

Roselle History Museum Newsletter

Official Publication of the Roselle Historical Foundation

39 East Elm Street Roselle, IL 60172-2026
Ph:630-351-5300 E-mail: rosellehistory@sbcglobal.net
Summer 2011 Issue

**Inside.... Coming to America
Roselle Fire Department**



By Ray Hitzemann

I was recently asked about the stone posts on the west side of Roselle Road just south of Walnut Street.

I had quite a bit of knowledge about the property and supplemented it with a visit to the Bloomingdale Township assessor's office.

The stone posts were fence posts for the north and south side of the property. The lot is 2 acres and not rectangular shaped. The north side of the lot is 604 feet long. The south side is 625 feet long. The Roselle road frontage is 120 feet and the rear of the lot is 90 feet. The back portion was a fruit orchard, the center was a garden area, and the front had trees on it.

The property was originally part of the Fred Hitzemann farm which was north of it. It was sold to A. Hudson in the early 1920's. He built 3 buildings on it about 150 feet from the road. A one story 2 bedroom house, a 19X19 foot garage and a 30X31 foot chicken house.

In the early 1930's he sold the property to the Knack family. They built a roadside stand on the front of the property and sold soda, candy, ice cream and produce from his gardens and orchard. He would put a slip of paper worth 5 cents in soda bottles and throw them in the creek on the east side of Roselle Road. The kids would jump into the creek to try to get one of the bottles.

The property was sold to another family in the 1940's. I don't remember their name, but they had a typewriter and the woman in the house tried to teach me how to type.

The property was then sold to the Peter Heinrick family. He was a harp maker from Lyon and Healy. He converted the chicken house into a wood working shop. He liked to make his own wine so he hired my brothers Roland and Leonard to dig out the crawl space under the house so he had somewhere cool to age his wine. The ground under the house was very hard clay so they had to rent an air hammer to break it into lumps so they could take it out in a wheel barrow. The Heinrick's lived in the house until they died. The property was then sold again.

In 1982 the buildings were torn down. The septic tank was removed and the property was reclassified as agricultural and remains that way today. In the 1990's a party named Shephard signed the statement for the assessor's office saying it was still agricultural. It is currently being held in trust by a bank in Schaumburg.

The current assessed value for the two acres is \$290 with the last tax bill of \$ 17.55.

Board of Directors

Milan Bagel

Ruth Bagel—Secretary

Ray Hitzemann—Pres.

Kathy Schabelski

Walter Lotz

Glenn Spachman - Treas./VP

Frank Zielinski

Administrative Director

Joseph Devlin

Historian

Joan Beauprez

COMING TO AMERICA

Presented by Ray Hitzemann

The following is the life story of my great, great grandfather after he came to the United States in 1853. At the age of 75 he had his story printed in a little pamphlet in German. He gave copies of it to his children and grandchildren. My nephew took the pamphlet to a German teacher at Lake Park High School and he translated it for us.

“Johann Freiderich Wilhelm Hitzemann oldest son of a carpenter Frederich and his wife Eleanore Charolette Hitzemann nee Kaul.

I was born July 27, 1830 in Stadthagen, Furstenthum Schaumburg-Lippe. I came to America November 15, 1853 direct to Chicago, though a misunderstanding. My ticket was to Cincinnati.

It was a sad time from 1853 to 1854. I began to work as a carpenter which I learned as trade and for 12 hours of work you would receive 50 cents.

In 1855 I bought 40 acres of prairie land and 2 ½ acres of woodland for \$475, \$75 had to be cash, the rest in 4 years at 10% interest, and now I owned a piece of property.

In 1856 I was married to Engel Marie Sophia Eleonore Kauke, oldest daughter of the 2nd marriage of cobbler Ludwig Christian and his wife Engle Marie Kauke nee Dulmier.

She was born January 17, 1829 in the village Diern in the congregation Aplerreas, Amt Rodenburg, Graftschaft, Kurhassen. She came in the spring of 1855 with her parents to America. We were married March 11, 1856 by Pastor Folker in the Lutheran Congregation in Schaumburg, Cook, Co., Ill. and moved into the prairie and built under much hardship a new home. Three years later after the land was broken, also fenced in, with a new

home and trees planted we sold our farm in 1859 for \$1200. At that time our property was \$400 in money 2 yolk oxen, 8 cows, a wagon and a plow. Our first farm was in the S.E. corner in Sec. 34 Barrington Township which was the next farm on the prairie. At that time there was open prairies from Heiland to Hoosier Grove (now Streamwood), 1000 acres.

We bought the next farm on the prairie in Section 35. By that time the price went up to \$16 per acre, we had to pay \$600 in cash and \$1000 in 5 years. We only had \$400 and had to borrow \$299 and had to pay 18% interest. So we moved into the prairie without a home, no money, hardly any clothing with 2 small children, now our misery began. Then came the money problems with the Civil War (Burgerkriege).

With all the hardship I will be silent, only a few words yet. The prairie was full of cattle, you could cut the best grass in our prairie, but the worst was how to get it together, then we had no wagon, and that was an expensive item. A lumber wagon with a plain box would cost \$125. But trouble teaches us to pray. We brought our hay together with a sled, quite different from nowadays.

From 1860-1865 was the hardest time, it was the time of stamped money, where the gold dollar was worth \$2.60.

In 1864 we sold our farm in Barrington where we had worked hard 8 years and got \$600 out of it”. (Cont. page 3)

ROSELLE HISTORY MUSEUM WEBSITE

Learn more about the museum and, also read this newsletter in color at www.rosellehistory.com

(Cont. from page 2)

“Then we bought a farm in Wayne Twp. of 106 2/3 acres and 10 acres of woodland for \$2,600. Here we lived for 40 years when mother died on September 23, 1904, at the age of 75 years 8 months and 6 days. In our marriage of 48 ½ years 9 children were born, 6 sons and 3 daughters. Four were born in Barrington Twp. And were baptized in Schaumburg where we were members. Namely first Christian Wm. March 11, 1857, Engel Marie March 15, 1859, Wm. Henry March 1, 1861, Christian Wm. Freidrich April 15, 1863.

In Rodenburg we lived in Wayne Twp., 5 children Henry August August 10, died October 24, 1865. Engel Marie Sophie February 13, 1867, Eleanore Frederike Wilhemine May 28, 1869, Christian Wm. August November 14, 1871, August Wm. Herman July 20, 1874. The rest you know and can tell your children as I have told it to you.

Told by your father in his 75th year , 1904 after the death of your beloved mother”.

He died June 6, 1906 leaving 8 children and 30 grandchildren.

Fourth Of July Fireworks



Please support our museum by purchasing-**GLO-STIX** during the annual fireworks celebration at the Lake Park West campus.

ROSE PARADE



The History Museum continued our custom of having a float in the Rose Parade. The committee designed a float reflecting an old time school. The walkers passed out almost 100 pounds of Tootsie Rolls during the parade on June 5, 2011

Many thanks to all who helped design, build and “perform” in the parade.



THE ROSELLE FIRE DEPARTMENT HAS COME A LONG WAY

by Kathy Schabelski

The Roselle Fire Department was organized under the supervision of the Board of Trustees of the Corporation of Bloomingdale on October 7, 1905. It became necessary to do so because prior to this time, Roselle split fire protection services with Bloomingdale and the horse-drawn pumper that was used to put out fires was in Bloomingdale for half of the year. People who had the misfortune to have a fire break out at their home or business during that half of the year could do little but watch their building burn down and be consoled by the fire department when they came, if they came at all.

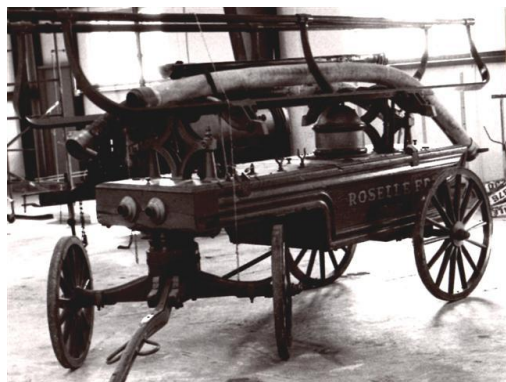


The first officers of the Fire Department were William H. Sauerman, chief; Louis Leiseberg, assistant chief; Theodore Vaas, engineer and secretary; Herman Schmoldt, captain of hose cart company; and Henry Hansen, treasurer. Roselle's first fire house was located on the south side of Chicago Avenue (now Irving Park Road). The upper floor served as the first Village Hall.

The first recorded fire that the Roselle Fire Department assisted with occurred on October 11, 1906. The fire broke out in a corner building belonging to J.C. Hattendorf and occupied by Mrs. Adolph Christensen as a saloon. Since the fire was confined to a rear bar and a partition behind it, it was quickly extinguished. The building sustained about three hundred dollars in damage and no injuries were reported. Mr. Hattendorf had an exceptionally bad day and at the same time, very lucky day because later that same day a fire broke out at his ice house, which was caused by sparks being blown onto the ice house from a passing steam engine. This time, the building only sustained five dollars' worth of damage and again, no injuries were reported. Roselle's decision to have its own fire department, separate from Bloomingdale's, was already paying off!

In the early days of the Fire Department, homes outside the official boundaries of the Village of Roselle could only receive services from the Fire Department if they paid an annual fee of thirty-five dollars. This was quite a lot of money back then, particularly during the Great Depression. In 1933, Hugo Gerschevske did not pay the annual fee. His home unfortunately caught fire and while neighbors and volunteer firemen stood and watched, unable to help, it burned to the ground. This policy sometimes caused confusion and delay if a fire occurred outside the village limits. It was not unheard of for a building to be lost to fire regardless of fee payment because firefighters were not always certain if they were able to help. A few residents did not want the fire equipment to leave the village unprotected if firefighters had to answer a distant call, but most people saw how important the farms surrounding Roselle were to the local economy and looked for a better system.

On December 21, 1936, a change to this policy was implemented with the aim of improving fire protection for the rural area surrounding Roselle. It was decided to charge ten dollars for smaller homes and twenty dollars for farms in the district. This was a much more affordable fee than the previously required thirty-five dollars. Most were able to pay the reduced amount and fire protection services were improved for everyone. By 1937, enough volunteer firefighters had joined the Rural Fire Truck League to make rural fire protection possible.



On the morning of Monday, January 28, 1957, Roselle experienced its worst fire-related tragedy to date. The first floor of J. Gieseke's hardware store, which was located on the northwest corner of Irving Park Road and Bokelman Street, exploded and a flash fire in the basement destroyed the building. Employees of the Public Service Company unknowingly struck a gas main when they were installing a new light pole on the premises. Glass windows within a two block radius shattered. Seven people in the building at the time of the blast were killed: Herbert G. Gieseke, store employees Evelyn Kramp and Donald Willie, and shoppers William Heinrich, Dorothy Heinrich, Lawrence McGrath, and Robert Finn, a twelve-year-old boy who was in the shop with his nine-year-old brother, Michael, buying curtain rods for their

mother. Michael survived the explosion, but never recovered from the injuries he sustained. Two other people in the building at the time of the explosion and resulting fire also survived. Amanda Gieseke lived on the upper floor as an invalid. She was thrown from the building while still in her bed and suffered two broken legs. Gilbert Sorenson, the Northern Illinois Gas employee initially sent to check on the reported smell of gas from the hardware store, survived as well.

It is unlikely that this type of tragedy would occur today. Prior to any installation requiring digging, residents and businesses are now required to call an 800 number for the Joint Utility Locating Information for Excavators, or "JULIE." Through JULIE, the utility companies will quickly verify the location of any underground pipes or cables at no charge to you. If you dig without calling JULIE first, you will be held liable for any damages that occur or resulting repair costs.

Today, before becoming a volunteer firefighter, candidates must pass a written exam on general firefighting knowledge and an agility test which requires the candidate to climb ladders, run with heavy bags (to confirm that they would be able to carry an unconscious adult if needed), climb ropes, pull hoses, and balance on beams. Training is ongoing for our firefighters, with numerous new and refresher courses being offered each year. All firefighters are also required to be trained and receive state certification as Emergency Medical Technicians (EMTs). As part of this training, firefighters learn how to take vital signs, administer CPR, and evaluate the general overall condition of a patient. This information is then transmitted by radio to the hospital before the patient is transported. EMTs are **not** paramedics and are not permitted to administer drugs or start IV's.

HISTORICAL EVENING



The annual Historical Evening featuring a presentation on the Wright Brothers was a huge success. We had a record crowd of over 150 people enjoying the program, the Lynfred wine tasting and the home made desserts. The winners of the raffle were: Early Flight Basket- Paul Troyke, and the Historic Roselle Basket- Robert Schmoldt. The date for next year's event has been scheduled for April 14, 2012.

MEMBERSHIP

SUM-11

Your membership is even more important now.....With the economic slow down, many towns including Roselle, have had to make difficult decisions as to how their limited funds are spent. The village owns and maintains our property but the inside maintenance and other operating costs are the responsibility of the Museum. . Please become a member and help support and preserve and educate people about local history. Your generous help is appreciated.

Yes, I'd like to help the Museum! Here's my membership contribution.

*Mail to: **Roselle History Museum, 39 E. Elm St. Roselle, IL 60172***

New *Renewal* *Circle One:* \$25 \$50 \$100 \$250 *Other Amount*_____

*Name*_____

*Address*_____

*City*_____ *State* _____ *Zip* _____ *Phone*_____

The Roselle Historical Foundation is a 501-c(3) corporation, and your contribution may be fully tax deductible

VOLUNTEERS: We are always looking for people who are interested in helping preserve the history of our village and the surrounding area. Do you enjoy working on displays, gathering historical evidence, researching photographs or just puttering around cutting news articles for our archives? We can also use people who are handy with tools to do miscellaneous repairs and modifications or, assist with building displays, floats, etc. There are no fixed hours and your compensation is the good feeling you get when you have helped us complete an important project

ROSELLE HISTORY MUSEUM

39 E. ELM STREET

ROSELLE, IL 60172