

The 1950s Park Forest House Museum, at 141 Forest Blvd, Park Forest, Illinois, invites you to **"Step Back Into a 1950s Valentines Day,"** from February 4 -March 4, 2015. The museum is decorated with vintage valentines and decorations. One room represents a classroom in the first school, Forest Boulevard School, which was set up in a row of townhomes. **In February, the classroom is decorated for a 1950s Valentines Day party with crepe paper candy baskets, and construction paper heart-shaped valentine "mailboxes" on each desk. Red honeycomb, puffy hearts and vintage valentines are on display throughout the house. Admission is Adults \$5; children 12 and under free with a paying adult.** Admission is free for with the purchase of a Marshall Field's Park Forest Store Brick. The museum now has convenient street parking directly in front, on Fir Street.

**Operated by the Park Forest Historical Society, the museum will be losing its current location soon after March 31, 2015. This will be the final Valentines exhibit in this almost original Park Forest townhome.**

The Park Forest Historical Society is looking for a new location for the museum, may not be able to find a home suitable to be a house museum in the future, and is having difficulty finding a townhome to house it. The society may use a temporary location to set up a Park Forest history exhibit while it continues to search for an ideal house museum building. The museum began in September 1998 as the 50th Anniversary House Museum, at 397 Forest Blvd. It lost that location in May 2007. The museum has been at 141 Forest Blvd since opening for Christmas in December 2007, with a grand opening in February 2008. Having operated the museum at 397 Forest Blvd for nine years without paying rent or utilities, the Park Forest Historical Society has since October 2007 struggled with paying rent which began at \$150 per month and is now at \$560 per month. Even if they could afford the full rent for the unit, which will be required after March 31, 2015, the current landlord, Andrew Brown, owner of Central Park Apartments, wants the unit back so it can be updated like the rest of the property. The society is saddened by this because they have been striving since opening to preserve a townhome in almost original condition. This is a blow to that vision. Mr. Brown generously allowed the society extra time from the June 1, 2014 through March 31, 2015 for the society to continue its search for a new home, after it was discovered none of the Park Forest co-operatives could allow the museum to move to their housing due to existing covenants. Currently, the society plans to stay for awhile past the March 31, 2015 deadline, paying the full rent, while their search for a new site continues.

When and if a suitable location is found, the society will be looking for contractors or volunteers to offer pro bono services to render the new site usable. "What we have looked at that we can begin to afford has been in condition which will require rehabbing and retrofitting for our purposes," Museum Director Jane Nicoll says.

The Village of Park Forest has for the third year offered a \$5000 Matching Challenge Grant to the Park Forest Historical Society. Memberships, museum admissions, donations and store purchases all count toward the match. "These Challenge grant funds are what has made it possible for the museum to remain open for the past two years, and hopefully through the period of full rent which lies ahead of us," says PFHS President, Mike Gans.

The society is selling bricks from the Marshall Field's Park Forest Store to support the museum and the mission of preserving and sharing Park Forest history. Bricks are 1 for \$15; 2 for \$25, and come with a Certificate of Authenticity and a history of the Marshall Field's Park Forest Store. Prints of Annabelle Gould's vibrant watercolor showing the Park Forest Plaza and Holiday Theatre are on sale for \$15. Other gift ideas are books and other items on Park Forest. All are  
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available in the society's online store, at [www.parkforesthistory.org](http://www.parkforesthistory.org). Shipping and handling for bricks is \$12; for prints it is \$6. Bricks may also be purchased during open hours at the Recreation and Parks desk at Village Hall, 350 Victory Drive.

The Marshall Field's Park Forest Store was the first to be in a shopping center, beginning the long association between Philip M. Klutznick and the Field's company which led up to Water Tower Place.

For information on Marshall Field's Bricks, and to offer suggestions or pro bono services contact the Society President, Mike Gans, at 708-305-3308. Questions on the museum and exhibits should be sent to Director, Jane Nicoll at 708-481-4252 and through the email on the website. "Like" the 1950s Park Forest House Museum and the Park Forest Historical Society at their pages on Facebook!