

HYDE PARK HISTORICAL SOCIETY BULLETIN



May/June 2020

www.hydeparkhistory.org, 773-493-1893

UPCOMING EVENTS

Hyde Park Book Club – Monday, July 20, 7:30pm via Zoom. Author Carlo Rotella, *The World is Always Coming to an End: Pulling Together and Apart in a Chicago Neighborhood*. Rescheduled from March. Contact info@hydeparkhistory.org for the Zoom link.

Hyde Park Book Club – Monday, August 17, 7:30pm via Zoom. Author Keith Stolte, *Chicago Artist Colonies*. Rescheduled from April. Contact info@hydeparkhistory.org for the Zoom link.

Hyde Park Book Club – Monday, September 21, 7:30pm via Zoom. Author Mark Larson, *Ensemble: An Oral History of Chicago Theater*. Contact info@hydeparkhistory.org for the Zoom link.

Book Club Contacts: Carol Vieth, ultra5300@earthlink.net; Michal Safar, michal.s.safar@gmail.com

WELCOMING A NEW MEMBERSHIP CHAIRMAN

The Hyde Park Historical Society is happy to welcome Mark Mandle as our new Membership Chairman. Mark is a long-time board member and has previously assisted both at KAM Isiah Israel and the Jewish Historical Society with membership. You should have already heard from Mark about renewing your membership, if you haven't already. You can contact Mark at membership@hydeparkhistory.org.

THERE'S ART IN THEM THAR REVETMENTS – ZOOM PROGRAM, SATURDAY, JUNE 27

On Saturday, June 27, 2020 Bill Swislow gave a presentation on the stone carvings found in the revetments found along Chicago's lakefront. These carvings are one of the world's most remarkable outdoor art treasures that lies hidden in plain sight along Chicago's Lake Michigan waterfront. Some of them are spectacular, most of them by anonymous creators, and almost none of them noticed by the millions of people who enjoy the city's unobstructed shore. In addition to showing many examples of these carvings, Bill presented a history of the Chicago lakefront and why, unlike most other lakefront cities, Chicago's lakefront has remained mostly clear and unobstructed. The presentation was recorded and will be available on the HPHS web site in the near future.



1893 WAS A VERY GOOD YEAR FOR THE HYDE PARK BOOK CLUB

On Monday, June 15 the Hyde Park Book Club held its second Zoom meeting with Joseph Gustaitus, author of *Chicago's Greatest Year – 1893: The White City and the Birth of a Modern Metropolis*. Of interest to the participants was how the book started with small but fascinating topics, like the Chicago hot dog, Wrigley Chewing Gum and went on to address the larger themes of Chicago architecture, Chicago as a university town, and Chicago as a major medical center.

THE HYDE PARK BOOK CLUB GOES VIRTUAL (WITH A LITTLE HELP FROM OUR FRIENDS)

On Monday, May 18 the Hyde Park Book Club met virtually via Zoom with Mark Hanson, author of *The City in a Garden*. We had a lively discussion with 22 participants. Some of the questions Mark fielded included: How did Hyde Park get its name? What would Hyde Park have been like without the University of Chicago? What were the early street names in Hyde Park? How did you research the book? Mark gamely answered all questions, and the virtual meeting was declared a success.

The back story to this event is also interesting. *The City in a Garden* is published by the College of the University of Chicago. Interestingly, the book is only available from the Seminary Coop Bookstore - not Amazon or anywhere else. The Coop was closed and was only handling mail orders (USPS) - no curbside pickup. Several club members expressed concern about getting the books in time for the meeting and could HPBC check with the Coop to see what could be done. We contacted Jeff Deutsch, Director of the Coop, who told us that he would be happy to help, but the Coop was out of stock on that book and unable to restock because the inventory was warehoused in a University building that was closed when the rest of the University was shut down. I contacted Mark Hansen with the problem. He contacted Dean of the University, John Boyer, who personally got the books and delivered them to the Coop's manager, Alena Jones. Our members placed their orders with the Coop and the books were personally delivered to Michal Safar, by Jeff, who, in turn, delivered them to the book club members.

Talk about an amazing supply chain - The Charles L. Hutchinson Distinguished Service Professor in the Department of Political Science and the College, to the Dean of the College at the University of Chicago, to the Manager of the Seminary Coop Bookstore, to the Director of the Seminary Coop

Bookstore, to the President of the Hyde Park Historical Society, to the Hyde Park Book Club members. All in the cause of convening over books via Zoom, in the midst of a global pandemic. It helps to have friends in high places.

PRESERVATION NEWS – WATCH LIST

Emmett Till House, 6427 S. St. Lawrence –

Since 2017 Preservation Chicago has been proposing to have the City of Chicago's Commission on Chicago Landmarks honor the memory of Emmett Till by landmarking the house where Emmett Till and his family were living when he was murdered on August 28th, 1955. The HPHS Preservation Committee has been working with Preservation Chicago to help make this happen.

We spoke with 20th Ward Alderwoman Jeanette Taylor. She is enthusiastic about the landmarking and asked us to work with Naomi Davis who is a West Woodlawn community organizer and President of Blacks In Green (<https://www.blacksingreen.org/>). Ms Davis has been meeting with us weekly. She sees the landmark designation as an ideal way to bring attention to West Woodlawn and to highlight the on-going racial injustice which was the background for Emmett Till's murder. She also feels that this would be an opportunity to show the public what Emmett Till was like as a boy before the murder and would honor his mother, Mamie Till-Mobley, for her activism in the years following Emmett's death.

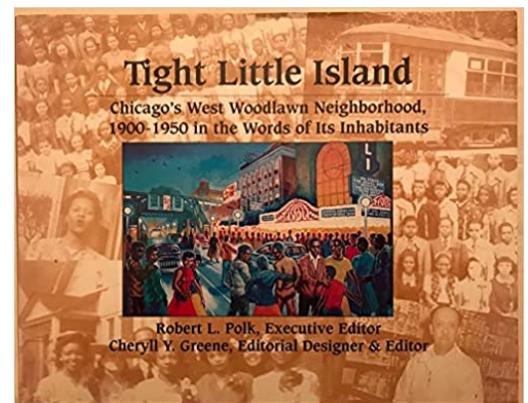
We have contacted the current owner, an absentee speculator. He was unaware of the history of the Till/Mobley House and is considering whether he would consent to the landmarking. His consent is not required but is very desirable.

We've connected with a number of Till/Mobley family members and friends. They are enthusiastic about the landmarking of the house.

<https://chicagocrusader.com/push-to-make-emmett-tills-house-a-landmark/>

https://www.wbez.org/stories/_/f8abe096-9cbc-4eed-9deb-81aed022954b

<https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2020/apr/25/emmett-till-long-wait-for-justice>



Tight Little Island: Chicago's West Woodlawn Neighborhood, 1900-1950 in the Words of its Inhabitants

Roseland's South Michigan Avenue Historic Commercial District, S. Michigan Avenue, 100th to 115th Streets

<https://preservationchicago.org/chicago07/chicago-7-most-endangered-2020-roseland-michigan-avenue-commercial-district/>

United Church of Hyde Park, Blackstone Avenue at 53rd Street, 1889

https://www.hpherald.com/news/local/residents-gather-to-see-ways-to-save-hyde-park-united/article_daff48c-575b-11ea-aeec-136efc539a6a.html

Jeffery Theater Building, Jeffery Boulevard and 71st Street, 1923

Washington National Bank Building, Cottage Grove Avenue & 63rd Street, 1924

<https://preservationchicago.org/chicago07/washington-park-bank/>

The Forum Building, 318 East 43rd street, 1897

<https://secure.givelively.org/donate/urban-juncture-foundation/raise-the-roof-fund-the-forum>

Promontory Point, 55th Street and Lake Michigan

<https://www.promontorypoint.org/about>

<https://www.chicagoparkdistrict.com/parks-facilities/Burnham-Park/>

Jackson Park, The Obama Presidential Center

For more information on any of the above Hyde Park Historical Society preservation efforts, contact Jack Spicer, jackspicer@earthlink.net

HYDE PARK HISTORICAL SOCIETY INITIATIVE – COVID-19 AND THE HYDE PARK COMMUNITY

PLEASE SHARE YOUR EXPERIENCES!



Photo of masked sanitation workers in Chicago during the 1918 Spanish Flu Pandemic from the Chicago Sun Times

COVID-19, also known as coronavirus, is a worldwide pandemic that has had wide reaching impacts on every member of our community.

The Hyde Park Historical Society wants to hear from you about how you, your family, and our community are being affected. Please tell us your story so we can add your voice to the history of our community. While the Historical Society is focused on the Hyde Park Township area, we value responses from anyone who would like to participate.

Please fill out the form at [COVID-19 Hyde Park Archive](#) to share your story with us.

If you would like to share photographs or a video, or both, please email them to hphscovid@gmail.com.

If you would like to submit a diary or journal of your experience, please email it to hphscovid@gmail.com or mail it to the HPHS Headquarters.

Any physical ephemera can be mailed to the Hyde Park Historical Society's Headquarters at 5529 S Lake Park Ave, Chicago, IL 60637. Anything received will not be returned to the sender and will become property of the Historical Society.

We at the Hyde Park Historical Society hope to be able to share selected stories with the community on an ongoing basis.