

History
of the
City of Palos Hills

Founded October 25, 1958



The history of Palos is overshadowed by a French specter. Visitors to the area in the 19th century found the earthworks of two forts in the vicinity, and speculated they were the work of French explorers or soldiers; this speculation was repeated as fact, creating a legend of French occupation that may or may not be true. The problem is discussed in the section on our prehistory. Palos Hills City Hall, built under the administration of Mayor Thomas Bona, stands on the site of one of the earthworks.



Carlton H. Ihde, First Mayor of Palos Hills, elected December 6, 1958, died in office January 11, 1962. Without his foresight there might never have been a Palos Hills.

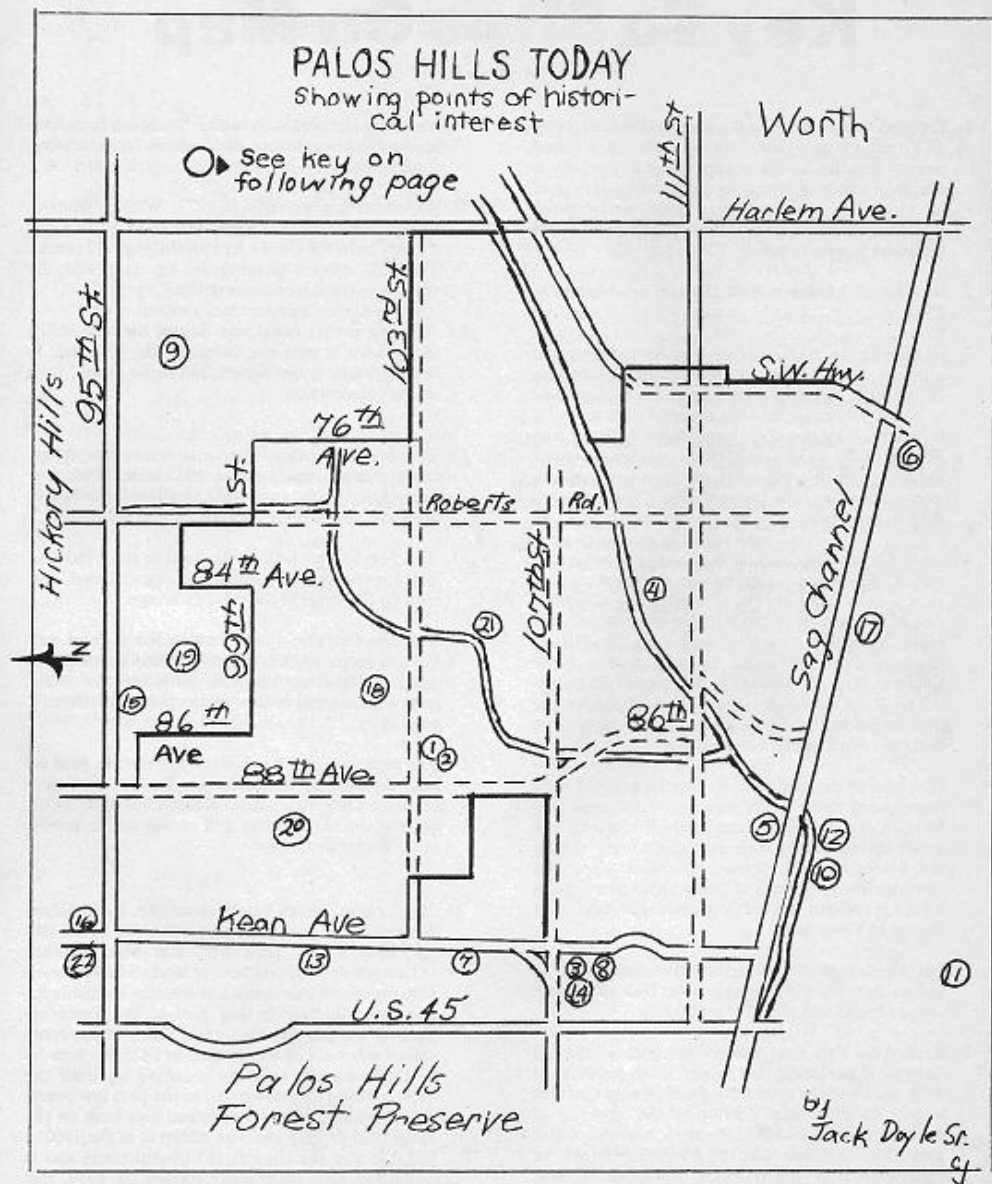
Preface

The City of Palos Hills, Illinois, celebrates its 20th anniversary as a city on October 25th, 1978. In honor of this event, the Palos Hills Historical Association has prepared this history of their city so that all present and future citizens of Palos Hills will have an appreciation of the antecedents of the place they call home.

Starting with pre-historic times, this account is divided into four chapters. The first, prepared by Jeanne Fleszewski, gives the geological background of our area. The second, written by William Potter, covers the time from the arrival of the first human settlers up to the dawn of the 19th century. The third, which deals with period from 1800 to 1945, was written by Robert Busch, a descendant of an early Palos settler, and the fourth chapter, covering the time from 1945 to the present, was written by Earl Potter, who was personally involved in the actual birth of the city of Palos Hills. Jack Doyle, Sr., prepared the maps and their accompanying notations preceding the first chapter.

Special thanks are due to Palos Hills Mayor Leonard Meyer and Aldermen John Jordan, Florence Bain, Dan Scurek, Tom Denham, Mike Wunder, Lee Wyrick, Michael Lawler and Andrew Cisarek for their support of this project.

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Key To Sites On Map

1. Reputed site of fortification claimed to have been of French origin. Three cannon balls were found nearby and the Knolls Spring archeological dig a couple of hundred feet away unearthed evidence of an Indian village, including skeletons of three upper Mississippian Indians, pottery shards, stone tools and projectile points.
2. Location of the Green Hills Library, established in 1962.
3. Dr. Boyer, in 1833, claimed to have found the remains of an old fort in the west half of Section 15, near the Newman center on 107th St. just west of Kean. Although nothing remains of it today, it is believed by some to have been built by the French in the 1730's, while others think it was of Indian origin. It occupied a commanding position overlooking the crossing over the "Sag" swamp, then in existence.
4. Stony Creek. This is a natural water course that was at times navigable before the surrounding area was drained by the Calumet Sag Channel, and is thought by some to have been a possible route for early travelers from the DesPlaines River to Lake Michigan by way of the Little Calumet River. It is possible that Father Marquette and Joliet used this route on their trip down the Mississippi to the Arkansas River, but there is no definite record of this being so.
5. Two axes of the kind used by French soldiers were found here some years ago and may mark the location of a camping place where Marquette and Joliet rested during their memorable trip during the winter of 1673. Some authorities place this camp on the north bank of Stony Creek at the point where it crossed the old Saganaushkee trail, now known as Kean Ave.
6. The Gleason family unearthed the skeleton of an Indian here in 1902, along with that of a dog, copper beads and pieces of pottery.
7. Kean Ave. This road follows the path of the old Saganaushkee trail, the main north-south road from Indian times across the great swamp that was known as the "Sag." Prior to the opening of LaGrange Road in 1933, the area between 103rd and 107th on Kean was the business district for the farmers of North Palos Township. It was named after an early Chicago politician whose tomb is clearly visible from this road in Archer Woods cemetery.
8. An Indian burial was found on the Lucas farm here in the twenties during excavations for a building foundation.
9. An interesting legend—in 1773, William Murray, an English trader, reportedly bought all of Cook County from the Crown for two shillings (12 cents). The U.S. refused to recognize his claim with the coming of the American republic.
10. The Sag feeder canal was dug in the late 1830's along what is now the Calumet Sag Channel, to supply water to the Illinois Michigan Canal, then under construction.
11. The first real school house in Palos Township, made of logs, was built in 1840 near 119th and Kean Ave. in what is now the Swallow Cliffs Forest Preserve.
12. The Sag Feeder Canal was used in the 1850's to float logs north to the Illinois Michigan Canal, and then up the latter to the city of Chicago.
13. The first Catholic church serving North Palos was built here in 1873 on land donated by Mathias Jungles. It burned down in 1904, but the cemetery, which is still in use, marks the place where it used to be.
14. The replacement church was built here in 1904 on land donated by Peter Lucas. It was later succeeded by the New Sacred Heart Church on 111th St., but the old building still stands and is known as the Newman Center.
15. The original North Palos school site. Palos School District No. 4 was established in 1858, but it was not until 1879, when Mr. and Mrs. Edward O'Connell deeded one acre of land to Palos Township for school use that a site became available for a school building in that part of the Township north of the Sag Feeder Canal. The first one-room school was built on this ground at 8425 W. 95th St. in 1883 and was used for teaching up until the 1950's, being torn down only in the past few years. An additional brick schoolhouse was built on the same land in 1938 and was added to in the 1960's, but it is now the District 117 headquarters and is no longer used for regular classes. In 1939, this school, which served all of what is now Hickory Hills, and all of Palos Hills north of 111th St., had only three teachers and 135 students.

Key To Sites On Map

16. There was an old saloon and way-station here for the stage coaches going west, with overnight accommodations. It was torn down long ago.
17. The Calumet Sag Channel was started in 1911 to replace the feeder canal and was opened in 1922.
18. Walnut Hills Golf Course, which occupied the area between 84th and 86th Avenues, from 99th St. to 103rd St., was built between 1910 and 1920, but was taken over by an apartment developer in 1968 and is now an apartment complex.
19. Hickory Hills Golf Course, between Roberts Road and 86th Ave. from 99th to 95th St. is in unincorporated territory and is still a golf course. It was built shortly before World War I.
20. The first residential subdivision north of the canal was laid out here in 1924 by Robert Bartlett from 95th to 105th between 88th Ave. and Kean Ave. Only three or four homes were built in it before the crash of 1929, but most of the lots in it other than those taken over by the Forest Preserve District have had homes erected on them since the founding of the city in 1958.
21. The Lucas Ditch. It was dug around the turn of the century to aid in draining the swampy area that is now the Palos Hills plains section, greatly increasing the farm output of North Palos and setting the stage for its later development into a city.
22. A human interest site. At the northwest corner of 95th and Kean, plainly visible from both roads, is a gravestone inscribed "Felix." Beneath it is buried a dog hero, Felix, the mascot of Engine company 25 of the Chicago Fire Department. Somewhere between 1926 and 1930, he saved the lives of a number of his friends of Engine Co. 25 when they were trapped in a burning house and he led them to safety. When he died, his good firemen friends chipped in and bought a standard child's casket and held a regular funeral for him. He was buried here because it was Forest Preserve property and the firemen felt that this assured that his resting place would never be desecrated by spreading development.

In The Beginning

By Jeanne Fleszewski

Millions of years ago what is now Palos Hills was probably an upland plain. The soil was strikingly different then and represented neither the boulder clay nor peat prevalent in the area today. Neither were there the distinctive hills and valleys.

The area would have remained that way had it not been for the four intervening glacial periods, during which time soil and bedrock was stripped from the Palos area and redeposited a number of times by advancing and retreating glaciers.

Hills were created and later pushed aside by the advancing glaciers, whose meltwater helped etch out valleys.

The last glacial period in this area occurred about 60,000 years ago, with each previous advance and retreat of the glaciers contributing to the Palos Hills we know today.

At one point the entire area was buried deep beneath 2,000 to 5,000 feet of ice. As the glacier retreated chunks of ice broke off and later formed the many ponds and lakes in the area.

The final curtain on the "ice age" fell about 13,000 years ago, with the building of the Valparaiso Moraine system which overlaps the older Moraines in the Palos area.

The moraine, or high ground consisting of glacial drift or deposits, marked the furthest advancement of the last glacier.

The retreating glacier left the north west part of Palos Hills on the eastern edge of the Valparaiso moraine, while the southeast and eastern portions of the city were buried beneath 40 feet of icy glacial meltwater.

A few feet to the east of where the city hall now stands at 103rd and 85th ave. was a beach overlooking Glacial Lake Chicago, the predecessor of Lake Michigan.

Because of the amount of meltwater, the glacial lake was about 60 feet higher than present Lake Michigan.

The hills were covered by forests of spruce and fir, much like Canada is today.

As the glaciers played a big part in forming the city's gently sloping hills and valleys, so did the

glacial meltwater play a unique part, cutting through the Valparaiso moraine and placing most of Palos Hills on an island.

With the deepening of the glacial waters, two outlets were formed in the rolling belt of glacial deposit forming the Valparaiso moraine, the one to the north, forming the DesPlaines River valley and the one to the south forming the Sag valley.

Thus a segment, called "Mount Forest Island", was cut off from the rest of the Valparaiso moraine by two mile-wide rivers, which rushed through the valleys carrying glacial melt water down to the Mississippi river.

As the outlet, called the Chicago Outlet, deepened, Lake Chicago dropped in stages to 40, then to 20 feet above present ground elevation.

With each drop in the level of water, beaches and ridges were left behind. The three levels can still be seen today etched into 107th street as it approaches Kean Ave. from the east.

The three ridges in the street represent the Glenwood, Calumet and Tolstone stages of the lake.

While the glaciers are gone from the area, residents in the city today can still see their handiwork.

Mount Forest Island, an island surrounded by glacial water until about 3,000 years ago, rises about 80 feet above the surrounding land.

While most of the "island" has been placed in Cook County Forest preserve holdings, the northwestern portion of Palos Hills, and part of Hickory Hills and Willow Springs have been built on the remainder.

In Palos Hills, residents going east on 103rd st. will begin going up the side of the island at roughly 84th ave., while those travelling north on 88th approach the island just south of 103rd st. The island gently curves southward at 103rd and 88th ave. to 107th and Kean, where it runs westward.

The western border of Mount Forest island is located at the junction of Archer, Rte 83 and 107th sts., where the DesPlaines valley, holding the Des Plaines river, the Chicago Sanitary and Ship Canal and the Illinois Michigan canal, joins the Sag valley, which hold the Calumet Sag channel.

Palos Hills - A Pre-History

by William L. Potter

Requiem in Palos Hills

She came with her family to spend the summer here one year. While others in the family hunted in the nearby woods and fished in the Sag, she gathered berries and helped her mother in the garden. She loved it here.

Autumn came; her family moved on, but she never left. When she died, they buried her on the wooded hill behind the garden.

That was over 250 summers ago. The girl's body still lies undisturbed and undetected in the yard of a home in Palos Hills. The girl was an early resident of Palos. She was an Indian.

The Indian Pioneers of Palos

For thousands of years, Indians were attracted to this area, establishing camps and small village sites along the Sagunash Swamp. This grasschoked body of water and mud stretched from the Des Plaines River valley on the west to what is now Blue Island on the east. The Sag swamp had the features primitive man looked for: the watery areas held a bountiful supply of fish, clams, birds, and fur-bearing animals. The shores of the Sag (and nearby bogs) were dotted with plants that provided numerous edible roots and berries; the rich soil was suitable for growing their crops of maize, beans and squash. The nearby hills and woods provided game such as deer and raccoon. Rivulets, intermittent streams, and springs at the base of those hills provided fresh water. In short, the Sag Swamp area was one of several locations in the Chicago area that Indians sought out while in the vicinity of the tip of Lake Michigan.

A short (and hopefully painless) lesson in anthropology is necessary at this point:

History of the Illinois Red Man

Archeologists divide Indian life in Illinois (and the midwest) into several periods or cultures. The people of each of these periods produced distinctive tools and other artifacts that, when gathered and studied en masse by the archeologist, show the characteristics of a particular culture. The changes from one period to the next were probably not sudden, but were (in most cases) a gradual transition as old methods and tra-

ditions were replaced with newer ones. In some instances, it's reasonable to assume the people of adjoining cultural periods existed simultaneously (a modern analogy might be comparing the Amish community with the Chicago community). The main cultures, approximate dates, and brief descriptions follow. It should be stated that other cultural breakdowns do exist, but these are the basic ones.

The Paleo-Indians (6000 B.C. and earlier) were a primitive, nomadic people. They were a wandering band of hunters and food-gatherers with a limited stone-age technology. The Paleo-Indians left scant evidence of their existence, the principal artifact being a particular style of flaked-stone spear or projectile point.

The Archaic Indians (8000 B.C. to 1000 B.C.) also had a hunter-gatherer society, but showed a greater knowledge of stone working techniques: besides the flaked-stone tools, they made tools by pecking and grinding away at non-flakable rocks like granite. They made tools such as stone axes and gouges, which indicate an interest in woodworking. The Archaic people also produced artifacts from lumps of natural copper; the tools were formed by beating the raw metal into the desired shape. (This represents the limits of the metallurgical abilities achieved by the Indians in the midwest; they had - for all intents and purposes - a stone age technology up to their contact with the white man.) Small settlements and crude shelters began to appear during this period.

The early Woodland Indians (2500 B.C. to 500 B.C.) lived a life similar to the Archaic people, with one important cultural addition: they developed the use of pottery. Mound burials began. Houses and villages continued to evolve.

The Middle Woodland period (500 B.C. to A.D. 500) is the highpoint of Indian culture in the midwest. They had become a plant-growing society with supplementary hunting and food gathering. Large and small villages existed with different types of housing. They carried out extensive trade with Indians in other parts of the country, importing items such as obsidian stone from the west, shells from the gulf coast, and mica from the east coast. Burial mounds were often large and occasionally contained tombs.

The late Woodland period (A.D. 200 to 900) was a period of decline for Indian culture for unknown reasons. Village sizes decreased, housing was no longer substantial enough to leave archeological remains, the quality of tools and weapons fell off markedly, and, most importantly, they depended once again on hunting and gathering for food. The one important contribution of this period to Indian life was the bow-and-arrow, which was used, but not extensively.

Palos Hills - A Pre-History

The middle Mississippian people (A.D. 1000-1500) marked a cultural rebirth for the Indians. Once again, plant-raising became important, and village size ranged from small villages to large cities, some of which were palisaded or otherwise fortified. Trade with other Indians took place, but not to the extent of the Middle Woodland culture. The bow-and-arrow became an important weapon.

The Upper Mississippian and Proto-Historic period (about A.D. 1200 to 1673) appears as a simplified or backwards Mississippian culture, or perhaps a combination of Woodland and Mississippian Cultures. The Upper Mississippians lived mainly in the areas near Chicago, Joliet and the southern end of Lake Michigan. The Proto-Historic grouping would include late Upper Mississippian people and descendants of the Middle Mississippians. Proto-Historic Indians were on the verge of recorded history. It is possible they had unrecorded contacts with whitemen, or that some had knowledge of the whiteman through contact with other Indians who lived in areas where contact had already been established.

The White Man Comes to the Area

Late in the summer of 1673, Louis Jolliet and Father Jacques Marquette paddled their canoes up the Illinois and Des Plaines rivers, then portaged to the Chicago River, and pushed on to Lake Michigan while returning to Canada from their journey of exploration. And in so doing, they moved the Illinois Country out of its pre-historic status. The written history of Illinois had begun. It is possible other Europeans had been in the area prior to this, but - if so - they made no attempt to record the fact.

The historic Period (1673 to the mid 1830's for Indians in Illinois) was the era of contact with the white people; the explorers and Voyageurs, the *Courcours de Bois* (the French "rangers of the woods" who conducted extensive - though illegal - trade with the Indians), the *Habitants* (French settlers establishing small villages in the wilderness), the soldiers of France, Great Britain, the United States, and even (in one instance) Spain, and the American settlers entered the Illinois country and influenced the Indian way of life. It was a period of rapid erosion of native culture. White traders brought in large amounts of trade items, all vastly superior to any equivalent items produced by the Indians, and gradually saturated the Indian life style to such an extent that their native skill and crafts fell into disuse. Iron axes replaced those chipped or ground from stone, brass pots replaced native pottery, while fine European cloth replaced animal skins and rude native-woven cloth. The rush to adopt the new technology available to them

and the shunning of their own stone-age technology - resulted in an increasing dependence by the Indian on the white man, which in turn resulted in an increasing dominance of the Indian by the Whites. Not all the Indians went along with their increasing subservience. Revolts against white influence did occur, most notable being the Fox Indians against the French in the early 1700's, Pontiac's Rebellion against the British in 1763, and the Blackhawk War of 1832. The latter was more the product of white fear than Indian threat, but it did seal the fate of all the Indians still living in Illinois: legislation was enacted to move the remaining tribes (many had already gone on their own) west of the Mississippi. The principal removal was from the Chicago area (where several tribes had gathered to receive Government hand-outs and await the move) in 1835, with residual groups being removed through 1839. Thus ended the Historic period for the Indians of Illinois.

Indian Sites in Palos Hills

Now to return to Palos Hills in the specific. Two Indian sites have been excavated in our area by archeologists. The sites produced artifacts that indicate Indians from each of the above described periods visited here, but the two sites were occupied principally by Indians of the Upper-Mississippian and early Historic periods. This doesn't eliminate the possibility that village sites from other periods might have been here. Palos Hills and the surrounding area were dotted with archeological sites at one time. Farmers in the 1900's often struck graves with their plows, and they collected arrowheads and other artifacts literally by buckets-full. Many of these sites have been totally obliterated by the construction of homes, roads, and sewers; the information that might have been obtained from these sites is lost forever. Other sites have been disturbed or partially destroyed by farming, construction, and robbery by "pot-hunters," inept or irresponsible amateurs who dig carelessly at sites to bolster personal collections, often losing important data in the process. Such sites are still valuable sources of information (although somewhat garbled), but are unfortunately passed over by professional archeologists who, in consideration of the small quantities of money available for excavations, must go on to the sites that will produce the most information. There are undoubtedly a number of sites in our area that have gone undetected; for this reason, you should report any artifacts you may find so they may be recorded.

The two sites excavated nearby were the Knoll Spring site near Palos Hills City Hall, and the Palos site near the model airplane field on Route 45. The

Palos Hills - A Pre-History

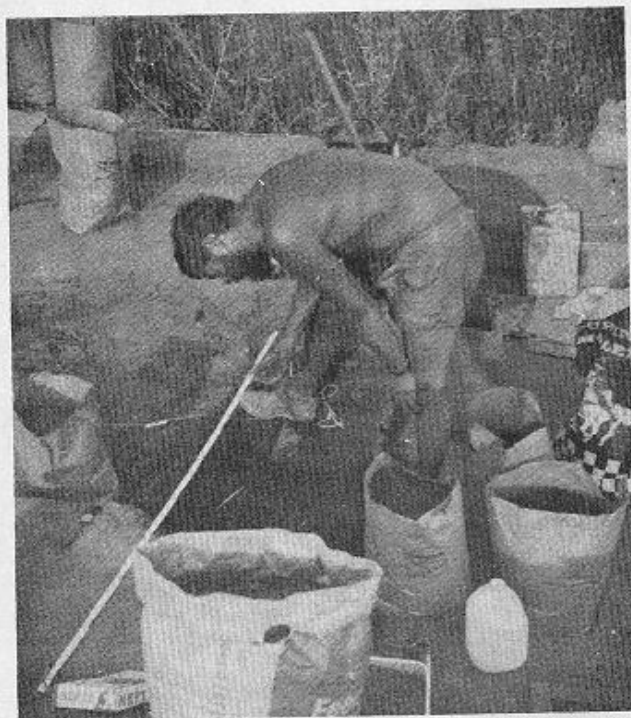
first was excavated by Charles M. Slaymaker III from Treganza Anthropology Museum at San Fran-

cisco State College, the latter by members of the Field Museum's Summer Anthropology program.



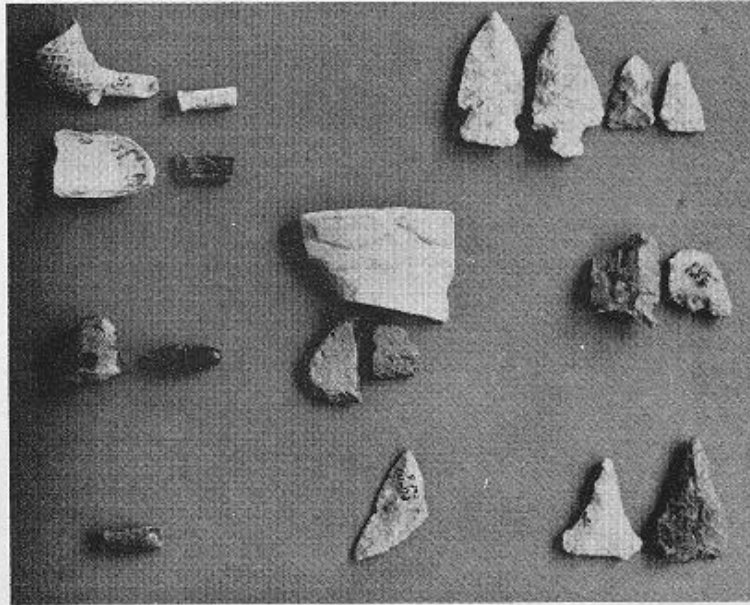
A reconstruction of one type of Indian dwelling, built by Ed Lace of Sand Ridge Nature Center. (Photo by W. L. Potter)

Palos Hills - A Pre-History



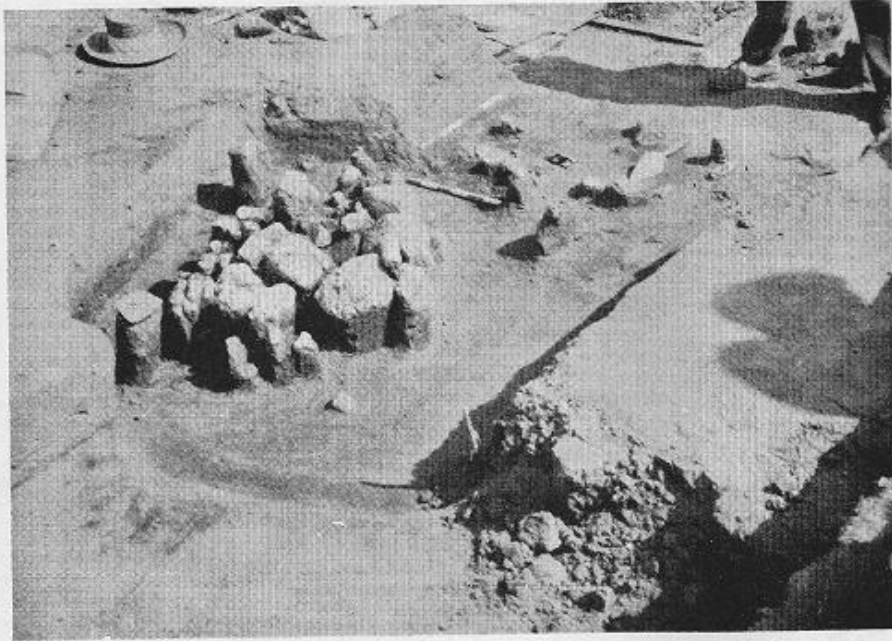
Archeologist Charles Slaymaker III measuring in an artifact during the 1969 excavations at the Knoll Springs site, now occupied by the Palos Hills City Hall.
(Photo by W. L. Potter)

Palos Hills - A Pre-History



Artifacts typical of those often found in Palos Hills. Clockwise from upper right corner: projectile points, projectile point fragments, drills, a blade, a bead made of native copper, a thimble and glass bead (trade items) and clay pipe fragments (trade and early settler items). Center: fragments of Indian pottery.
(Photo by W. L. Potter)

Palos Hills - A Pre-History



A hearth, or cooking pit, at the Knoll Springs Indian site. (Photo by W. L. Potter)

Palos Hills - A Pre-History

Indian Methodology and Hardware

What's found at Indian sites in our area? The most common items are flint flakes and fire-cracked rocks. Flint flakes were a by-product of making flint tools such as arrowheads. The first step was to find a suitable nodule of flint or chert, glassy rock material that would break into long flakes when properly struck. The nodule would be broken away until a core remained, which was discarded. The best pieces were chosen for further working. Striking a well-placed, glancing blow to the larger flake produced a smaller one. A hundred other skillful strikes would produce a useful article and hundreds of flakes. A misplaced blow would produce a broken item which, if it couldn't be converted into some other tool, was discarded. A skilled flintknapper could produce a projectile point or other artifact in a few minutes.

The fire cracked rock was the result of one method of cooking used by the Indians. A pit was dug and filled with wood and rocks. The wood was burned, causing the rocks to become almost red hot. The coals and rocks were raked aside; fish, roots, and other foodstuffs were wrapped in wet leaves or grass and placed in the pit. The rocks were then pushed back over the food, which was allowed to cook as needed. Heated rocks were also tossed into hides filled with water to boil other foods. The heated rocks usually fractured as a result of such use.

Among the most common flint artifacts are projectile points for arrows, spears, and darts; blades (flints with sharp or serrated edges) used for cutting meat, hide, or wood; drills (similar to arrowheads, but with a long, narrow point) for drilling holes in hide, wood and shell; and scrapers for dressing hides before tanning. Flint hoes or digging tool blades are found occasionally, as are gun flints.

Common non-flint stone items include ground-down ax heads, hammer stones, grinding stones (for grinding corn etc.) and celts (which may have been a sort of multi-purpose tool for grinding and chopping). Occasionally ground stone tobacco pipes are found.

Common items made from bones or antlers were hoes and digging tools, projectile points, awls, and needles for matting or weaving.

Items made from clamshells included hoes and spoons. Shell was ground up and mixed with clay to make certain pottery items.

Artifacts found here made from natural copper include finger rings, beads, and hair tubes, (long, thin tubes that were formed around shanks of hair as a common hairstyle). The copper was prepared by beating the copper nodules flat with a hammer-stone.

Pottery was made from certain clays to which various tempering materials, such as shell or ground stone, were added to increase its durability. It was paddled and kneaded to shape, then fired at a relatively low temperature; the result was vessels that were closer to hardened dirt than to modern ceramics.

Each culture had its own particular materials, finishes shapes, and decorations; this - coupled with the fact that the easily broken pots were often left where they broke - make them useful tools for dating sites and identifying the cultures.

Indicators of what our Indian predecessors ate while in the Palos area include fish scales and bones, clam shells, bird bones, small animal bones, and deer bones. Remains of stored corn occasionally turn up.

White man's trade artifacts that have been found in the area include gun parts, a bullet, bits of brass kettles, iron trade arrowheads, kaolin (white clay) tobacco pipes, glass trade beads, iron knives, iron hatchets, and steel strikers for starting fires. Trade manifests from the Historic Period indicate many other trade items were available to the Indians, but have not turned up here.

It should be noted the above list is by no means complete.

The present overall view (from data unearthed) of the Indian Villages of the Sag is of small clusters of Indians, probably amounting to 25 or fewer people, closely related to the Upper Mississippian culture, Blue Island subculture (a variation in the culture first recognized at a site in that nearby area). The village was probably a summer camp; virtually all the Indian cultures went to different areas of the midwest according to the season. Housing was not substantial enough to have left postmoulds below the plow level (although evidence of long, oval houses have been found at other sites of this culture in the Chicago Area). The presence of relatively few European trade items shows some contact with the whites, but not extensive contact, which would indicate the excavated sites were probable not occupied during the late Historic Period.

Tribal distinctions were first made in the writings of the early explorers. The tribes occupying our area would be difficult or impossible to pinpoint. However, tribes known to have occupied the Chicago area at various times during the first half of the Historic Period include the Miami, the Wea, the Sauk, the Fox, the Potawatami (with some of their Ojibway and Ottawa cousins), the Mascouten, and the Kickapoo. The Illini Indians, for whom Illinois is named, do not appear to have been residents of this area during the Historic Period, although a few winter hunting parties were found starving in the Chicago area in 1674, and a small group may have been living somewhere in the area in 1676.

Palos Hills - A Pre-History

The Truth About

Our Noble Savages

Some Palos Hills residents are surprised to learn Indians once lived here; they picture the Indian as the Hollywood stereotype: a brave clad in a well-tailored buckskin outfit, wearing a magnificent feathered headdress, living in a teepee, riding a horse like he was born on it. That image may fit the western Plains Indians of the 1880's (long after the last Indian was forced to leave Illinois) but it doesn't come close to depicting our area's former residents. If you were suddenly thrust backwards in time to the midst of the Indian village near the present Palos Hills City Hall, this is what you would find (based on early French accounts of Indian life as well as archeological evidence):

The village consisted of a few huts on the edge of the vast, grass-choked Au Sable Swamp near the base of some steep hills which are interspersed with thickets, open grassy areas, and woods. The huts were crudely made from saplings, reed mats, and strips of bark; they are rectangular with rounded roofs. A few resemble elongated igloos in shape.

The Indians present do not say hello or greet you in any manner. You are embarrassed by their lack of clothing. Most of the males are totally naked, although a few are wearing moccasins and breech clouts (rectangular pieces of hide slung fore and aft between their legs, and held in place with a belt) in anticipation of traveling to a nearby village. The women are bare-breasted and wear breech-clouts or skirts of leather. If the weather turns colder, the men and women will wear hide mantles or robes, hide leggings, and possibly leather shirts. One villager has a cloth shirt he purchased through trade with a Frenchman; another man - the envy of the village - has an iron knife gotten in trade. The villagers have heard that the whites have extremely beautiful and priceless items, like colored glass beads and fine scarlet cloth, which they wish to trade for common items like furs and pelts; the Indians are anxious for a chance to take advantage of the whiteman's foolishness.

The man you are talking with has long hair which has been coated with animal fat. His hair is adorned with shiny copper tubes dangling from several locks; he says that other hairstyles are popular in other villages.

A woman has been tending a garden plot near the base of the hill; she has been tilling the soil with a pointed stick. She says the crops are growing well, and that the men brought in a deer the day before, enough to feed the village of twenty-three for a few days.

Although a major hunt isn't immediately necessary, several men are out spearing fish, she says. While she is talking with you, she happens to urinate; you are greatly embarrassed, but she continues to talk uninterrupted, and not a single person takes any notice whatsoever of the act.

A man motions you into his dwelling. He gives you a mat to sit on and offers a pipe for you to smoke. His daughter enters the hut. She has been out picking berries and has returned with an earthen vessel filled with nuts and berries. Her father offers the girl's sexual favors to you in return for your shirt. The girl giggles and remarks how ugly the hair on your face is.

The man's wife enters with food she has been preparing outside. You are offered the largest serving of each dish. Although food is plentiful at the moment, she would have given her guest their food even if they were starving. You are hesitant to accept because the food has been placed in a bowl you saw a dog licking moments earlier. However, it would be an insult to her, her family, and the village to refuse this hospitality. You are surprised to find the food is good.

While preparing to leave, you notice another woman tending to a screaming child. The child has soiled itself; the woman wipes the baby clean with her fingers, then returns to the task she had been working at: cooking food.

You look around and realize that you don't see any horses. The reason for this is simple: they don't have any. It will be several years before the Indians of this village even see a horse, and no one of this generation will ever own one. The Spanish brought the horse to the new world; it was the wild descendants of those horses that the Indians eventually came to master. The common methods of travel for the Indians of this village are by foot and by pirogues - canoes made of hollowed logs. They have seen birch-bark canoes made by Indians further north, but prefer the sturdy bottoms of the pirogues for when they must drag them through the mud and stones in shallow water, a frequent occurrence in the summer.

While this view of the Indian is not entirely flattering, it should be remembered we are applying the standards of our culture to theirs. The Indians got along perfectly well for thousands of years without the whiteman's idea of culture, and were content with their lifestyle until outsiders began to interfere. While accepted Indian customs such as cannibalism and promiscuity may be offensive to us, the Indians had no reason to find them offensive. In point of fact, they felt the same way about much of the whiteman's culture. Many an Indian rolled in laughter when told about the whiteman's ideas of courtship, politeness, etc., because - at the time - the whiteman was the freak, the Indian was the majority --- briefly.

Palos Hills - A Pre-History

The "Marquette" Era

While the Illinois country on the whole entered the light of history in 1673, the Palos area remained in the shadows until the 1830's. This historical grey area has proven to be a spawning-ground for local legends and speculations that have come to be repeated as fact; these legends merit some discussion.

One legend has Marquette and Joliet camping or saying Mass in the Palos vicinity in 1673. The basis for this conclusion is probably more wishful thinking than fact. Unfortunately, the records and maps that are cited as proof for this legend are anything but conclusive. Joliet's notes made during the 1673 expedition were lost when his canoe went down; the so called Joliet maps were all drawn after the event, and in fact, were not all done by the same person, causing some confusion in accuracy. Marquette's map of the voyage is virtually detailless. All maps from this period show great amounts of distortion that make them useless for pinpointing landmarks. Marquette's account (written after the trip was over) probably wasn't even written by him. The events related in that journal are in many instances vague and subject to broad interpretation. It is interesting to note that many towns have used the very same information to "prove" that Marquette and Joliet stayed in their city. Although there is a slight possibility of Marquette and/or Joliet having been in Palos, there is no way of proving where they went in the Chicago area from the records now available.

Another legend suggests that the Chicago Portage (the route used by the explorers and voyagers of the 17th and 18th centuries to get from Lake Michigan to the Des Plaines River) was via the Calumet River, Stoney Creek, and the Sagaunash Swamp. In 1830, Indian guides for an Illinois Michigan Canal surveyor said that in times of high water, a direct water connection existed between the Lake and the Des Plaines via the Sag route. However, the Calumet River shows up (with any degree of certainty) on only a few maps prior to that time, and the Sagaunash Swamp (also labeled Grassy Lake) doesn't make regular appearances on maps until the 1830's, indicating a lack of importance. Also, proponents of the Sag Portage theory have occasionally based their claims on the same shaky evidence used to place Marquette and Joliet in Palos.

The preponderance of evidence indicates the normal Chicago Portage was the Chicago River, Mud Lake, Des Plaines River route (passing in or near Stickney, Forest View, and Lyons) generally accepted by historians. However, this route undoubtedly wasn't as tried-and-true as some historians would like us to believe. The actual route probably varied considerably according to season, and it is not too unreasonable to assume that, in light of the comments made by the Indians to the Canal surveyors, the Sag Swamp may have been used as an occasional alternate

route. But for the bulk of the 17th and 18th century traffic, the Chicago Portage was where it was supposed to be.

The "French" Skeleton

Another legend states that in 1858, Thomas Kelly of Section 18, Palos Township, found "the skeleton of a man with an ancient French gun and copper powder horn, with the inscription 'Frery Brinhem' etched upon it". Just how it was determined that the gun was French is not known; it is very unlikely anyone but an expert could examine a musket excavated after decades of exposure and tell if it was a French one. Indeed, many of the American military muskets made up until the early 1800's were copied from earlier French weapons. Some French soldiers did have brass powderflasks, but the one found by Kelly would have to be compared with existing samples to produce any meaningful information; the flask could easily have been from one of several periods of time and places of origin. Unfortunately, the Kelly finds probably no longer exist or are not available for examination. Several sources give accounts of the Kelly finds, which indicates he really did find a skeleton, gun, and powder flask. The man probably was alone at the time of his death, and possibly died of natural causes; if he had been with companions or had been killed by hostiles, his weapon and powder probably would not have been left with the body. Who he was, what he was doing here, and the year of his death may never be known.

A legend closely related to the above is that of caches of French and Spanish coins turning up in our area; the stories go that these coins were left by soldiers, explorers, etc. One must wonder what these people would have used coins for out in the wilderness, and why they would have lugged them so far to bury them. A more probable explanation could lie in one of the periods in the 1800's when foreign coinage was in use because of shortages or distrust in American money. Another explanation might be the caches were left by immigrants who flooded the area in the 1840's. Of course, the key to the mystery lies in the coins: when and where they were struck. The coins that were supposedly found haven't been produced for examination, and there was apparently no attempt to record or report any inscriptions on them. Perhaps some relative of those who found the coins might still have them, but verification of their authenticity would be a problem at this late date.

A few longtime residents have claimed that members of their families had dug up "French" swords, "French" lances, and "French" guns while plowing in days passed. For a time, it seems, every piece of rusty metal hit was a "French" something. It is possible they really were the items they were claimed

Palos Hills - A Pre-History

to be; they could even really be French. However, none of the items have ever been produced for examination, so their authenticity will never be proved or disproved; even their very existence must (for now at least) be put in the "legend" category.

All of the above legends have been treated in a somewhat pessimistic light. However, there are some flies in this historical ointment, anomalies that create more questions than they answer.

The "French" Forts

In the 1830's, visitors to this area found the remains of what were apparently earthworks fortifications on the bluffs overlooking the Sag Swamp. Although there is some confusion in a few early descriptions, there were apparently two fortifications, one on or near the site of Palos Hills City Hall and the Green Hills Library, the other near the intersection of 107th and Kean Ave.

All traces of the earthworks were destroyed by farming and road building early in this century, so we are reliant upon a handful of descriptions made near the turn of the century. One person wrote he had first visited one of the sites in 1833, and had revisited it several times before his 1883 writing. He described the earthworks as having trees at least 100 years old growing within their confines, making it doubtful the fortification was built in the 1800's. The fort he was describing was probably near Kean Ave., but there is a sizable discrepancy between the location he gives (near the Model Plane Field on Rt. 45) and the location given by contemporaries who were reprinting his letter. It is interesting to note that he casually suggests the earthworks were possibly the work of French explorers. This supposition has "poisoned the well" with writers after him taking the hypothesis as fact, thus creating a French heritage for Palos that may or may not be true.

The Palos Hills Cannonballs

It would seem logical these forts were of Indian construction, especially considering their close proximity to Indian village sites. Fortifications are common to several Indian cultures. The City Hall earthworks were described as being square and about 200 ft. long. Circular and square planforms are common in Indian fortifications. However, the fortification purported to be near 107th and Kean was described as triangular - not typical of Indian forts, but common to European construction. Then there is the matter of the cannonballs: In 1963, children found

three cannonballs embedded in the bottom of a freshly cut ditch at 87th Avenue and 103rd Street, a block west of one of the probable fort sites. Another was found $\frac{3}{4}$ of a mile northwest of there lying on the ground. A fifth has come to light that had supposedly been found "East of Willow Springs" about sixty years ago.

The sizes of the cannonballs are 1-17/32", 1-9/16", 2-1/8", 2-1/2", and 2-11/16" in diameter. The first two correspond almost exactly to the size of British ordnance $\frac{1}{4}$ pound shot used in swivel guns (small cannons often mounted on ramparts and ship's railings). This size was used by several nations, including the U.S. in its early days. The next size is also in the swivel gun class and is probably a "one-and-a-half pounder". The fourth is a 2 pounder near (but not quite) to British specs. Again, several armies used cannons firing a ball this size. The fifth cannon ball comes closest to matching the theoretical size of a French 2 pound gun. It should be noted that cannons were usually identified by the weight of the iron ball they fired. In viewing the above information, it is important to realize there was considerable variation in the size of cannonballs for a single caliber gun; this size difference results from poor casting or inaccurate moulds but was acceptable as long as the shot fit freely and easily down the bore of the gun. Because of this size difference in shot, because of the common use of similar size cannons by several countries, and because of the practice of using captured weapons, it would be very risky to base any conclusions on the size of the cannonballs found. However, each of the sizes found were obsolete by the Civil War Period.

These cannonballs present more questions than they answer. Palos Hills and the surrounding area has no documented military history, or at least any that has come to light. How did the cannonballs get here? Are they related to the fort sites, or is their presence coincidental? Were they all left during the same period of time? If so, how come there are so many different sizes involved? Perhaps there was some sort of military action here that has been overlooked by historians. Is it possible? Several military expeditions, including French, American, and English, are known to have passed through the Chicago area in the 17th and 18th centuries, although it would be difficult to pinpoint their exact routes. If one of these groups were here and built a fort, it would have been a temporary field fortification that was to be occupied for only a short time. But why haven't more military items been found? Could it be the artifacts the old-timers were rumored to have found actually were the things they claimed? Why are there so many cannonballs but no bullets? Why was the Sag fortified with not one, but two fortifications? Could it be the legends might inadvertently be true?

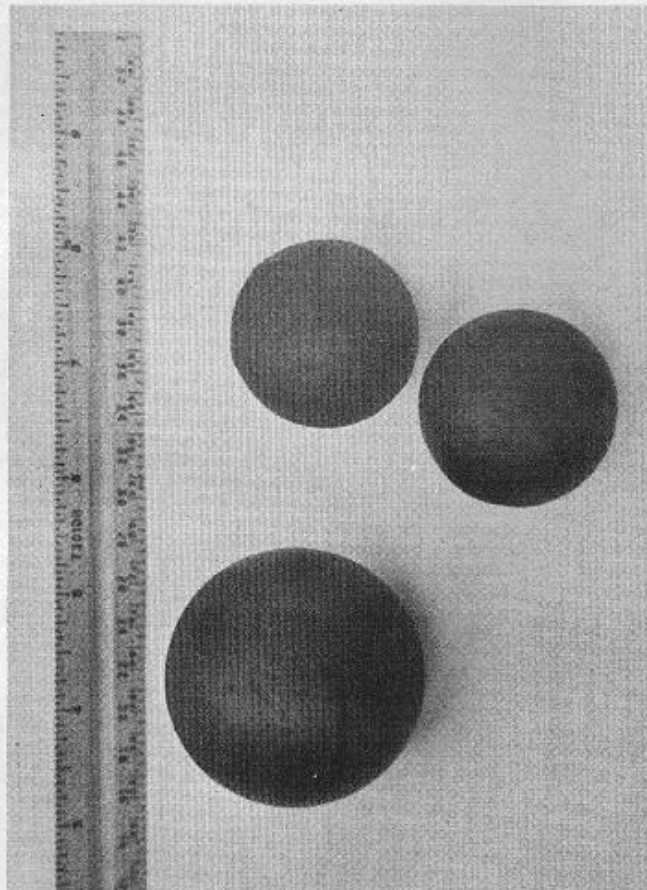
Our search for the answers continue, but we need the help of the residents of Palos. If you've found

Palos Hills - A Pre-History

something that may be an artifact of our Indian or white predecessors, please contact the Palos Hills Historical Commission through William Potter, 8811 W. 102nd St., Palos Hills (Phone 598-5552), who will make arrangements to have your find identified.

Too much valuable information on our history has been lost forever. Perhaps you have the missing piece that will enable us to finish this chapter in the history of Palos Hills.

And now, on to the recorded history of Palos Hills!



The three cannonballs found by John Potter, Dale Young and Gery Fawkes near 87th Ave. and 103rd St. in 1963.

1800 to 1945

by Robert Busch

The century just past brought to an end thousands of years of Indian life in Palos Hills. White men have only lived here for one-hundred-forty years.

This chapter is about the white man's era in Palos Hills. It will tell his story in a manner which won't, hopefully, put the reader to sleep. Few names will be mentioned and I will try to stay with the story in a general way uncluttered by any dates unless they are very important or very interesting.

It is hard to believe that Illinois could be considered the Northwest Territory but that's just what it was called in 1787 when Thomas Jefferson authorized and rammed through congress his enlightened Northwest ordinance.

Basically this called for the organization of five states, one of which was Illinois. More importantly it called for the orderly survey and transfer of land in a manner which would be easily proven in court. The Township became the basic unit of Government and land ownership. Each Township had its own legal description and each square foot of that Township could be legally described. This seems trivial because it is taken for granted today. But, imagine if your deed read, walk 50 paces to the rock, 50 paces to the creek, 300 paces to the river, then 500 paces to the big elm tree where you started—isn't lot 30 in Jones subdivision, etc. much more precise?

This is where we got the idea of Township and legal description and that method has been used in all states which joined, or tried to leave, the Union since 1787.

Now that we know where the township concept came from let's return to Palos Hills between 1800 and 1835.

Nothing much was going on as far as the white man was concerned in those years. Trappers and hunters wandered down the Sag swamp or Stoney Creek. Indians traded furs for guns and trinkets at Lauton's Trading Post in Summit. But there was no recorded settlement in Palos Hills.

Chief Black Hawk of the Sauk tribe decided in 1832 that the grass was greener on the Illinois side of the Mississippi River. His attempt to re-settle in Illinois prompted the Black Hawk War which panicked the area and ended in his defeat, causing the permanent removal of Indians to lands west of the Mississippi.

1800 to 1945

The Illinois Michigan Canal And What It Brought

The building of the Illinois Michigan Canal in 1835 brought the first permanent settlers to Palos Hills. They were laborers who came to dig the canal. Most of them were Irish, with a few Germans. They bought their land from the Illinois and Michigan Canal Company which was given alternate sections in all of Palos Hills, plus others all along the route, to sell off and pay for the construction of the canal. Old records show that famous men such as William B. Ogden and John Wentworth also bought land here for speculation. It is from a surveyor on the canal that we get our first recorded glimpse of Palos Hills. It was either swamp or timber. These early settlers were for the most part farmers and they had their work cut out for them.

The ringing of axes biting into oak must have been loud in the 1840's and 1850's. Land was cleared, crops planted and buildings erected. Log cabins were numerous in Palos Hills. A small water course called the Sag feeder was built along the course of the present canal to provide water for the Illinois Michigan Canal. This drained some of the bottom land along the swamp. Lucky indeed was the farmer who owned some of the fantastically rich soil. The poor "clay hills" farmers who settled the hills of Palos could only chop and dig out stumps.

There was, however, gold in them there trees and it wasn't long before Palos Hills was a logging community. The dense beautiful virgin hardwood forests of Palos Hills were decimated in the 1800's. The wood was tied into rafts and floated down the feeder where it was shipped to a place called Chicago. Many of the logs became railroad ties on the Illinois Central Railroad, others, planks on the Ogden Plank Road.

How Palos Got Its Name

During the 1840's Cook County reorganized its townships. Palos Township was originally called Orange Precinct of Trenton Township, but there were other townships also called Orange. So the settlers agreed on the unearthly name of Palos, which means "little sticks" in Spanish. The story goes that one of the early settlers had an ancestor in the crew of one of the boats Columbus used to get here and the legend claimed that the boat had sailed from a port on the west coast of Spain called "Palos."

War clouds were brewing in the 1850's that led to the most destructive war, in terms of American lives, in all our history. The Civil War brought grief and death to Palos Hills but it also brought prosperity to the farmers of the area. Crop prices were at their

century high during the Civil War, but it also brought about a decline in the use of inland water-ways for transportation, and this was to have serious consequences for Palos Hills until the coming of mass ownership of automobiles in the 1950's. The war ended and the rest of the 1860's were spent in agrarian pursuits for most of the inhabitants.

Sacred Heart is Born

Agriculture was the dominant profession of most people in Palos Hills right up until the second World War. The 1870's were no exception. There was one development, however—Palos Hills had a church; the Sacred Heart Church, built in 1873 at 100th and Kean Ave. It burned down on January 9, 1904, when a rabbit hunter allegedly tried to smoke a rabbit out from under it. A new church was built eight months later on 107th st. just west of Kean on land donated by Peter Lucas. Originally catholic pioneers went to worship at Saint James of the Sag Church which was founded in 1835. Most of these were Irish, German Catholics who moved into the area in the 1860's wanted their own church but couldn't afford the building. Irish and Germans compromised and formed a parish in 1871 where, for a while, sermons were held in English and German, until the first church was built two years later. The small cemetery on Kean marks the site where it stood until its destruction. A third Sacred Heart Church was built in 1968 at 8200 W. 111th St. To illustrate the rapid growth of Palos Hills from 1871 until 1968, Sacred Heart was officially listed as a "Mission Parish" with no pastor in residence for 97 years. Now 11 years later it is one of the country's largest catholic parishes.

The First Golden Years

The 1880's were called the Golden Time in American agriculture, even though by our standards the work was brutal and the houses were barbaric. Prices were stable and high. Farmers prospered and so did Palos Hills, although there was a growing shadow creeping up on the rustics in the area of transportation. Some of the oldest remaining farm houses in Palos Hills date from the 1880's. Chicago was the hog butcher of the world, and Palos Hills farms sent more than a few little porkers to the Swift and Armour stock yards. This decade (1880-1890) saw more people, percentage-wise, on the land than any in our history. Population records for Palos Hills are included in the 1890 Palos Township census and they show a higher

1800 - 1945



The Charles J. Busch family, circa 1910. Margaret Lucas, on the right, is a member of yet another early family in Palos history. Descendants of both families still live in the area.

1800 to 1945

population during this census (1209) than any other until 1930 when we had 1436.

The Gilded Age of the 1890's brought a decline in population to 998 in 1900, a loss of about 18% of the peak population. The lure of the city was taking its toll. Another disincentive was becoming apparent—it was hard to get around in Palos Hills and even harder to travel out of the future city.

The Railroad

The Wabash Railroad brought the ner-do-wells and "artistic" people to south Palos, but missed Palos Hills by a wide margin, so the area remained agricultural. There was a little-known railroad easement in Palos Hills dating from the 1870's but the line never was built. If it had been, the history of the area would have probably been quite different.

The 20th Century

The early 1800's saw the digging of the Sag feeder, later replaced by the Calumet Sag Channel in the first 25 years of the twentieth century. The building of the new Sag Canal provided employment for another generation of canal-digging Palos Hills men, and during its construction, the first land purchases by the Cook County Forest Preserves occurred.

The canal water level was lowered and a drainage course called "Lucas Ditch" was dug. This finally drained hundreds of acres in Palos Hills and opened up more of the land for use by man.

In 1916 the Forest Preserve purchased 50 acres of that part of their holdings next to Palos Hills. By 1975 the acreage was well over 7,000, which makes almost half of the entire township preserved for posterity. However, this expansion did cause an exodus, since some of the families who had lived in Palos for almost a century were forced to move. During the "Roaring

Twenties" Palos Hills had its share of "Speak Easies" and moon-shine stills. Times were good, people were becoming addicted to automobiles and developers were noticing all the land in Palos Hills only 15 miles from the loop. Literally chunks of Palos Hills were being bought up by speculators and developers. Palos Hills was hard to get to, but very nice when you got there. The village of Palos Park was incorporated in 1914 and the future looked bright. Then, in 1929, it all fell apart. The Stock Market crash shelved development plans and the Great Depression began. Palos Hills didn't really recover from the crash until long after World War II.

The Depression

Farmers during the Depression at least didn't starve, and most of Palos Hills residents at that time were still farmers. The speculators and developers shelved their plans and tried to weather the storm. The Depression did have a beneficial side; for the WPA built the roads that opened up Palos Hills. In the late 1930's, a developer named DeLugach tried to dispose of his subdivision. It was called "Frank DeLugach's Wooded Hills" and ran from Roberts Road to 84th Avenue, 105th to 107th. Amazing as it now seems, DeLugach ran free buses from 79th and Western to the subdivision. He gave the riders a free lunch and drink while smooth talking salesmen tried to coax families into buying a fifty footer for fifty dollars, "And you can get the lot next door for one dollar more if you buy today." This actually did occur and I wonder if any of today's new residents ever rode that bus back to Chicago, smirking at how they had resisted his sales pitch and didn't buy a hundred foot lot for fifty-one dollars in Palos Hills!

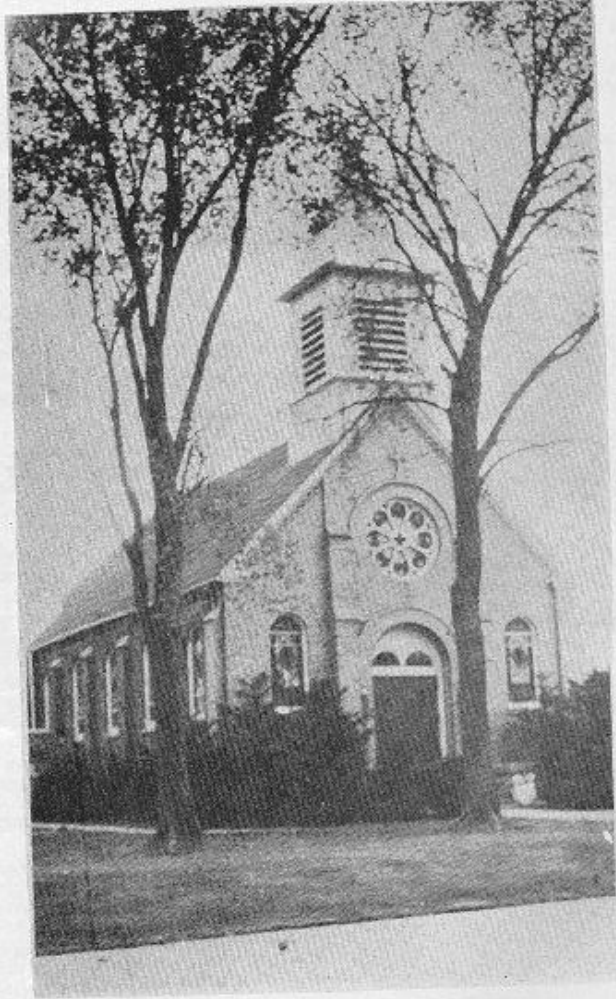
As prosperity returned, North Palos was no longer isolated and a bus ran from 107th and Roberts Road to 63rd and Halsted Street. Progress was all around. Then again the door of progress was slammed shut as World War II began.

1800 to 1945



The Mathias Jungles Family in 1870, early Palos Hills settlers who gave the land for the first Sacred Heart church and cemetery in Palos Hills.

1800 to 1945



Sacred Heart church, built near 107th and Kean Avenue in 1904 to replace the 1873 church at 10100 S. Kean, which had burned in 1904 as a result of a bizarre accident when a hunter attempted to smoke out rabbits from under it. The Sacred Heart Cemetery still marks the site of the original church, and is the final resting spot for members of many early Palos families. The church served much of the area's early population. The building pictured currently houses the Newman Center. Sacred Heart church continues to serve the community at 8245 W. 111th St.

1800 - 1945

| | 111th | 107th | 103rd | 99th | |
|------------------------|---------------------------|--|----------------------------|---------------------|-------------|
| Sag Channel | J. Murphy 80A | | Wentworth 80A | A. Minor 80A | Kean |
| C.E. Boyer 80A | T. Cody 40A | P. Cody 40A | John Cody 160A | C.R. Boyer 80A | 90th |
| A | Ed Connors 80A | ED. Conlin 80A | T. Cody 30A F. Cody 35A | ? 40A Crew 40A | 88th |
| T. Butcher 80A | Rich Connell 80A | John Collins 80A | Kink 40A Keefe Cody 40A | 89th | 86th |
| C.E. Boyer 640 A | R. Hunter 160A | Rich Connell 400A | John Sullivan 80A | L. Jones 80A | N → 82nd |
| P.H. McMahon 80A | Alex Callahan 101 A | Rich Connell PAT Connell 160A P. Harrington 80A | W.B. O'Brien 40A | Don Sullivan 80A | Roberts |
| Higgins + CO 80A | | P. O'Conner 80A J.B. Shields 80A | 78th | | |
| 115th | | | | | Harlem |

1862 Ownership of Land in Palos Hills
J. Doyle, Sr.

History Of Palos Hills - 1945 to Present

by Earl Potter

War's End

The year 1945 saw yet another big change come to the North Palos area. In April, Germany surrendered; on the 7th of August the "A" bomb dropped on Hiroshima, and before that month ended, Japan had surrendered also. No sooner was the word given that the war was over than the big Dodge-Chrysler aircraft engine plant at 75th and Cicero (now the Ford City shopping center) closed with the consequent lay-off of thousands of its workers. Many of these newly unemployed lived in North Palos in the tents, the packing crates, the truck bodies, the thrown-together hovels that had served as their war-time abodes as they came north from Kentucky, Tennessee and other States lying to the south, to seek a better living to help to meet the war's huge industrial appetite.

The Tucker Torpedo

As a result, many of the most recent residents abandoned their \$69 lots and headed elsewhere in pursuit of opportunity. A number, however, decided to stay and find new jobs, gradually building more permanent homes to replace the temporary housing that had had to make do in wartime. Soon, in 1946, Preston Tucker contracted for the idle Chrysler plant in which to build his now-legendary "Tucker Torpedo" automobile. And advanced car for its time, it focused new attention on the southwest suburban area, but financial trouble soon overtook Tucker, so only about 70 Tuckers were actually built before his effort folded in early 1948. Ford Motor Co. took over the plant, and in 1950, used it to build aircraft engines for the show-down building up with international communism. The prosperity this brought to the area resulted in a more permanent wave of new residents into the North Palos community, mostly individuals who bought a lot and built their own house. The areas that first attracted the new post-war residents were the war-time boom subdivision of DeLugach, bounded by 105th St. on the north, 107th on the south, Roberts on the east and 84th Ave. on the west. Its start really began in the 1930's when Frank DeLugach bought his 64 acres from the O'Connell Family, one of the early settler families of the mid-1800's. He divided it up into a myriad of lots 25 feet wide and offered them for sale at \$69 each in 1941. The catch was, though, that you

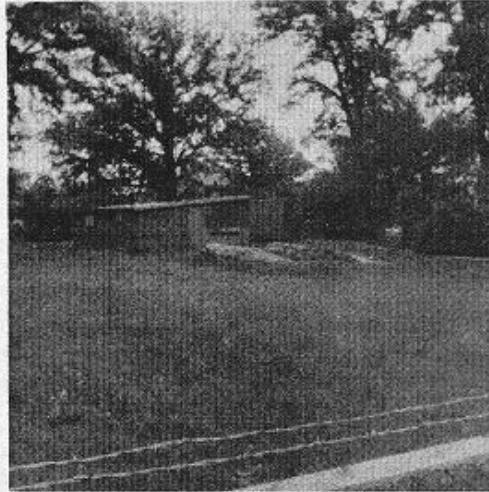
had to buy them in groups of three. There were no streets other than Roberts and 107th, the other being mere stakes in the cornfield. In the early postwar period, this was the nearest thing to a village between the Canal and 95th St. west of Harlem Ave. Sometime soon after the war, the area bounded by Harlem on the east, 74th Ave. on the west, 103rd St. on the north and 105th St. on the south was subdivided as the Garden Homes subdivision. Many homes were built there between 1947 and 1949, but like the DeLugach subdivision, there were no streets, sewers or water. The people who settled there got together and built their own streets from broken brick, stones cleared off their lots, and as much crushed stone as their meager budgets would permit. They had no motorized equipment and so it was not uncommon on a Sunday during 1948 and 1949 to see groups of men and boys working on their streets with picks and shovels and rakes and wheel barrows.

The First Fire Department

The volunteer spirit was very much alive in those days in what is now Palos Hills! The first Volunteer North Palos Firemen's Association was formed informally in 1944 or 1945, but had grown enough by 1946 to enable the firemen and other volunteers to join together and build the first North Palos Firehouse on the G. Boerema property at 106th and Roberts Rd. The building, for which the Firemen paid \$1 a year rental, is still there, although it is not easily recognized as a fire house, being two stories high. Originally there were living quarters on the second floor while the fire truck was kept in the garage on the first floor. The latter has now also become living quarters.

In 1948, a contractor built six homes on the east side of 88th Ave. and the north side of 103rd, all of which are still there. Homes were springing up individually here and there throughout what is now Palos Hills during this period from 1946 to 1950, many without building permits, since it was unincorporated territory and the County took only sporadic interest in what was going on here. Homebuilding on the north side of 95th street was going on at a faster pace, resulting in the incorporation of Hickory Hills as a Village in 1951. It turned out in light of subsequent events that the advent of the Village of Hickory Hills actually marks the first step in the birth of Palos Hills.

History of Palos Hills - 1945 to Present



A typical home in post-war North Palos. Eleven people lived in this small structure -- without such luxuries as running water--until the early 1960s. Like most of the sub-standard housing that once dotted Palos, this building was torn down and replaced with a modern house built to rigid building codes.

History of Palos Hills - 1945 to Present

North Palos Schools

In 1949, the Earl Potter family, which was to play a major role in the future, from Morgan Park (Southwest Chicago) moved into North Palos, along with many other families who still to this day live in Palos Hills. Up until 1940, the schooling needs of North Palos were met by the one-room white frame North Palos school for the grammar school pupils, while the high school students went to the Argo-Summit High School via school bus. In 1940, the old North Palos school was joined by a new four-room brick schoolhouse at the same location, and by 1950, the growing population of the area forced the construction of the Quin School near 103rd and Roberts, which opened in November of that year. A referendum was held in all of the high school districts that now form consolidated District 230 in 1951 to see if they wanted to join together to form one large high school district and build a modern high school near the center of it. This was the first controversial issue to hit the North Palos area since the DeLugach subdivision was started; the argument stemming from the fact that the North Palos High School District had 20 acres of land at 111th and Roberts Rd., the present site of the Stagg High School, and while they did not yet have the money or the bonding power to build a school building on it, they were the district with fastest-growing school-age population. Those favoring the consolidation of the districts offered a gentleman's agreement to those in North Palos opposing it, to the effect that after the central school filled up, the next school would be built in Palos Hills. This unwritten pledge was not to be honored without a bitter struggle much later on between the people of the District living north of the Sag Channel and those living south of that waterway!

The Fire Protection District

In 1954, a petition was circulated to form a Fire Protection District bounded by 95th St. on the North, the Sag Channel on the South, Harlem Avenue and Southwest Highway to 76th Ave. on the east, and Kean Avenue on the west. A referendum was held for this purpose and to authorize the building of a new fire house at 106th and Roberts, and was passed by a comfortable margin. Fred Lang was the Fire Chief at the time, having succeeded Charles Morgan, the first Fire Chief, in 1949. Construction went forward on the new fire station, and it opened on April 3, 1955. Chief

Lang resigned shortly thereafter to be succeeded by Hal Carlson, who had long been active in the Department.

The Road Annexations

The year 1956 brought an event that was to play a major role in the birth of the city of Palos Hills with the coming of the jet age to the Chicago area. When the first jet-engined commercial airliners started to replace the old gasoline-engined DC-6's, DC-7's and constellations, Chicago's Midway airport, then the world's busiest airport, was unable to safely accommodate them because the runways were too short. There was no room to expand Midway, so the Democrat administration of Chicago looked around for a suitable site on which to build a jet airport. The Douglas Aircraft Company's big airfield in unincorporated territory bordering the village of DesPlaines was judged to be just the spot and Douglas was eager to sell it. Unfortunately for Chicago, the property was separated from that city by almost four miles of land that was not part of Chicago and there wasn't time for Chicago to sell all the property owners in between on the merits of annexing to Chicago, so an end-run was figured out that only worked because the Democratic politician had complete control of the County government and the State legislature. The stratagem was to torture the meaning of the State Law by annexing the roadway of Bryn Mawr Ave. (now the Kennedy expressway) from Pacific Avenue (8000 W.) to the west side of what is now O'Hare field, and using this as the basis for the contiguity of the huge area owned by Douglas. Thus a strip of Chicago four miles long and 100 feet wide was extended westward and became the stem by which O'Hare airport was attached to the city of Chicago. It is interesting to note that the area purchased by Chicago included part of a small airport at the west edge of the tract that was known as "Orchard Field." The Federal Airport Authority considered the new O'Hare airport as an extension of this engulfed airport and thus assigned its identity code of ORD to O'Hare, which accounts for the ORD you see on your baggage checks, flight schedules, etc.

The Federal government was happy to have Chicago open the new jet-port, as was also the State of Illinois, the County of Cook and the small towns surrounding O'Hare, so nobody was disposed to rock the boat about the trifling matter of the questionable way that Chicago held sovereignty over the field. Unfortunately, ambitious minds at the helms of one-horse villages got an inspiration as to how they could

History of Palos Hills - 1945 to Present

enlarge their domains by emulating Chicago's "slight-of-hand" expansion, and went into action. North Palos was one of the first unincorporated areas to fall victim to such empire-minded villages, although the residents of that sparsely-populated community were blissfully unaware of the chicanery afoot!

The Neighbors Get Into The Act

Whether the idea originated with the village presidents of Hickory Hills, Worth, Bridgeview and Chicago Ridge, or whether land developers put them up to it, it is hard to say. At any rate, it all started soon after Chicago had annexed O'Hare field when Bridgeview annexed the B.&O. Chicago Terminal Railroad right-of-way from 79th St. south to where it crossed Harlem Ave. at 96th Street. This was done to permit Bridgeview to annex what had become known as the "Hotpoint Property" that stretched along the west side of Harlem from 95th to 103rd St. and then along 76th Ave. back to 95th St. The name derived from the fact that shortly after the war, the tract in question had been purchased by the Edison General Electric Appliances Corporation as the site for the large factory they planned to build for the manufacture of electrical appliances to meet the expected pent-up postwar demand. To their surprise, their plans met with the intense opposition of the people living around the property, and when they attempted to annex this property to Oak Lawn by getting property owners and residents living along 95th St. from Harlem to Southwest Highway to sign a petition of annexation, they ran into one tough campaigner named Fred Schumacher.

The First Battle

Schumacher was the owner of a flying service at Harlem Airport, which he was leasing from the owners. Harlem Airport extended from Harlem to Oak Park Ave. and from 87th to 91st St., but Schumacher lived in what was then the nicest home in North Palos, and feared that the coming of the kind of factory that was planned by Hotpoint would be the ruination of what he knew then to be the finest unexploited residential property in the southwest metropolitan area. "Shoes," as he was called, launched a counter-attack against the Hotpoint annexation to Oak Lawn, organizing opposition to it, talking

people into withdrawing their petition signatures, and bringing suit against Oak Lawn when that village attempted to act on the petition. In the end, Schumacher won out and Hotpoint dropped its efforts to join Oak Lawn, finally selling the property to an industrial real estate developer sometime between 1950 and 1955. That developer was the one who sought annexation to Bridgeview because the zoning and building codes of Bridgeview were much more lenient than were the County codes covering such activities. By using the railroad right-of-way as the connecting link to Bridgeview in such an annexation, the profit potential of the land to its owners was immensely increased, while the village of Bridgeview stood to greatly improve its municipal revenues through permit fees, license fees, and, most of all, by a huge increase in the total assessed-valuation village tax base.

The Empire Builders

This annexation received no publicity whatever, with the result that nobody living in North Palos at the time was even aware that it had happened. It was shortly followed by Hickory Hills' annexation of 95th St. from 86th Ave. to Kean, Roberts Road from 95th St. to 107th St., 88th Ave. from 95th St. to 107th St. and 103rd St. from 76th Ave. to Kean Ave. They also annexed the area from 103rd to 105th and from Roberts Rd. to 82nd Ave., which became known as the Lansdowne Subdivision, using the Roberts Rd. annexation as the connecting link to Hickory Hills. This enabled Lansdowne to build on 7,500 square ft. lots instead of the 20,000 square foot lots then required by Cook County. Again, most of the residents of North Palos didn't know about the annexation and the few who did, didn't care.

The same week, the village of Worth enacted a really sweeping road annexation ordinance. They annexed 111th St. from 76th Ave. out to LaGrange Rd., Southwest Highway from 76th Ave. to Rt. 83, Harlem from Stony Creek north to 103rd St., Roberts from 107th to 111th, 103rd from Harlem to 76th, 88th Ave. from 107th to 111th, Kean from 107th to Rt. 83, 107th from Roberts to LaGrange Rd., and Rte. 83 from Southwest Highway to LaGrange Rd. They also annexed the area known as the Peak Subdivision to Worth by means of the 111th St. road annexation.

In this instance, too, the people of the North Palos area were unaware of what happened. At the time of the Worth Annexations the village of Chicago Ridge was about to annex a tract on the west side of Harlem stretching from 105th St. to Stony Creek and from Harlem to 76th Ave. which was to be used as a

History of Palos Hills - 1945 to Present

garbage dump, but fortunately, the Worth annexation of Harlem Ave. cut across their planned annexation, destroying its contiguity to Chicago Ridge.

The Speed Trap

Then, in November of 1956, Hickory Hills got a bright idea that was to rouse the people of North Palos almost beyond belief. They passed an ordinance setting the speed limit on their recent road annexations at 35 miles per hour instead of the State speed limit of 65 mph that obtained at the time. No publicity was given to this ordinance nor were any speed limit signs posted, but the Hickory Hills Police Department went into action at once, staking out their squad cars on the newly-annexed roads and nailing violators of their new secret speed limit right and left. Since the roads involved were virtually country roads with few dwellings along them, nearly everybody went faster than 35. Also, since they were secondary roads, they were used mostly by residents of the North Palos area, and as a result, the majority of the people who were ticketed and fined were from near-by homes. The fines usually ran from 15 to 25 dollars (a lot of money for 1956!), and as soon as word spread through the community about what Hickory Hills was doing, the anger and resentment started rising. Groups of citizens in various parts of the North Palos area formed to consider what action could be taken to end the outrage. First, a public meeting was called at the North Palos Firehouse on September 28, 1957, to hear from Hickory Hills Village President Robert Montessor what they were going to do about the situation. Montessor explained why Hickory Hills had annexed only the roads but not the adjoining land they encompassed, but he was subjected to so many barbed questions and accusations that he finally lost his temper and told the crowd present that they could go blazes, that Hickory Hills would do what it pleased on the roads of the area. This sparked a near riot, in which cries of "lynch the b...d" were heard as the crowd surged forward to lay hands on him, but cooler heads intervened and Montessor beat a hasty retreat through the rear door to a waiting Hickory Hills Police Car.

The PHCA is Born

A Republican Precinct Captain named Harlan Kane, who lived in the vicinity of 99th and Roberts Rd., then called a big public protest meeting at the Firehouse again to plan action against these outrageous annexations. The meeting was held on October 11th and the place was packed to overflowing, with more than 300 people present. Kane brought an attorney to advise those present on the alternatives available to them, and it soon became apparent that the only way they had a chance to fight was to formally organize into a Civic Association. Kane made a motion to this effect, seconded by Grady Watley of 102nd and 88th Ave., and it passed unanimously by voice vote. The lawyer then recommended that officers be elected, starting with the President, and it was so moved and passed. At this juncture, Earl Potter of 88th Ave. and 102nd St. spoke against nominating anybody identified as a member of a national political organization, pointing out that by so doing, it would alienate the support of members of the opposing party and thus reduce the effectiveness of the organization. Ted Griffith of 99th and Gladys Lane supported this observation and nominated Potter for the Presidency. Someone else nominated Kane, but Kane declined, saying that "he was too political," with the result that Potter was elected President and the meeting was turned over to him. Election of the remaining officers followed, with Louis Shaver of 99th and Roberts becoming the Vice-President, Joyce Burns of 96th and 89th Ave. won as Secretary, Dominic Perkowski of 87th Ave. and 103rd St., was chosen as Treasurer, Jerry Cerny of 104th and Roberts, elected as Trustee of the Southeast quadrant, Marvin Heineman of 89th Ave. and 103rd as Southwest Quadrant Trustee, Jerry Doody of 79th Ave. and 101st St. won as Northeast Quadrant Trustee, Maxwell Dunlap of 102nd and Eleanor became the Trustee for the Northwest Quadrant, and Ted Griffith was elected to be Trustee at Large. The organization was officially voted to be named the North Palos Community Council, a name that was to become well known in the months that followed.

A few nights later, the Board of the new organization got together to draw up its by-laws and map a strategy to free its roads from the grip of the adjacent villages. The Board applied for a charter as a not-for-profit community corporation, prepared the by-laws for presentation at the next meeting and then got down to the business for which the N.P.C.C had been created.

History of Palos Hills - 1945 to Present

The Battle Against the Road Annexations

At the Public meeting, Kane's attorney had advised that the only way to attack the road annexations was through the State's Attorney, so Potter called the latter gentleman, Benjamin Adamowski, and was advised that he would take the necessary action provided that the PHCA filed a petition asking him to bring a "quo warranto" proceeding against one of the offending villages. There was one condition, however - the civic group would have to agree to engage an attorney of their own to do all of the legal work for the States Attorney! He supplied them the names of several municipal lawyers whom he judged to be properly qualified for the job, but it was up to the PHCA to select the right one and figure out how to pay him. The one that appeared to have the most impressive credentials was Louis Ancel, and when the Board interviewed him, they discovered that he was eager to take on the job. Ancel told them that he had long wanted to test the Chicago annexation because it was, in his opinion, "blatantly illegal", but that he had been unable to get a "handhold" with which to bring it to litigation himself. When informed that the PHCA had less than \$200 (the amount that had been collected in contributions at the founding meeting) in its treasury with which to start the fight, Ancel was very understanding. He agreed to charge very minimum fees for his work and to give the fledgling civic association ample time to raise the money in whatever way it could. The Board, in return, gave him their pledge that they would not rest in their fund-raising efforts until they had paid him in full, and Ancel went into action. The first thing that had to be decided with the States Attorney was which village should be named in the lawsuit to force rescission of the road annexations. The Bridgeview annexation, since it was based on a railroad right-of-way, which was property, was thought by Ancel to be the toughest of the three. Since Hickory Hills was the village that was actually harrasing the residents of North Palos, while Worth was laying low, it was decided that Hickory Hills should be the target of choice. In the meantime, immediate attention had to be given to the problem of somehow getting together the money that would be needed for the legal bills that were sure to come.

Funds for the Fight

A horse show was held at the Green Acres Farm, soon followed by a dance at the fire-house, then a

rummage sale, then a house-to-house solicitation, then an auction sale, and finally Potter came up with what proved to be the best of all - a steam railroad excursion on the Burlington Railroad. The last steam locomotive in service in the Chicago area had quit running in 1955, so they were already a memory and people were beginning to think of the steamers with nostalgia. The Burlington had saved two of them; one a freight engine and the other a large high-speed, dual-service locomotive. They were talked into bringing the latter out to pull a special passenger train to the Mendota fair on a charter by the PHCA, and it caught on big. The PHCA cleared over \$1,000 on it, and in the following years raised most of the money that paid for the birth of Palos Hills by subsequent steam excursions to Earlville, Galena, Ottawa, South Bend and other places. In the spring of 1958, the PHCA chartered 7 tour boats and put on a tour of the inland waterway from the Wrigley Building, down the Chicago River and the Sanitary and Ship Canal to Sag Junction then up the Sag Channel through North Palos to the Calumet river, through the Calumet and Calumet Harbor and finally up the Lake Michigan shoreline back to the Wrigley Building, a trip that was to be repeated the following two years. The PHCA, in those days of united effort by the citizens of North Palos against a common enemy, could always count on at least 100 volunteers to stage the various events that they dreamed up, a fact that seems incredible in today's world.

A Court Victory

In the meantime, Lou Ancel did his work well. He prepared such a good case for the States Attorney that in April, 1958, the Circuit Court found against Hickory Hills and ordered them to rescind all of their road annexations within 30 days, declaring that just annexing roads without also annexing the lands appertaining to them was clearly a violation of the Illinois State Statutes! Jubilation reigned in North Palos and in the offices of Lou Ancel and Associates, gloom in Hickory Hills, disappointment in Worth and near panic in the Chicago City Hall! Chicago launched a crash effort to sign up enough property owners to form a corridor of private land between O'Hare airport and the nearest boundary of Chicago, on a petition of annexation to Chicago, because the court ruling made Chicago's claim to O'Hare tenuous at best, and non-existent if any of the villages bordering O'Hare were to challenge Chicago's sovereignty over the airfield.

History of Palos Hills - 1945 to Present

A New Threat Rises

The celebrations in North Palos did not last long, however. Four days after the court order, Potter received a disturbing phone call from Ernie Hedlund, the Village President of Worth. Hedlund told Potter that Worth would now have to rescind their annexation of Harlem Avenue from Stony Creek to 103rd St. and that the moment they did, Chicago Ridge had an ordinance of annexation prepared to take over the De Boer dump site on the west side of Harlem, which the Ridge had already zoned for use as a garbage dump. He suggested to Potter that this could be prevented if the PHCA would circulate a petition to annex the area from Stony Creek to 103rd and from Harlem to 76th Ave., to the village of Worth. Potter was staggered by this proposal and asked Hedlund how the people of North Palos would be better off becoming a small part of Worth. Hedlund replied "Oh, we have great plans for the North Palos area - drop by my house and I'll show you what we propose to do with it!". Potter accepted his invitation and found indeed that Worth had plans for their "new frontiers". Hedlund showed him a big map of Worth and the area around it, on which the new proposed boundaries for Worth were marked out in colored pencil. In blue, the boundaries were Harlem to 103rd, 103rd to Roberts, Roberts to 111th, 111th to LaGrange Road, LaGrange Road to the center line of the Sag Channel, and the Sag Channel back to Harlem Ave. This was the area slated for immediate annexation. The red boundaries were from Roberts Rd. on 103rd St. to Kean Ave., south on Kean to 107th, west on 107th to LaGrange Rd., and south on LaGrange Rd. to 111th St. This was to be the final boundary, to be annexed over several years. It was the land use plan that was the most startling. Worth proposed to make the entire area belonging to the Metropolitan Sanitary District heavy industrial zoning along with all of the property north of the District from 76th Ave. west to 88th Ave. and south of 113th St., and from 88th Ave. to LaGrange Rd., south of 111th St. to be under the same zoning and Hedlund already had a large oil storage tank terminal interested. Between 76th Ave. and 88th Ave. from 113th St. to 111th St. would be a mixture of light industry and commercial. North of 111th St. the area from 76th Ave. to Eastwood Drive would be business to 110th Place, except that the business zoning would also follow along Southwest Highway from Harlem Ave., on both sides of the road, to the northern boundary of the Sanitary District property. Roberts Rd. was to be business on both sides from 111th St. to 103rd St., while the north side of 111th St. from Roberts to LaGrange Rd. was also to be business. All of the rest of the area was to be residential of various

kinds, ranging from single family dwellings to multi-unit apartment buildings. Most of the single family dwelling areas were to have 50 foot or 75 foot frontage lots, with a few areas to have larger if the people in those areas wanted them.

Hedlund was as proud of this plan as could be, claiming that it would bring great prosperity to what, even in that day, was considered a blighted area. He was astounded when Potter failed to echo his enthusiasm, telling Hedlund that he could not agree to helping Worth until he put the matter before the people of North Palos in a public meeting. He asked Hedlund if he would address such a meeting and inform the people who attended as to what he proposed, and Hedlund agreed.

A New War Starts

Potter immediately called a meeting of the NPCC Board and the attorney to consider what the alternatives were. Jack Siegal, who was Lou Ancel's right-hand-man, was the attorney that Ancel sent, and he told the board that the only way to prevent the establishment of the De Boer dump and to avoid the gradual piece-meal nibbling away of North Palos by neighboring villages was to form their own city or village. He then explained the difference between the two - a city must be divided up in to Wards, with each Ward having two Aldermen and the Aldermen constituting the City Council, whereas in a village, a group of Village Trustees, elected at large throughout the village, forming the Village Board. He also advised that to incorporate a village, it required the approval of any city or village that would be within one mile of the projected border of the new village, an approval that would be hard to get in this case. The Board decided to take the matter before a public meeting and invited Hedlund to attend that meeting and speak to the people.

The meeting was held on a Friday night in the spring of 1958 at the Firehouse and nearly 400 people attended, representing every part of the North Palos area. After hearing the pro for incorporating their own city from Jack Siegal and Potter, and the con against it from Ernie Hedlund, the vote was taken. 296 voted to incorporate, 42 voted against it, and the other 50 or so abstained. Immediately after the vote, the three-man delegation from the Eastwood-Westwood subdivision, who had voted against incorporation, walked out, followed closely by Hedlund. The next day, shortly before noon, Potter received a visit from Edward Hail and James Wilson, two of the three Eastwood-Westwood people who had voted against incorporation the night before. They told Potter that they had come from a meeting in their area that had just broken up a

History of Palos Hills - 1945 to Present

half an hour before that, at which Ernie Hedlund had presented a petition for annexation which he said would destroy the PHCA plan for incorporation before it ever got off the ground, causing Wilson and Hall to have major second thoughts on the matter of forming an independent city.

Potter called the Attorney, Jack Siegal, immediately and told him what Hedlund was up to, asking Siegal what could be done about it. Siegal said the only hope the PHCA had of preventing Worth from breaking the incorporation was for the PHCA to draw up a petition to the County Court for incorporating a city at once, get the 400 plus signatures on it required by State Law, and have it ready to file at the County Clerk's office by 9:00 AM Monday morning when it opened. He gave Potter some instructions over the phone on how to go about preparing such a petition, and Potter sat right down and went to work on it. Within two hours, he had the petitions prepared, a map drawn and an emergency Board meeting in session to approve his handiwork. He had written the legal description of the city-to-be and had picked the name "Palos Hills" from a map, based on the fact that an old subdivision in what is now Ward 3 was so named, and also because of the proximity of the huge Palos Hills Forest Preserve just to the west of the projected city. He read it back to the attorney, then read it to the board, who unanimously approved it. He had prepared enough carbon copies of the petition to accommodate the requisite number of signatures, so he gave each board member the appropriate number of petitions for the area they represented and everybody left to begin the knocking on doors to get the signatures. They worked until ten o'clock that night (Saturday) getting signatures and resumed their efforts the following morning. By four o'clock, all petitions were signed and the petitions back in Potter's hands. One of the volunteers that had helped in the battle against the road annexations was a young reporter for the Chicago Daily News by the name of Carlton Ihde. He lived on 102nd Street near 89th Ave. with his wife Peggy and their four small children. He agreed to go early to work the next morning so as to be waiting at the County Clerk's office when it opened at 9:00 AM, and in fact did just that. He was the first in line, there being no one with Worth's petitions around. The clerk stalled him for about ten minutes before she accepted them and put the time stamp on them, but he left in high spirits, thinking that Worth had been outmaneuvered. The joy of Ihde and the PHCA Board was shortlived when Potter received a phone call from Jack Siegal telling him that he had checked with the County Building and found that Worth's annexation petition had been filed before the PHCA petition, the time stamp on the Worth petition being 9:00 AM while the PHCA petition was stamped 9:10 AM! It was never ascertained how Worth had pulled this coup, but it was well known that Hedlund had a lot of political connections in the County government, and that he had heard about what the PHCA was doing in

time to get the annexation petitions to some crony who worked in the County Building so that they could be waiting at the counter before the County Clerk's office opened its doors to the public.

Another Battle Joined

This turn of events put the PHCA group in a blue funk because their petition was set aside until the matter of the Worth petition was decided by the County Court. The Board of the PHCA decided that they must try to break the Worth petition before it came up for hearing by getting some of the people who had signed it to remove their names from the Worth document. It turned out that the annexation petition was a legal monstrosity - it was like a grapevine, depending for its contiguity to Worth on the lots owned by the Schaafsma family on Southwest Highway to reach Eastwood Drive, then a few families on the west side of Eastwood to extend contact to the Edison high-line right-of-way. This right-of-way then became the stem on which the parcels of all other signatories hung, taking the annexation down to 103rd Street on the north and to the south edge of the Peak subdivision on the south. They had signatures for all property in the annexation except for the Commonwealth Edison property, but this meant that they had to have an aggregate of land area larger than the area of the Edison portion duly signed for by legal owners of such property to make the annexation binding. The PHCA went over a copy of the Worth petitions and found that they did have the three conditions required by State law met; i.e., signatures representing more than 50% of the land owners, more than 50% of the land area, and more than 50% of the "electors" that were resident on the land described in the petition. In the first two categories, they were comfortably over the 50% mark, but in the third, they were only one signature over. The PHCA volunteers called on every signatory of the petition, but only two were willing to withdraw their names. This would have been enough, since both were residents and registered voters, but when the PHCA turned in their affidavits to Judge Otto Kerner, who was hearing the case, the husband of the couple, who was a guard at Oak Forest, was warned that he would be fired if he didn't denounce the affidavits. Since he was virtually unemployable elsewhere, he and his wife reneged on their withdrawal and their names remained on the petition. At this point, the battle became a real cliff-hanger. The PHCA checked every name looking for some way to disqualify it and then discovered that a man living on a run-down farm at 104th and 76th Ave., was not a registered voter! They petitioned to have his name thrown off the petition and Judge

History of Palos Hills - 1945 to Present

Kerner said he would take it under advisement. A week later he reached his decision - the name was withdrawn and he pronounced the petition rejected! This now left the way open for action to be taken on the petition to incorporate the City of Palos Hills.

The Baby Gestates

But now opposition to incorporate developed within the North Palos area itself. It came mainly from three sources; one, the people who just didn't think incorporation was necessary because they did not believe that any village could annex them if they didn't want to be annexed, two, those in Peak subdivision and along Southwest Highway who would rather be part of Worth than part of the "rural slum" that they thought their new city would be, and third, businessmen like Ben Warren of the Warren Turf Nursery, who thought incorporation would raise their costs to the point where it would put them out of business. Warren bankrolled the opposition effort, but they were unable to effectively oppose the incorporation in court, when Judge Kerner accepted the petition and set October 25, 1958, as the date for the referendum on the matter of incorporating the city of Palos Hills. The opponents conducted a bitter campaign to defeat the question in the referendum, and as election day approached, the outcome began to look more doubtful, until on October 25th, North Palos was well and truly divided as it went to the polls.

The Election, and a City is Born

People poured out to vote. There were only 2,400 registered voters in the area to be incorporated, yet the final results were 1060 votes for and 1007 against - the city carried by just 53 votes out of 2,067 cast! Palos Hills now existed as a city, but it had no government. The PHCA functioned as a volunteer government of sorts until an election could be held to fill out all city elected offices. This election was set for December 6, 1958, and another hot campaign was under way. The PHCA put up its own slate of candidates - Carlton Ihde for Mayor, Dorothy Lohrens for City Clerk, Merrill Bain for Treasurer, LeRoy Johnson for Police Magistrate, Ed Hail and Jim Wilson for First Ward Aldermen, Elmer Claussen and Ted Griffith for Second Ward Aldermen, and Dick Perkowski and Joe Straka for Third Ward Alderman. The

entire slate was victorious, although they faced determined opposition, and set about trying to create a functioning government on zero revenues. They had campaigned on a "volunteer government dedicated to absolutely minimal services" since they knew that the city would have no income for at least a year and a quarter. Not only were they able to keep their word (with the help of the PHCA) but they did an extraordinary job of starting and running a government staffed entirely with volunteers. The going wage for Mayor, Magistrate, Treasurer, Police Chief, Policemen, road workers, building inspectors and clerks was \$1. per year. Only the City Clerk got a higher salary because the state Statutes required it - she got \$50 a month when the money could be raised to pay her. There were no sewers, no water, only dirt or gravel side streets, no garbage collection and only the volunteer police department. Someone contributed a 1949 Ford to the Police Dept., which became Palos Hills' first squad car. Delbert Pearce of 101st St. west of 88th Ave. became the first Police Chief, and his wife, Julia, became the first Police dispatcher, along with Gwen Potter, wife of Earl Potter. There was no Police radio - Police calls would come by phone to both the Pearce and Potter homes, then one of the ladies would call the homes of the Policemen who were on that shift and they would go take care of the problem. Pearce built this volunteer unit into a remarkably capable Police Force, yet spent less that first year in total than is spent on the present Police Force in two days.

The cost of the road annexation law suit and the legal work for defeating the Worth Annexation attempt ran into the thousands of dollars, but the PHCA raised every cent of it through their zealous fund-raising activities, and in 1959, presented the city with a well-used road grader that served the city well for many years. At first, it was not possible to find a volunteer to operate it so Potter took driving lessons for it and then proceeded to grade the city streets every evening and week-ends until a professional grader operator volunteered and took over the job. There was a spirit alive among those people that was very akin to that of the American Pioneers of the 18th century, which is virtually extinct today! Even though each had his or her hands full with their own problems, they found time to help keep the city growing into what it was ultimately to become.

History of Palos Hills - 1945 to Present

War Again!

Unfortunately, their efforts had hardly begun when a new threat to Palos Hills came roaring down on them. The village of Worth filed a lawsuit with the County Court to have the incorporation of Palos Hills nullified on the grounds that their incorporation petition was defective. This suit dragged on for two months in 1959 and looked like the end for the infant city, but in the end they won and the city has not been challenged as a legally-constituted body since. The legal fees, however came to several thousand dollars, but again the NPCC came to the rescue and the bills were paid.

The First Defeat

Another City Council election had to be held in April, 1959, to stagger the terms of the Aldermen. One Alderman from each Ward had his term end on that date and if he wanted to continue in office, had to stand for re-election. Hail from the First Ward, Claussen from the Second Ward, and Straka from the third Ward drew the short straws and stood for re-election. The opposition groups had cooled off and it appeared that there would be no opponent in the Second Ward and only unknowns as opposing candidates in the First and Third Wards. Consequently, Claussen didn't mount a campaign, since his was the only name on the ballot in the Second Ward. By noon on election day, he discovered that he had made a fatal error. Stephen Johandes, an old-time GOP precinct captain from 106th and 81st Ave., had sized up the situation and recognized an opportunity to pull a real coup. He quietly organized a write-in campaign for himself and on election day, put his plan to the test. His cars picked up voters who had been carefully instructed on how to cast a write-in ballot, and when the polls closed at 6:00 PM, Johandes was the new Alderman of the Second Ward by 14 votes! Hail and Straka won re-election without difficulty.

In the interval between the city's first election and its second, the Aldermen were busy setting up the city ordinances to cover the important problem of building and zoning regulations. Aldermen Hail and Straka hammered out the building code using the Cook County Building Code as a model for residential construction, and the Building Officials Conference of America (BOCA) as the basis for the code covering

commercial and industrial structures. The Building ordinance was passed on February 2, 1959. On January 15, 1959, the first issue of the Palos Citizen was published, the result of an agreement between Earl Potter and Walter Lysen, the Publisher of the Southwest Messenger Press in Midlothian. Lysen's brother, Elmer, who was editor of the Worth Citizen, had championed the Palos Hills Civic Association in their fight against the road annexations and in their subsequent battles with Worth.

The City Grows

By the time the next election rolled around on April 18, 1961, it had become necessary under State Law for the City to re-district into four wards from the original three. The original boundaries of the city were from 95th & Kean east to 88th Ave., south on 88th to 96th St., east on 96th St. to 86th Ave., south on 86th Ave. to 103rd St., east on 103rd St. to 84th Ave., north on 84th Ave. to 99th St., east on 99th St. to 82nd Ave., north on 82nd Ave. to 97th St., east on 97th St. to Roberts Rd., south on Roberts to 99th St., east on 99th St. to 78th Ave., south on 78th Ave. to 103rd St., east on 103rd to Harlem Ave., south on Harlem to Stony Creek, Stony Creek west to 78th Ave., 78th south to 109th St., 109th east to 76th Ave., 76th south to 112th St., 112th west to Southwest Highway, Southwest south to the Calumet Sag Channel, the Sag west to Kean Ave., Kean north to 111th St., east on 111th to 88th Ave., north on 88th Ave. to 105th St., west on 105th to 90th Ave., north on 90th to 103rd Place, west on 103rd Place to Kean, and north on Kean to 95th St. The original Ward boundaries were: everything east of 81st Ave. was Ward One; the area between 81st Ave. on the east, 86th Ave. on the west and south of 107th St. was Ward Two; and all of the area north of 107th St. and west of 86th Ave. was Ward Three. Shortly after the 1959 election, Marvin Heineman, who was one of the members of the Incorporation Committee, living on the 10 acre tract west of 90th Ave and south of 103rd, disconnected from the new city, but many new homes had been built in the part of the city east of 84th Ave. and north of 103rd St., increasing the population to more than 4,000 and forcing the re-districting. Standing for re-election under the Civic Party label was Carlton Ihde, the Mayor, but Merrill Bain was not chosen to run again, and Dorothy Lohrens decided not to run either. The Civic Party chose Charles Daciolas of 110th and Westwood Drive as their candidate for Police Magistrate in place of Leroy Johnson, Grady Watley of 102nd and 88th Ave. to run in place of Joe Straka for Alderman of the Third Ward, and Frank Czarny to

History of Palos Hills - 1945 to Present



The first Palos Hills City Hall was actually the living room of the first City Clerk, Dorothy Lohrens, who lived at 7345 W. 103rd St.

History of Palos Hills - 1945 to Present

run for the seat in the Second Ward left vacant by the creation of the Fourth Ward which included the area where Alderman Griffith lived. The Civic Party chose Leabert Powell and James Wilkinson to run for Aldermen of the new Fourth Ward, and Ted Griffith was one of the candidates who ran against them. The Civic Party selected Raymond Michaels to run against Bain for Treasurer and Gert Grund to run for City Clerk. Jim Wilson decided to drop out of city politics and Al Saenger of the Garden Homes subdivision was the Civic party Candidate for First Ward Alderman.

The Truck Terminal Fight

There was good reason that Bain, Johnson, Griffith and Straka were not chosen as candidates, the cause being one of the worst defeats that the city of Palos Hills has suffered to date! Shortly after the 1959 city election in April, the land developer that owned the property that had been known as "the Hotpoint Property" on the northwest corner of 103rd and Harlem announced the creation of Terminal City, the world's biggest truck terminal, on his Hotpoint holdings. The Board of the NPCC and the City Council both carefully examined the developer's plans in detail and decided that the contemplated huge truck terminal would be a disaster for Palos Hills. Unfortunately, not all of the members of the NPCC agreed, so a big public meeting was called on the subject to see how the people felt about it. After a spirited debate on the matter, a vote was taken and the membership present voted 231 to 42 to do everything possible to stop the truck terminal. Leroy Johnson strongly championed the terminal, claiming that it would bring prosperity and jobs to Palos Hills. Bain, Griffith and Straka agreed with him, but the NPCC immediately took action against the proposed development. Their strategy was based on the fact that the property in question was illegally annexed to Bridgeview, its only connection with that village being by two miles of 66 ft. wide railroad annexation, a "corridor annexation" very similar to the one outlawed by the courts less than a year earlier. Potter consulted with Ben Adamowski, the Cook County States Attorney who had successfully prosecuted Hickory Hills to force the dissolution of their road annexations, and Adamowski agreed to proceed against Bridgeview on the same basis as he had against Hickory Hills; i.e., with the NPCC paying their own attorney to do all the legal work for Adamowski. The NPCC launched fund raising activities, soon raising enough money to pay off the last of the legal bills for the previous court fights plus about \$1000 as a start on the new battle to

force Bridgeview to disconnect the terminal property. Mayor Ihde had talks with Al Petkiewicz, Village President of Hickory Hills to enlist his aide in the struggle. Petkiewicz agreed but little ever came of it.

Palace Revolution

In the meantime, Johnson, Straka and Griffith were laying secret plans for how to derail the whole effort. The regular annual election of NPCC officers and Board members was set for early September and it was at this meeting that they struck. The customary method of notifying all citizens of Palos Hills of an NPCC membership meeting was to mimeograph notices of the meeting, giving its purpose and agenda, then delivering them by car to every home in the city by attaching them to the mail boxes. This was done on a Sunday afternoon preceding the election meeting, but this time, the Johnson group followed along behind the people delivering the notices, at a discrete distance and plucked the notices off of the boxes before most residents even knew that they were there. Potter and the NPCC Board were so preoccupied with the fight against Bridgeview that they paid little attention to the forthcoming election meeting and were completely unaware of the dirty trick pulled by their opponents, so that when the meeting was called to order, it was the Friday night massacre! The rules of the NPCC were very democratic - there were no dues and any resident of Palos Hills was automatically a voting member if he showed up at a meeting. Potter finally tumbled to the scam when he opened the meeting and saw that the majority of faces looking up at him were people that he had never before seen at an NPCC meeting. When Johnson got up and made a motion that the regular rules be set aside and his motion passed by a vote of 60 to 39, it was obvious that disaster had struck. In a trice, the entire board was voted out, and Johnson became the new President. The new board then demanded that the old board immediately turn over the books and the treasury to them, but since the by-laws had stipulated that the new board would be sworn in at the next meeting following the election, the old board refused to yield to the new board's demands and another meeting was scheduled for two weeks later.

History of Palos Hills - 1945 to Present

Death of the NPCC

The second meeting was a tempestuous affair—this time the old board turned the tables on the new board, with over 200 people attending, most of them anti-truck terminal. The same weapon that the Johnson forces had used in their coup was now turned against them. They refused to recognize anybody from the membership that they did not know to be members of their own group, but they were shouted down and soon a motion had been made and passed to take all the money in the PHCA treasury and donate it to the road fund of the city. The new board walked out in protest with the exception of Gert Grund, the only old Board member who had not been ousted. She took over as chairman and a motion was made declaring that the board members who walked out had abdicated their offices so they were now vacant. The old board members were nominated and elected to fill the vacancies thus created, and no sooner was the vote taken than a member moved from the floor that the North Palos Community Council be declared dissolved. The motion was overwhelmingly passed and the NPCC was no more. The Johnson camp was livid with anger and threatened to sue, but they gave it up when they saw that it was all perfectly legal under the loose by-laws of the organization. They had won, though, all the same, for by diverting the funds and causing the death of the NPCC, they had struck an all-but-fatal blow to the anti-Bridgeview struggle.

The PHCA is Born

The old NPCC board immediately formed a new civic organization which they named the Palos Hills Civic Association, but it was virtually fundless so they had to turn once again to the task of raising more money. At this point, they were approached by the Southfield Home Owners' Association, a civic group from Southfield, which had also been illegally annexed by Bridgeview, and they were fighting to break that annexation and win their independence as a city. They offered to pay half of the legal fees if the PHCA would get the State Attorney to amend his suit to include the Southfield development as part of the area to be disconnected. This Adamowski did, but unfortunately, when Judge McKinley finally ruled on Adamowski's suit, he ruled in favor of Bridgeview on

the grounds that, while the annexation had been illegal, Bridgeview had put so much money into the sewer and water system of Southfield that the village residents would suffer irreparable harm if the annexation were dissolved. Adamowski then appealed McKinley's decision to the Illinois Supreme Court, but before they could hear it, Adamowski was defeated in November by the Chicago Democratic candidate, Dan Ward, and the Supreme Court quietly buried the appeal, never ruling on it one way or another. It was the opinion of the PHCA attorney that if the suit had been confined to the Hotpoint property only, McKinley would have probably decided against Bridgeview and it might today have been part of Palos Hills. The first internecine fight between the people who had established the city was also the first great blow to its future, the result of the misguided belief on the part of the Johnson people that the city would benefit more from the truck terminal under Bridgeview than from any other use to which the property might be put under Palos Hills, so it is no wonder that the Civic Party did their best to defeat their former members.

A Great Tragedy

At any rate, the Civic Party lost an aldermanship to the pro-truck terminal group. Grady Watley lost to Gerald Fardy, in the Third Ward, a pro-Johnson man. They won all of the other offices, but a major tragedy soon struck them and the young city a few months after the election when Carlton Ihde learned that he had a brain tumor and needed an immediate operation if he was to survive. He went into surgery in the fall of 1961, but the surgeons found that it was not possible to remove all of the malignancy, so they used radiation therapy after the operation. They then discovered that he had a large primary tumor on his lung that was inoperable, so they used cobalt radiation on it too. He improved considerably and returned to work, but one evening in January, 1962, the 11th to be exact, he came home from work feeling tired and laid down on the couch to rest. He fell asleep and when his wife, Peggy, went to wake him to go to bed he had passed away. Thus Palos Hills had its second official funeral—Louis Shaver, the first Building Commissioner, had died of lung cancer the year before. Later in 1962, Fardy left the city, and in a special election, Mike Harris was elected Third Ward Alderman to replace Fardy.

History of Palos Hills - 1945 to Present

The Green Hills Library is Conceived

Dominic Perkowski, The Third Ward Alderman, was named Acting Mayor by the City Council, and served in that position until the election of April, 1963. In the meantime, in addition to helping the new city get started, the Palos Hills Civic Association was not idle on other matters. Soon after the P.H.C.A. was formed, in 1960, its president, Earl Potter, recommended that the Board study the merits of forming a Public Library District that coincided with the city boundaries. The Board agreed, and Jerry Musson of 103rd near Roberts was endorsed to form a library incorporating committee. After the plans were well along and the petitions were being circulated, Musson was approached by a group from Hickory Hills that had also been considering the formation of a library, with the result that it was decided to start over again with a larger library district that would include all of Hickory Hills, with the name to be changed from the Palos Hills Library District to the Green Hills Library District to avoid possible resentment from residents of Hickory Hills going into the referendum. The incorporation election was finally held in December of 1962 and passed both in Palos Hills and Hickory Hills so the Green Hills Library District became a reality. A site was selected eventually at 86th and 103rd St. on which the library now stands, next to the Palos Hills City Hall.

How Stagg High School Came To Be

The PHCA had also joined the District 230 School Election Caucus in 1960, and soon became embroiled in a contest with many of the Caucus members from Palos Park. This came about when the 230 Board announced that enrollment had grown to where a complete new school had to be built, and they were recommending that it be built virtually next door to the existing Carl Sandburg School. They held public meetings to sell the idea, which the P.H.C.A. Caucus representatives attended. District 230 Superintendent Bill Fisher tried to convince the first meeting of the desirability of having a "high school campus" or "educational complex." The Board did not own the site next to Sandburg where they proposed to build the new school, planning instead to sell the old North Palos school property at 111th and Roberts Road to

raise the money with which to buy the projected new site. Potter questioned sharply the wisdom of such a move, since it would commit the District to a future of ever increasing mileage in order to bus the students to the central site, and since the population of the District north of the Sag Channel was then growing by leaps and bounds, it just did not make sense to not put the new school in that area. The reaction from some of the residents of Palos Park soon convinced the PHCA delegation that the real reason for the advocated site selection was not based on logic at all, but on prejudice! It was obvious to them that the people south of the canal still considered the area north of it as the next thing to 47th and Vincennes, a place where they did not want their children to go to school. The PHCA representatives at the next public meeting formally served notice of the PHCA's strong opposition to the campus idea and petitioned that the new school be built on the Palos Hills site. The 230 School Board postponed making a final choice until after the next school board election which by then was only a few months off. At the Caucus meeting, two candidates were chosen who supported the campus idea, so the PHCA representatives plus the delegates of most other north-of-the-canal organizations dropped out of the caucus and formed a rump caucus of their own, picking up two well qualified candidates from their area. One of these was Dr. J. M. Yarbrough of Palos Hills, who had been on several school boards, the other was Dr. R. A. Holt of Worth. Both filed to run in the school board election of 1962, but soon after the filing, the board announced that it had dropped the campus plan and would build the new school on its Palos Hills property. Dr. Holt withdrew his name from the ballot as soon as he was certain that the school would be built north of the canal, but Dr. Yarbrough ran and lost by a small margin. The new school was built and named the Amos Alonzo Stagg High School, opening for its first class in September, 1964, in Palos Hills, thanks to the all-out campaign spear-headed by the P.H.C.A.

The Founders Lose

The watershed in the direction Palos Hills would take in its development was the city election of April 16, 1963. The North Palos Community Council and its successor, the Palos Hills Civic Association, had from their beginnings unswervingly fought to keep the new city one of large lots, no apartments and minimal services, much on the order of its neighbor, Palos Park. Unfortunately, as more and more neighbor-

History of Palos Hills - 1945 to Present

hoods in Chicago fell victim to the social disease of racial integration followed by devolution to virtually total darkness, the pressures on Palos Hills for smaller lot sizes and large apartment buildings grew by leaps and bounds. Real estate developers left no stone unturned to convince the city fathers that it was very much to the advantage of their city to let down the bars, but until the 1963 election, they had little success in their efforts. By 1963, however, the schism between the conservative anti-truck terminal core of the NPCC and pro-truck terminal rebels had festered to the point where the latter group joined forces with the old die-hard anti-incorporation segment of the pre-1958 North Palos community and a new pro-higher-density faction in the city that had blossomed out of nowhere. This strange coalition of anti-PHCA forces was well financed and mounted an all-out campaign to win control of the city government. Their candidates were: John Jaeger, 42, a volunteer fireman who had lived in the area since 1947, for Mayor; Jacob Kats, 57, who had lived at 111th and Southwest Highway since 1933 and was ardently anti-incorporation, was their candidate for First Ward Alderman; Stephen Johandes, 62, the old GOP Precinct Captain and a resident of North Palos since 1941, their candidate for re-election as Second Ward Alderman; Leroy Johnson, 52, the chief truck terminal protagonist, who had lived in North Palos since 1955, candidate for Third Ward Alderman; and for their Fourth Ward Alderman they had Leroy Roloff, 37, an opponent of the PHCA who had become the Public Works Commissioner of the City and had been a North Palos resident since 1952.

The PHCA candidates were: For Mayor, Charles Daciolas, the Police Magistrate; First Ward Alderman, Al Saenger; Second Ward, John Pospisil; Third Ward, Grady Watley and Fourth Ward, Jim Wilkinson. When all of the ballots were counted, Jaeger was the new Mayor, Saenger had been re-elected as First Ward Alderman, Johandes re-elected in the Second Ward, Johnson won in the Third, and Wilkinson was re-elected in the Fourth. The City Council emerged with two anti-PHCA Aldermen, Johandes and Johnson, but still under the control of the PHCA group, however, with an anti-PHCA Mayor, things were different. Immediately after the election, a battle erupted over appointed officials. Jaeger sought to fire the Police Chief, Delbert Pearce, the City Attorney and the Building Commissioner. The Council refused to recognize the firings, and when Jaeger went ahead and appointed new officials, the Council refused to confirm them. For a while, Palos Hills had two of every kind of official that Jaeger had fired, but finally, after six months of stalemate, a compromise was reached whereby Pearce kept his job but the other Jaeger appointees were approved. Jaeger had

been running for the remaining two years of Ihde's term, but late in 1964, he became the subject of a spicy personal scandal that rocked the city. He refused to resign, and continued in office until the next election in April of 1965.

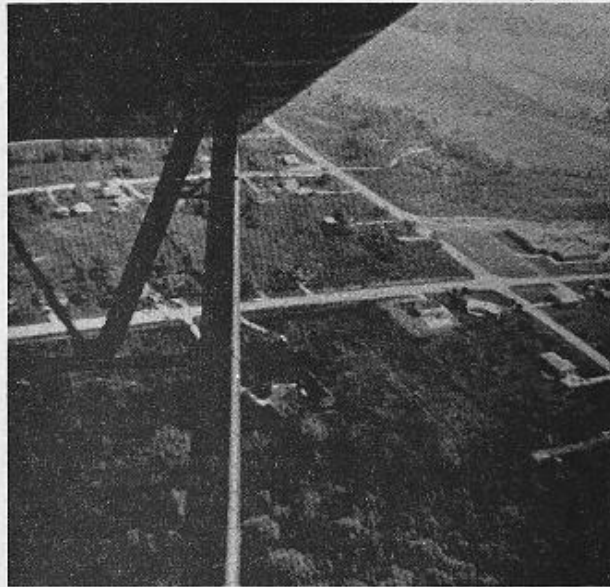
The Election of 65

Little happened in the two year interval between the 1963 election and the 1965 election except a growth in the population and a re-zoning of certain areas to permit "planned unit subdivisions" with 8,500 square foot lots. The election of 1965, however, was another donnybrook, with four candidates for Mayor, three for City Clerk, three for City Treasurer, and three for each of the four Aldermancies at issue. the PHCA group, now formed into a separate political party which they named the "CIVIC PARTY." Its candidate for Mayor was Charles Daciolas, who was opposed by Leroy Johnson, James Gates and John Jaeger. Lori Mason was the Civic Party candidate for City Clerk against Gert Grund and Neta Clesson, while Dorothy Lohrens carried the Civic Party banner for City Treasurer against Thomas C. Bona and Dolores McGuire. In the First Ward, George Walston, the Civic candidate ran against Ray Michaels and Milton Sopiarz; in the Second, Ignatius P. Mockaitis ran on the Civic spot against James M. Curtis and Lester B. Howell; in the Third Ward it was Grady N. Watley against John Von Bampus and Henry O. Fedrigon, and in the Fourth Ward, it was Rev. Thomas E. Reed against Leroy Roloff and John J. Curtin, Jr. The victors were Daciolas, Lori Mason, Tom Bona, George Walston, Pete Mockaitis, Grady Watley and Leroy Roloff. This once again returned control of the City government to the original founder's group, having only the City Treasurer, one Second Ward Alderman (Johandes), one Third Ward Alderman (Johnson) and one Fourth Ward Alderman (Roloff) from opposition groups.

The 1967 Election

The next two years were pretty harmonious, since Daciolas proved to be able to get along with his opposition comfortably, but when the 1967 Aldermanic election came along, the Civic candidates had opposition in every Ward. In the First Ward, their candidate

History of Palos Hills - 1945 to Present



An aerial glimpse of 88th Avenue (running horizontally across the photo) and 103rd Street, looking east, 1965. Oak Ridge School is on the right. Most of the vacant areas in this picture no longer exist.

History of Palos Hills - 1945 to Present

was the incumbent, Ed Hail, who was challenged by Raymond E. Michaels. In the Second Ward, two pro-terminal candidates, the incumbent, Steve Johandes, plus James Gates, ran against Civic candidate, Barbara Zakar. The incumbent Third Ward Alderman, Leroy Johnson, was challenged by Michael J. Wunder, the Civic Party candidate, while in the Fourth Ward, Alderman James Wilkinson, who had broken with the Civic Party, was challenged by the Civic Party's candidate, Nelson Minor, and by Edward S. Griffith. When the votes were counted, Hail had won re-election, Johandes was defeated by Zakar, who thus became the city's first woman Alderman; Johnson was beaten by Wunder in the Third Ward; while in the Fourth Ward, Wilkinson won re-election by a single vote over Minor—minor had been unable to vote because the night before election he had volunteered to help the election committee put up the polling booths in his Ward and while so doing, fell off the ladder and broke his arm, resulting in his hospitalization! The original Founding group emerged even stronger than they had been, having only two opposing Aldermen remaining.

The Walnut Hills Dilemma

It was shortly after this election that the city suffered another major blow. John Curtis, the owner of the Walnut Hills Golf Course, died suddenly, leaving his widow rich with land but short on money with which to pay the inheritance tax. As a result, she sold the 80 acre golf course to the apartment developer, Kasuba. The two golf courses (Walnut Hills and Hickory Hills) had not been included in the incorporation, so were still under County jurisdiction, but the County zoning and building requirements for areas not having central sewer and water were so rigorous that Kasuba opted for annexation to either Palos Hills or Hickory Hills, whichever would give him the most concessions. Hickory Hills already had city sewers and city water, but their water system was already proving to be inadequate. To extend them from the nearest point in Hickory Hills to Walnut Hills, would cost a small fortune. Palos Hills was in the process of installing its own sewer and Lake Michigan water system, but it was absolutely opposed to the kind of apartment complexes that Kasuba was famous for. Kasuba then began playing off the one town against the other in order to get what he wanted. Hickory Hills had far less restriction on apartments, especially in the density permitted. Hickory Hills allowed one living unit per 1,000 square feet of land, while Palos Hills, in the few

areas they had been compelled to zone for apartments, allowed only one living unit per 3,000 square feet of lot, so that was the big attraction of Hickory Hills over Palos Hills, especially since Palos Hills would only annex Kasuba's area as single-family residential. Palos Hills wanted to fight it in the courts, but their attorney advised them they would lose, so finally a compromise was reached with Kasuba whereby he would meet the Palos Hills apartment zoning requirements if the city would annex him and grant him apartment zoning. Daciolas, Potter, and most of the others who had been responsible for forming the city of Palos Hills were heart-broken, but there was no other alternative—they either had to accept Kasuba's deal or see the site annexed to Hickory Hills and have three times as many units on it that were absolutely beyond the control of Palos Hills. Daciolas and the City Council bowed to the inevitable, but the people of Palos Hills were angry to extreme about it.

The Tornado

The two year interval between the election of 1967 and the election of 1969 had not been without incident, however. A few days after the voting was over, the killer tornado struck Palos Hills on April 21, 1967. It started at 105th and Kean, crossed 88th Ave. at the same street, breaking off a utility pole as it passed, and followed along the base of the hill to 103rd St. where it turned almost due east at Lucas ditch. It was increasing in intensity as it went, starting to destroy houses on the north side of 103rd as it turned and wreaking havoc from the ditch to Roberts Road. It appeared to have lost some of its force as it traveled east by north but resumed its fury as it approached Ridgeland at about 97th St. From there clear through Oak Lawn it became more vicious than ever, killing people in that village as it passed by, eventually ending up in the area around 87th and Cottage Grove in Chicago. Nobody was killed in Palos Hills, even though several people were injured, but the property damage was extensive, with at least 18 homes so badly damaged that they had to be torn down.

History of Palos Hills - 1945 to Present



The "Ernie" Brinkman home in Palos Hills after the great tornado in April, 1967.

History of Palos Hills - 1945 to Present

MVCC Comes to Palos Hills

1967 was also noteworthy for Palos Hills because it marked the year of the final collapse of the Dover project. The Dover construction company was a mass producer of single-family homes and had purchased the property from 111th St. to 107th St., from 86th Ave. to 88th Ave., and were in the process of acquiring the property west of 88th Ave. to Kean. There was much opposition to the Dover plans, but they had agreed to meet the city's zoning and building ordinances for Planned Unit Subdivisions so there was little that could be done to stop them. During the summer of 1966, they had built about six model homes between 110th and 111th St. and then were overtaken by financial difficulties which arrested their plans temporarily. During the same general period, the voters of Palos Hills, Hickory Hills, Oak Lawn, Summit, and many other towns in what is now the Moraine Valley Community College District #524, participated in the referendum that established that District. Although the district quickly established temporary quarters in Evergreen Park, they were searching for a suitable large area within the District for a central college campus on which to build the main college. In 1967, they spotted the troubled Dover Development, and in 1968 the District bought all of the land between Kean Ave. on the west, 86th Ave. on the east, 111th St. on the south and 107th St. on the north. The first classrooms of the Moraine Valley College were built in 1969 and were prefabs. All but two of them still are in use today, the missing two having been destroyed by fire.

The coming of the college was a mixed blessing for Palos Hills. On the one hand, it brought prestige to the city, was very convenient for those in Palos Hills who wanted to attend it, and provided a new market for retail businesses in Palos Hills. On the other hand, it brought in no tax revenues, yet was a big user of city services. It also cost in another way—the city sewer and water system was designed to adequately service the area taken over by the college as a large single-family home neighborhood. This meant that larger pipes were used, bigger pumps, etc., than were necessary to service the college buildings, so that in the end, the residents of Palos Hills had to pay more for their sanitary systems than would otherwise have been necessary. Although this dichotomy resulted in a big division of opinion within Palos Hills as to whether to fight the college or not, it was obvious that it could not be stopped and so it was accepted. Today, it is Palos Hills' greatest claim to fame.

The Election of 1969

They showed their unhappiness in the election of 1969. Daciolas ran for re-election and was challenged by Tom Bona. Lori Mason found herself facing James Wulff, an anti-founder's candidate, for the City Clerk's job, while Betty Kampstra, the "Progressive Party's" (formerly the Civic Party) candidate was opposed by Marie Johandes. George Walston, the incumbent First Ward Alderman, faced Ray Michaels; John Pospisil, the Progressive candidate in the Second Ward was challenged by Joseph Cliff, a volunteer policeman; Ray Youell, the Progressive candidate in the Third Ward, went up against Grady Watley, the incumbent, who had turned against his party; while in the Fourth Ward, Leroy Roloff, the incumbent, was challenged by William Knakfus, the Progressive candidate. Daciolas, Pospisil, Youell, and Knakfus all went down to defeat, with Lori Mason, Betty Kampstra, and George Walston the only Progressive candidates to survive the debacle.

Bona took office as Mayor on April 22, 1969, but almost immediately, a re-play of 1963 occurred. Grady Watley and Leroy Roloff, who had talked Bona into running in the first place, wanted Bona to fire Del Pearce, the Police Chief, plus others. Pearce had been chief from the start and had an excellent record, having built the force from literally nothing to at least the equivalent of any neighboring Police Force. He had, however, a brusque personality and would in no way countenance political interference in the Police Department by anybody—not Carlton Ihde, not Dick Perkowski, not Jaeger and especially not Roloff nor Watley! He was scrupulously honest and to this writer's knowledge, never once "fixed" a ticket for anybody. Bona was therefore reluctant to fire him and instead suspended him, naming George Kampstra, also one of the original volunteer policemen, as Acting Chief. Numerous other disagreements developed between Bona and the two Aldermen, until they finally broke with him and allied themselves with Ed Hail, who was by then the leader of the old incorporationist faction of the city. Bona did do one thing, though, for which he deserves eternal credit—he saw the dire need for a new city hall and worked a deal with Les Barnell, the man who created the Palos-on-the-Green subdivision, whereby he obtained the land for both the city hall site and the Green Hills Public Library site in exchange for several small park sites in the Barnell development. He managed to get City Council approval for the deal and also their concurrence in building the new city hall before relations had deteriorated to the point where he could obtain no support from the Council in anything.

History of Palos Hills - 1945 to Present

Del Pearce Dies, Bona Resigns

On August 1, 1969, Del Pearce was buried, having died of a brain tumor operation three days earlier. Although this removed one thorny issue between Bona and his two former supporters, it was not enough to heal the breach, and finally Bona, in complete frustration, resigned on June 11, 1971. The Council chose Hail to be Acting Mayor until the regular national elections in November of that year. The April, 1971, election had contributed to Bona's troubles, because Hail had been re-elected in the First Ward, James Mayer, a Progressive Party candidate, had won election in the Second Ward, Mike Wunder was re-elected in the Third Ward, and Bill Knakfus, a Progressive and one of the original Policemen, was the victor in the Fourth Ward. This left Bona with only Joe Cliff, another original Policeman, as the only Alderman that was not partisan, and helped to push him to resignation. The new city hall was formally dedicated on July 25, 1971, with much ceremony, but Mr. and Mrs. Bona were not present, a most regrettable omission in light of his role in bringing it into being.

Hail New Mayor

Hail ran for the unexpired portion of Bona's term in the November election, facing Stephen Johandes and Wayne Borre, and won overwhelmingly. In April of 1973, the regular city election saw Hail standing for re-election, with Vincent N. Venezio and Leonard Meyer running against him. The Pioneers of Palos, formerly the Progressive Party, ran Jayne Eiers for City Clerk, forsaking Lori Mason at Hail's insistence, while Lori ran as an independent. Betty Kampstra ran for re-election under the Pioneers of Palos banner, being opposed by Rose Lamendola, for the City Treasurer post. In the First Ward, George Walston chose not to run for re-election, so Merrill Bain, who had rejoined the Founder's group, became the Progressive Candidate for the four year term, facing Thomas Ambrose, Jr. for that spot. There was a two year term to be filled by virtue of Hail having resigned as Alderman to run for Mayor, so Anne Zickus was chosen by the Progressives to succeed Hail and she was opposed by Lee Harris. The Pioneers' candidate in the Second Ward was Claude Orton while his oppon-

ent was Daniel Scurek. Leon Pierhal carried the Pioneers' banner in the Third Ward, opposed by Vincent P. Murphy and James E. Ross, while in the Fourth Ward, Leroy Roloff, who had joined the Pioneers Party, was their candidate, facing Andrew J. Cisarik and Michael R. Lawler. Hail beat his two challengers by a wide margin, but his attempt to replace Lori Mason with Jane Eiers was foiled when Lori won by 34 votes. Betty Kampstra was re-elected Treasurer, Zickus and Bain won in the First Ward, Orton won in the Second, in the Third, the Pioneers suffered their only loss when Pierhal was defeated by Murphy, while in the Fourth, Roloff won re-election.

Another Mayoral Scandal, Roloff Becomes Mayor

Less than six months after the 1973 election, the second big scandal to hit a Palos Hills Mayor overtook the Pioneers, when Hail suddenly disappeared and a week later his city secretary also dropped from sight. Weeks of mystery passed by before it finally became clear that they would not be returning to their posts. The Council appointed Roloff to be acting Mayor until January 26, 1974, when a special election would be held.

The 1974 special election to fill the remaining three years of Hail's term pitted Roloff against Meyer and Vincent M. Venezio. The Pioneers of Palos were thoroughly demoralized by the Hail affair and split just before the election when Earl Potter publicly renounced his support of Roloff and championed Meyer. Meyer won over Roloff by almost two to one, having been the candidate of a new large political group called the INFORMED ELECTORATE PARTY headed by Dan Scurek. Meyer took office facing the determined opposition of Bain, Zickus, Orton, Mayer, Roloff, and Knakfus, but having the support of Murphy and Wunder. Bain eventually came over to Meyer's side before the next Aldermanic election in April of 1975, when Zickus was defeated by an IEP candidate, John Jordan, in the First Ward; Mayer was beaten by Scurek, the IEP president, in the Second Ward, Mike Wunder was re-elected in the Third Ward, and Michael Lawler, an IEP candidate, was elected in the Fourth Ward. This left Meyer with a majority in the City Council, and only two dedicated foes, Roloff and Orton, who still sat in opposition. Knakfus, who was already ailing with bone cancer at the time of Meyer's election, attended few meetings during the period between Meyer's taking over and Knakfus' death on March 29, 1974, which, incidentally, made him the fourth City official to die in office since the city's founding.

History of Palos Hills - 1945 to Present

The Ambulance Drive

Returning back to 1967, in August of that year, the Palos Hills Civic Association met with Assistant Fire Chief John Roe to discuss a fund raising drive to buy a new ambulance for the Fire Department so that it could take over the ambulance service that had formerly been furnished by the Columbus Manor Volunteer Fire Department. Oak Lawn had annexed Columbus Manor, taking over its fire protection, and had served notice on the North Palos Fire Protection District that they were dropping ambulance service outside of the Oak Lawn Village limits. The PHCA board approved the project and Earl Potter was named Chairman of the drive. By the end of 1967, the money necessary to buy the ambulance had been raised, so for \$14,000, the 1968 Pontiac Custom ambulance was purchased and donated to the North Palos Fire Protection District. It is still in use, in beautiful condition, although it has seen heavy service over the past ten-plus years. It has been joined by two others, one, a 1975 Dodge bought by the District, and the other a complete paramedic intensive care ambulance that was donated by the City of Palos Hills to the Fire District and equipped with funds raised by the Fireman's Association. Hal Carlson, the Fire Chief, retired in August of 1969, after more than 23 years of faithful service to the people of North Palos, and he was succeeded as Chief by John Roe, who had joined the Department in February of 1956, and who is still the chief.

The Fen is Saved

Another controversy that blossomed during the 1967 to 1975 period was the Fen campaign. In 1970, during the resurgent period for the Founders' group, an effort was made to annex the parcel of land extending from 105th St. to 107th St., from 88th Ave. to Kean. This was being done to permit a developer to build a mixed development of apartments, condominiums and single-family homes on what had been the old Sullivan Farm. This move sparked much opposition to it within the city, especially from nature-lovers who claimed that it contained the only known example of native fen remaining in Illinois. With the assistance of faculty and student members of Moraine Valley College, a heated campaign was waged that finally

culminated in the annexation of the property by the Cook County Forest Preserve District on April 20, 1972. The FPD went on to eventually annex the rest of the area from 101st St. south to 105th St. and from Kean to 90th Ave., forever foreclosing this western part of the city from being developed.

The Mass Murder

Probably the most shocking news story to originate in Palos Hills since its founding, occurred on June 16, 1973, when William Workman of 105th and 82nd Ave. took an automatic 22 rifle and went on a shooting spree that left his mother Dena, 58, his father, Raymond, 69, a neighbor and wife of Alderman Cliff, Henrietta Cliff, 35, their daughter, Kimberley, 12, Paul Clesson, 72, of 81st Ave. and 107th St., his wife, Neta, 78, and their son, Paul, Jr., 47, lying dead. Workman was arrested and charged with the murders, but a psychiatric examination resulted in his being committed by the Court to a State mental hospital until he regains his sanity. At that time, he will be tried on the murder charges.

The Election of '77

As the city election of April 19, 1977, approached, the old Founders' group, which had become part of the Coalition Party, made one last effort to recapture their days of glory. Roloff had retired from politics as had most of the others who still lived in the city, leaving Claude Orton to make the attempt. He was the group's Mayoral candidate, opposing Meyer, who was running for re-election to a full four year term; Geraldine Nolan was the group's choice for City Clerk against James Lack, Nelson Minor, their pick for City Treasurer against the IEP's Kenneth J. Nolan. Anne Zickus ran for re-election as First Ward Alderman against Merrill Bain who was now a member of the IEP. In the Second Ward, the group ran Thomas Denham as their choice for Alderman while the IEP nominated Sam Lamendola. An independent candidate, Gerald Bennett, ran against both of them. The Third Ward also featured a three-man race, with Cindy Jorgenson being the IEP candidate, George Jilek being the Founders' group entry, and Lee Wyrick running as the independent. In the Fourth Ward, the IPE put up Earl Myers, while the group ran Andrew Cisarek. The winners were Meyer for Mayor, Lack for Clerk, and Nolan for Treasurer, thus scoring a clean sweep for the IEP at the top of the ticket. Their candidate in the First Ward, Merrill Bain, won easily;

History of Palos Hills - 1945 to Present

They suffered a defeat in the Second Ward when Tom Denham, the group's candidate won; in the Third Ward they lost to the independent, Lee Wyrick, while in the Fourth Ward, they again lost to the group's Andy Cisarek. Merrill Bain, already ill with cancer at the time of the election, grew worse and passed away on July 30, 1977, the fifth City official to die in office. His widow, Florence, was appointed to succeed him on September 8, 1977.

Palos Hills Today

Which brings us up to October 25, 1978, the 20th birthday of Palos Hills—what a long way this little city has come since that chilly day when almost all of the registered voters then living in what was to be Palos Hills turned out to narrowly vote for incorporation as a city! From no income, no police car and no city hall other than the first City Clerk's living room, it has become one of the better southwestern suburbs of Chicago, with a fine professional Police Department, plenty of park land, an attractive city hall, served by a first-class professional Fire Department and an excellent Library system, with trim houses, lovely trees and lush green lawns. The population has grown from less than 3,000 to over 17,000, and still the building of homes continues. Home of the Moraine Valley College, bordered by the cool green forest preserves on its west boundary and overlooked by the high ground of its Third Ward, Palos Hills has indeed become a city of which all who contributed to its birth and its growth can be proud.