

Portage Community Historical Society News

2015 FESTIVAL

President—Valeria Roach
Vice President—Anne Koehler
Secretary—Donna Smith
Treasurer— Barb Borg-Jenkins
Board of Directors:
Patti Coppess
Sue Cowser
Jim Franzen
Lois Mollick
Wanda Samuelson
Richard Turnak
Eva Udick

Next scheduled meeting for the summer festival will be Tuesday, June 9, at the Portage Library at 5:45 pm.

The festival will be like previous years with live entertainment, hay rides, children's games, food and beverages, pie and ice cream and the silent auction.

We are in need of donations for the **Silent Auction** again this year. Bring new or like new items to the museum any Saturday or Sunday 1 - 4 and Friday 9 a.m. — noon. Also we will take like new stuffed animals or kids' small toys for prizes in the kids' games.

Lois will be making calls to get volunteers to help the day of the festival.

So far we have received gift certificates or donations from the following businesses for our tea party and festival.

Portage Oil Change

Bam's Pizza

Subway

Advance Auto

Andy's Red Hots

Dunkin' Donuts

BP Gas on Central Ave.

Simone's Nail Shop

Marsha's Sweet Stuff

Mood's Bar

Jade Garden

Rosewood Restaurant

Portage Pet Supply Plus

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Raffle

We are raffling a tour of the Wolf Mansion for up to 10 people, first prize, second prize is a copy of the Wolf Mansion History compiled by Lynda & Clement Khan and third prize is a framed picture of the mansion. Get your tickets any weekend at the museum and the drawing will be at 3:00 pm during the festival.



Jerry Davich's book signing of "Lost Gary" was a success. We sold out of our copies at the museum.

SOCIETY NEWS

BELLE GUNNESS, THE MOVIE

Debbie Parker, Bruce Johnson and I took behind the scenes pictures during the filming of the movie. It was a neat experience and glad to be a part of it. I have posters made of the pictures we took and they will be in the farmhouse during the festival. Also, we have the display window in the Portage Library in June and we will have some of the pictures there. The display will promote our upcoming festival, museum buildings and our upcoming move to the barn.

We are excited to be a part of the filming of the movie and the use of our farmhouse. I hope it will help us at the Alton Goin Museum and Trager Farmhouse get more attention and visitors. We will definitely be putting this in our publicity for our upcoming events. We will have a small Belle Gunness display in the farmhouse so when people tour it during our Portage Community Historical Society summer festival, they can see the rooms that were used in the film.

Follow the making of the short film about "Belle Gunness" at www.facebook.com/BelleGunnessTheMovie and on our Facebook page.

OPENING WEEKEND

SATURDAY, April 11 The Spring Tea was a success. Everyone seemed to enjoy themselves. We even got a few new members signed up that day. I did have trouble keeping the water hot for the tea pots so I think next time I'll be using the microwave more.

After last years' huge attendance for our opening of the Cindy Bean Photography collection, this years weekend attendance in the museum was rather small. We are not doing any big displays because we have to concentrate on the move to the barn. We are going through everything in the current museum and organizing so it will be easier to set up in the barn.

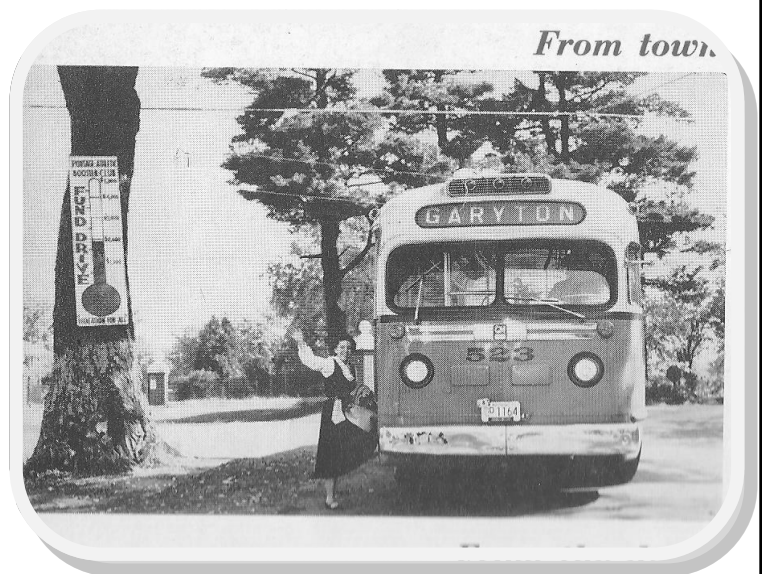


If you've been to the festival in the last several years you may have seen Margaret Jones weaving away on our rug loom. She has been kind enough to volunteer her time for many years now and will again be in the museum during our festival. I'm going to ask her to show and tell us what she does on the loom, give us some instructions and maybe we can work on the rugs throughout the year. She has offered to give us a special class or two for those who want to learn the art of rug weaving. Be sure to stop and say hi to Margaret during the festival and if you'd like to come to a class on rug weaving let Margaret or Kathy know and we will set it up.

Garyton's Round-about

Do you remember in 2012 we had this picture in the newsletter? Debbie Parker's mother said she thought it looked like Carol Bolles. Wished I would have followed up on it then because she was right. Someone else mentioned they thought it was Carol Bolles so I looked her up in the Alumni Directory and she was listed. I called her the other day and she verified it was her. Glad to have that mystery solved.

This picture was copied from the 1954 Portage HS yearbook. We originally received a copy from Walter VanBlaircom and he also mentioned: "The tree in the background at Willowdale and Central was set on fire by yours truly about 1956. It was a death trap".



Portage Little League History

We had someone inquire about the history of the Portage Little League. I asked on Northwest Indiana Memories on Facebook and got a few leads: Sue Cowsert said her father coached a team when she was about 10 years old. If you have any clues and/or pictures of early Portage Little League please contact Kathy and let me know so I can write up a history on Portage Little League and the Evergreen field. Following are a few articles I did find but nothing earlier yet.

Vidette Messenger March 14, 1958 p. 9

Crisman-Jack Van Warner said about 160 boys have registered for the Portage Little League. There will be 6 major and 4 minor teams. The Little League Auxiliary will hold a rummage sale May 10.

Vidette Messenger December 4, 1958 p. 13

Portage Little League Will Select Officers

McCool-The parents of all boys who are in the Portage Township Little League are invited to attend a meeting to elect officers Friday Dec. 5 at 7:30 pm in the all purpose room at the Portage High School.

Vidette Messenger May 15, 1959 p. 9

Little League Breakfast-The Portage Little League Auxiliary will have a breakfast at the home of Mrs. Dorothy Leeper, 2111 Cherry St. at 9 a.m. Mrs. Leeper lives on a street near the Little League Field. The menu will consist of bacon, eggs, juice, coffee and toast. Contributions will benefit the Little League.

Vidette Messenger June 10, 1959 p. 7

Little League Group To Hold Barn Dance

Crisman-The Portage Township Little League Auxiliary will sponsor a barn dance Saturday evening at Lute's barn which is at the south end of Willowcreek road. The time is from 9 pm till 1 am. Bryon Henderson's band will furnish the music for the festivities and Ralph Wesley will be on hand to call the square dances. The committee planning the affair consists of the mesdames

Lloyd Bothwell, president of the auxiliary, Ralph Hoskins, Henry Blohm, Earl Strain, Joseph McMurry, James Harris, Howard Hamilton, James Steele, Wayne Bradford and Miss Judy Fain.

Portage News Feb. 15, 1960 by Marie McMurry

Little League Started Five Years Ago

In the spring of 1955, the Portage Township Little League was the brainchild of Curtis Gallenbeck, an Inland Steel executive, who took the initiative in calling together a group of men who were to become the backbone of one of the most successful Little Leagues in the area with guest speaker, Joe Eckert.

At the initial meeting, the following men were present: John B. Lennes, Martin Smith, Argle Nohr, Wallace McCormack, William Springenberg and Dean Snider.

Next followed the incorporation of our first Little League and the following men were in charge: Argle Nohr, Clayton Hassell, Roger Lindquist, John B. Lennes, Lloyd Samplawski, Martin Smith, John VanWormer and Boyd Cantrell. The attorney for the incorporation was James Crandall.

Right off the bat, 85 boys were interested. They played part of the season without a charter and without uniforms at the Crisman ball field.

In 1956, they started a permanent League and had four teams with managers: George Peterson, Mel Jones, Art Nelson Jr., and Bill Springenberg. The coaches were Roger Lindquist, Wallace McCormack, George Hoag and Wayne Bradford. These charter members started from scratch and decided the boys should have their own field. Thus started the bond issue, which ranged from \$10 bonds to \$125. In one year they sold enough bonds to purchase the land for our field from Mr. Samplawski. It was bought in 1957 and by 1959, \$3200 was paid in full. (We will have a file in the museum on Portage Little League if you have anything to add or would like to see what we do have. I've copied a few more articles and some pictures for our file.)

We are on the web
<http://www.inpchs.com>



**PORTAGE
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Memberships: Yearly Single
\$20, Family \$50, Business \$60
and Lifetime \$100

Portage Community Historical Society Bi-monthly meeting

Wednesday, June 17, 2015

Woodland Park, 7:00 pm

Speaker:

Simine Short, author

Locomotive to Aeromotive:

Octave Chanute and his

Glider flying experiments

In 1896 and 1897

check for updates on our websites:

www.inpchs.com

www.facebook.com/pchs88

***Tuesday, June 9, 2015 - Festival Meeting
at 5:45***

Board meeting at Portage Library, 6:30

Monday, June 15, 2015—Digitation Workshop at the Westchester Library, 1—4

Wednesday, June 17, 2015 - Bi-Monthly Meeting, Woodland Park, 7:00 pm

Simine Short, author

Saturday, June 27, 2015 -

Summer Festival 10 am—4 pm

Saturday, July 4, 2015—Portage 4th of July Parade

Tuesday, July 14, 2015—Board meeting at Portage Library, 6:30

What a wonderful time we had during the filming of
“Belle Gunness, The Movie”

The crew and cast were all so professional. We took
“behind the scenes” pictures, which we will display in the
Trager Farmhouse during the festival.

When they were done they put everything back in its place like
they’d never been there. Our farmhouse really looked good in the
scenes I got to see. The film will be out sometime towards the end
of the year. They will send us a DVD copy and we will show it at
one of our meetings or at the installation dinner.

Thanks to the Portage Park Department for their help in moving
everything out of the barn and finding places to store everything.
When the barn renovation is finished we will be moving the tools,
farm equipment and buggies back to the bottom floor and on the
second floor will be our displays from the current museum. We
have volunteers to “adopt a display” and they will be concerned
with their display from packing it in the museum and setting it
back up in the barn.

Contact Lois or Kathy if you want to be involved.