

President/Archivist/Museum Director Report. PFHS Annual Meeting. September 27, 2020. Jane Nicoll.

Welcome. Thank you for attending our annual meeting and election of board members. We hope you enjoy the home movies and the two programs being offered on YouTube by way of a program today.

Our Program year was cut short by COVID-19. After our annual meeting last September, we had a nicely attended program on "Philo T. Farnsworth and the History of Television." In November we had a good program by Cliff Butz, former Park Forest Chief of Police, and Chief Christopher Mannino speaking on the history of the Park Forest Police Department which was celebrating its 70th Anniversary. In February, "Fashion from 1940-1980" given by Rhiannon Cizon of RhiConnect was well attended.

We were unable to hold Hall of Fame planned for April 5, or on the alternate date in June, and we will not hold an in-person program on October 12 as planned, due to COVID-19. We will compile a video program of each nominator presenting his/her nominee and each inductee accepting induction, and it will be shared via YouTube when we have it compiled and hopefully in October.

Our Annual Ice Cream Social in May was also cancelled. Our annual meeting was to be a "35th Anniversary Celebration and Family Sock Hop" we had scheduled for Saturday September 26, but that party will have to happen when the world is safe again.

Our programs this year will be via YouTube or Zoom. Most will be airing older programs or interviews many of you have never seen. We hope to have a special program in November, but I am learning not to announce plans as so few come true.

The Museum closed to the public in March 2020. With Illinois in Stage 4, we are offering to be open by appointment. We may begin opening for regular hours again, but the docents would need to be willing to take shifts. There have been some very interesting visitors, by appointment since March.

I received an email in July from a Rhoades Scholar visiting in Kansas from Russia, wishing to visit the museum because he studies American Suburbia in the 1950s and 1960s. Paul Blobaum was able to not only show him the museum, but meet his METRA train and bring him to the museum, then give him a brief car tour of the village. It turned out that this young scholar was only taking AMTRAK to Chicago for the purpose of seeing the 1950s Park Forest House Museum. Happily he was delighted with it and his tour of the village. He then planned to take AMTRAK to Omaha, Nebraska. Needless to say, we were honored to hold such an important place in his esteem that he would make such a journey.

Another visit was by Anne Abramson, the granddaughter of American Community Builders partner, Sam Beber. She and her husband hiked Thorn Creek Nature Center, then stopped for a visit at the museum. She was very happy to find our exhibit on Jews in Park Forest, which has some featured articles on her grandfather. Sam Beber, aside from his work in Park Forest, had as a very young man in Omaha, formed the youth group s AZA for Jewish young men, an organization which is international today. Among his first members was friend and future brother-in-law, Philip Klutznick. Mr. Beber also founded a camp for Jewish children and teens which is still in operation today.

I was able to find some professional photographs in our collection showing the exterior of Sam Beber's home on Monee Road, where Anne had spent a great deal of time in her childhood. That home and the Klutznick home on Monee Road, along with several others, were designed by Bud Fitch, Mid-Century Modern architect who had studied with Frank Lloyd Wright, and the nephew of Mrs. Beber and Mrs. Klutznick.

It is appropriate to recognize the contributions to Park Forest of our founders, Philip Klutznick, Sam Beber, and Nathan Manilow, along with the contributions to our village from many Jewish members of the community and Village Government on this Yom Kippur. May each be a blessed memory.

The Museum is decorated with 1950s Halloween decorations and is ready for masked visitors to come see it. You must make an appointment.

We thank Mayor Jon Vanderbilt, and Village Manager Tom Mick, along with the Village Board of Trustees for awarding us with a ninth Donor Match Grant for 1010-2021. Thank you to everyone who has helped us meet the match in previous years and we hope we can count on you again this year. We also thank the Village of Park Forest for allowing us photocopy services for our fliers and brochures, and especially thank Janet Brown for all of her help and patience with both Mike and I.

We thank the Library Board for once again donating to us half the annual rent for the Archive Office space.

We also thank St. Mary's and their staff for allowing us copying privileges at the church, for working with us in so many ways to make us comfortable to call St. Mary's home to the museum and Archive Office.

Hall of Fame nomination forms will be available by mid-October, and nominations will be accepted by the end of December. This will be our 27th Annual Hall of Fame and 28th Hall of Fame. We may need to hold a You Tube ceremony next year, as well.

I would again, like to add more volunteers at the Archive who could do data entry or photocopying or labeling and filing. We also need people to type thank you letters again this year, and to finish up last year's letters, which include a tax receipt. I apologize that not all have received their past year's letters and membership cards. And we need help to get our mailings out. This is a job which can be done in your own home and parts of the work shared by a few. Last year we added a new scanner which has the ability to scan transparencies like slides and negatives and which will work with the newer computer and Windows 10.

Society funds went to paying a professional photographer and videographer to go through and around Rich East with us in May. I scanned a number of our early photographs of the school which will be added to his footage and photos to produce a video which will be available for purchase through the Society. It is not finished yet, but we hope for an end result soon.

Thank you to all of our current board members who have met on Zoom or in person. Chris Janota is now helping with the website and has stepped into the Treasurer's shoes as well as maintaining his Vice-Presidential duties. Please read our current newsletter about the loss of our friend and Treasurer Matt Wenzel.

Due to other concerns, we did not do a very good job of looking for new board members this year. If you have skills with figures and would be interested in serving on the board, we are hoping to add a Treasurer. We would need to make an amendment to our by-laws to add a board member other than at the Annual Meeting, and we usually ask for a trial period with any prospective member before they are voted on to the board.

I am entering my 36th year serving on the Board, my 40th year of working on the Archive, and my 22nd year as volunteer Museum Director.

We hope to have you all join us for our Zoom or YouTube programs this year and to see you making appointments to visit the museum. Thank you all for your continuing support. We would not survive without your memberships, donations, museum visits and purchases, because without the Village's Donor Match program, we would not still be here.

May you all stay safe and healthy as we navigate this very different year in the history of our country.