mural society to guide the youthful artists.

**September 20, 1974** — The Mayfair branch of the Chicago Public Library is moved to larger quarters from its former location at 4750 N. Kenneth Ave., where it had been for over 32 years, to 4200 W. Lawrence Ave. It now has over 17,000 books and other reference material available for school age and adult customers.

**September, 1974** — Operation "Whistle Stop" is undertaken by N.M.I.A. A loud piercing whistle is made available to all residents for alerting neighbors in the event of attack or robbery. Dale Bolling, our delegate to N.R.C. and frequent contributor to the "Improver" is chairman of the North Mayfair "Whistle Stop". Mrs. Bolling is also compiling, along with Joseph Waltz, a History of North Mayfair.

**January, 1975** — Edward Kuhn, 4947 N. Kildare assumes presidency. James R. Shouba, 5042 N. Kedvale, our Financial Secretary of Advertising and Chairman of the Salvation Army Committee, reports an acceptable plan for the 334 bed nursing home addition adjacent to Booth Memorial Hospital. Chairman Shouba and Ald. Laurino have closely followed the lengthy negotiations with the Army from the beginning.

**February, 1975** — Don Croeger, 5024 N. Kildare heads a committee to advise our Alderman on where Stop signs should be placed to most advantage in our neighborhood streets.

**April 2, 1975** — Our regularly scheduled meeting was cancelled due to a heavy snow storm.

**April 4, 1975** — Alex C. Rochow, age 81, President of N.M.I.A. in 1936 and founder and editor of the Improver, passed away. His long record of unselfish service to the community is filled with his many accomplishments as a Church Elder, Garden Club President, snow plow chairman, Improvement Association officer and civic leader. All of them were conducted with strict adherence to the rules and with integrity and dependability. His 38 year reign as editor, publisher and guiding light of the Improver will probably never be equalled for its deep and lasting effect on North Mayfair and its residents.

**May, 1975** — The Involved Citizens against Crosstown (ICAC), organized in 1973 after the association rejected affiliation with CAP, is dedicated to prevention of the Crosstown Expressway. A delegation travels to Springfield, Ill. to present their views to Illinois Congressmen.

**September, 1975** — The Salvation Army project is at a standstill due to the state of the economy.

**September, 1975** — Marty's Drive-in, 4100 W. Lawrence is closing to make way for a savings and loan branch.

**October, 1975** — Palmer School celebrates its 50th anniversary.

**November, 1975** — Many complaints made against First Distributors because of delivery trucks blocking up the alley on the east of 4800 and 4900 Keystone. Also complaints about their parking lot and parkways. Letters are sent to the management of First and picketing is considered by the N.M.I.A. unless improvements are made.

**December, 1975** — Alderman Anthony C. Laurino reports in the "Improver" that the old Municipal Tuberculosis Sanitarium will not be used for a shopping center as feared by some people. A senior citizen's housing project, a medical



center and an open land preserve in its natural state is being planned for the area. He also makes a statement clarifying his position on the Crosstown controversy.

**January, 1976** — James McCarthy, 5023 North Kildare, installed as the 48th president of N.M.I.A.

The Bicentennial year of 1976 marks the end of this part of North Mayfair's story. Copies of all the "Improvers" and other records are now at the Chicago Historical Society and are available for reference. Our local branch of the Chicago Public Library now located at Keeler and Lawrence Avenues has a complete set of "Improvers" from 1960 on for your reference or inspection.

History Book Committee

*Pictures courtesy of Mrs. Mary Alven.  
S. Archambault.  
Mrs. Harriet Avichouser.*



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