



Northwest Chicago Historical Society

Your Neighborhood Historical Society

Newsletter July 2011

Number XIV

In This Issue:

Jefferson Township's Oldest Church • The Polish Museum of America
Dr. Lewis A. Convis - Pastor, Lecturer, Traveler and Survivor
David L. Roberts - The Father of Jefferson Park
Six Corners Historic Kiosks

Many of the readers of this newsletter have a desire to learn about and preserve the past, especially as it pertains the Northwest side and the greater city. Often, we become nostalgic when reminiscing about the "simple" times of yesteryear. While we certainly advocate understanding the past, many of us also understand that today's technological advances have our lives better in many ways. We are able to accomplish activities much more quickly and we are able to access information much more easily.

While part of our mission as the NW Chicago Historical society includes preservation of the past, we also understand that often we need to embrace the present and the future. To this end, we are consistently using technology to aid in the dissemination of information. We are connected with online communities through Facebook, Twitter, and Meetup. Our website offers the ability to contact us and download any of our published newsletters online. Today, the software that we are using to build our newsletters enables viewing in color and zooming in on historic pictures to see more granular detail than ever before.

Our most recent foray into this brave new world was instigated by Dan Pogorzelski and Rich Lang, both of the NW Chicago Historical Society. With their help, the Six Corners Association has displayed local history at 5 different kiosks on the streets of the Northwest side. These kiosks have a QR code that can be scanned with a Smartphone. This offers the ability to be virtually escorted to Forgotten Chicago's website for maps, stories, and historic photos.

As stated in our Mission Statement, "Our mission is to educate others about the history of the Northwest neighborhoods of Chicago." By embracing new advancements, we can share and document our history for generations to come. - *Frank Suerth*

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Are you an active member at a Christian Church? Call today to see how to qualify for an additional \$950.00 discount!

Mission Statement:

As the Northwest Chicago Historical Society, our mission is to educate others about the history of the Northwest neighborhoods of Chicago. We will accomplish this through discussion at meetings, public tours and events, and dissemination of historical documents and photos through publications. Additionally, we desire to collaborate with others in the community to continue to maintain and preserve the history of our collective neighborhoods. By linking the past with the present and the future, we will provide awareness and create appreciation for our place in Chicago's and Illinois' history.

The Northwest Chicago Historical Society

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Join our Meet-up Group (It's FREE)

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NW Chicago Historical Society

P. O. Box 30067

Chicago, IL 60630

e-mail: nwchicagohistory@sbcglobal.net

Membership:

\$15.00 per calendar year

\$10.00 for 65 years old and over

Website: nwchicagohistory.org

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Our Lady of Victory

A Parish Community in the Roman Catholic Tradition

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Our warmest welcome to all who celebrate with us, whether visitors, neighbors, long-time residents, or newly arrived in the Neighborhood.

Our parish family extends an invitation to all to join us as we celebrate the Centennial Year of our Serving God's People.

Our Lady of Victory offers a diverse group of ministries and organizations to fill the varied interests of our 4,000 individual members.

Our Lady of Victory School is open to all regardless of religious affiliation. Our emphasis is, of course, in the Roman Catholic Tradition. This award winning school has room for 500 students from Pre-K through 8th Grade.

Our Lady of Victory also supports a vital Religious Education Center for all ages. From three and four year-olds to Seniors, we have a Religious Education Program for all.

Leisure time organizations are the heartbeat of Our Lady of Victory, from Scouting for boys and girls of all ages, sport activities, to our Mothers' Club, Parish Men's Club, Teen Club and including our very active Music Ministry of Children and Adult HandBell Choirs, Children's Choirs, Adult, Teen and special Choirs.

We welcome you to join with us in our celebration of God's Word.

MASS SCHEDULE
Saturday Evening Mass
4:30 pm

Sunday Masses
8:00 am
9:30 am
11:15 am

Weekday Masses
7:30 am
Holy Day Masses
As Announced

Rosary
Daily after the 7:30 Mass

Novena to
Our Lady of Perpetual Help
Tuesday 7:00 pm

Eucharistic Adoration
Every 1st Friday
8:00 am until 7:00 pm
Holy Hour

Last Sunday of month
after the 11:15 am Mass

Reverend Robert Fedek, Pastor

A Country Club in Irving Park?



Irving Park Country Club, Chicago, Ill.

The card shown below is an announcement for a dancing party at the Irving Park Country Club. It reads:

The Dolliers - Announce Their Dancing Party
To be given at the Irving Park Country Club
Corner Irving Park Boulevard and 43rd Avenue
Friday Evening, April 23, 1909
Admission 50 Cents - Entrée 8:30 -
Music by Schultz

Yes there was a Country Club in Irving Park. The picture above is the Irving Park Country Club, which was located at the corner of Irving Park and Kildare Avenue.



4.

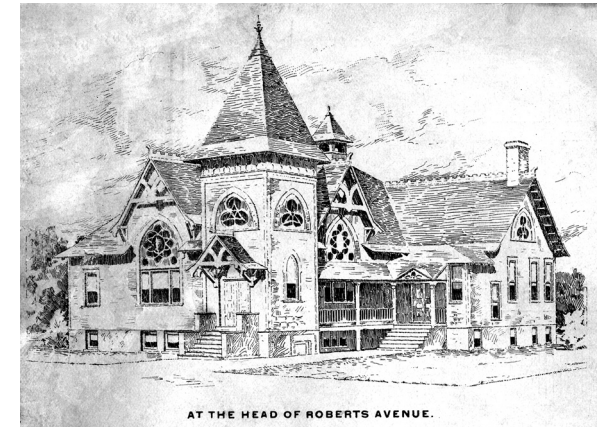
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Jefferson Township's Oldest Church

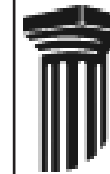
On Thursday evening on 18th April, 1861--just four days after the surrender of Fort Sumter and the outbreak of the Civil War--six residents of the township of Jefferson gathered in the town house for the purpose of organizing a new church. These six founding members included Mr. And Mrs. Orton Hubbard, Mr. And Mrs. David L Roberts, Ruebin Bailey, and Miss Mary Ellen Roberts. The written record of that day notes that "[s]undry individuals believing it to be their duty as Christians to associate themselves together and found a church in accordance with the examples set forth in the new testament"--called themselves the Congregational Church of Jefferson amidst a farming community not yet part of Chicago.



The sketch of the building that would become the 2nd church for Congregational Church of Jefferson Park, corner of Roberts Court and Roberts Avenue (Giddings & London Streets).



Shown on the left is Mary Ann Roberts, one of the founding members of the Congregational Church of Jefferson. She was the daughter of David & Hannah Roberts and was 26 years old when the church was organized in 1861.



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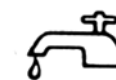
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INDEPENDENCE PARK Farmers Market



2011

**Farmers Markets
in Independence Park
Sundays 9AM-1PM**

June 12 • June 26

July 10 • July 24

August 14 • August 28

September 11 • September 25

October 9

**Irving Park Rd. (4000 N.)
at Hamlin Ave. (3800 W.) Chicago, IL**

East of Pulaski Road, the Kennedy
Expressway and CTA Blue Line



www.gipna.org

Civic-minded individuals who believe that a unified community that faces modern challenges can affect real, lasting change formed the Greater Independence Park Neighborhood Association (GIPNA).

MISSION STATEMENT

The Greater Independence Park Neighborhood Association (GIPNA) is dedicated to maintaining and enhancing the quality of life in the Independence Park community by involving, informing, and encouraging people to participate in matters relating to the community, and by protecting the historical, social, cultural, and architectural character of the neighborhood.

The Independence Park Farmers Market received a favorable mention in the first-ever Chicago edition of the world-famous Michelin Guide:

"The nearby Independence Park Farmers Market is also worth a trip. This fast-growing market will satisfy with its array of produce, plants, and baked goods."

BECOME A MEMBER

GIPNA is always looking for new volunteers and ideas. Join today! E-mail to us at: gipna@sbcglobal.net



CONTACT GIPNA

Mail:
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Web site:
www.gipna.org

The first pastor was E. C. Barnard, who came to the Congregational Church in the fall of 1866. Reverend Barnard was an energetic young man, who was also a carpenter and besides preaching he busied himself building additions and improvements to the meetinghouse. A parsonage was built on land that now forms the center of Giddings Street.

With increased membership, the congregation needed a new meeting house. In 1896 parishioners built their second church on the present site of Giddings and London Streets at a cost of \$8,000. An interesting story is told about the location of the church, which was changed to the present site on London and Giddings. Some disgruntled members who did not like the idea of a change threatened to leave the church if it was "built way down in a swamp." Over the years the former members gave rise to neighboring Watson Park Congregational Church and Forest Glen Congregational.



This simple wooden structure was the first church. The parishioners dedicated this church in January of 1862 and it was located at what is now 4754 N. Milwaukee Avenue. This church was used until 1896 when a new church was built at Giddings and London. The 1st church was sold to another congregation, who move it to another location, where it stood until it was tore down in the 1950's to make way for the Kennedy Expressway.

Photo Courtesy of the Congregational Church of Jefferson Park

The Congregational Church of Jefferson Park



God is still speaking,

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neighbors and
we would like
to meet you.*

Rev. Gayle R. Tucker
Pastor

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Members of Jefferson Park Church
Who Attended Original Church:

Top Row: Mrs. Mabel Schuhr, Mrs. Myrtle Hansen, Mrs. C. Young, J. E. Schuhr; Mrs. Emma Helmke, Charles and Luella Moisle;

Second Row: Geo. Wright, Mrs. Wm. Deitcher, Mrs. Geo. Wright, T. E. Bourne (Our Senior Deacon), Mrs. K. Bourne;

Third Row: Mrs. H. Moisle, Mrs. C. Lowell, Mrs. H. Wulff, Mrs. C. K. Wright, Mrs. L. Alting;

Bottom: Mrs. E. Meyers, Milton Smith (Our Treasurer).



The 2nd church for Congregational Church of Jefferson Park, corner of Giddings & London Streets.
Photo Courtesy of Gail Weber

Shown on the opposite page - Top Row; Left to Right: **Mrs. Mabel Schuhr** is the wife of John E. Schuhr and they lived at 5366 Lawrence Avenue with son and daughter. **Myrtle Hansen** wife of Carl Hansen; **Mrs. C Young**; **J. E. Schuhr** owns *J. E. Schuhr* the oldest established Tailor & Cleaner in Jefferson Park at 5362 Lawrence; **Mrs. Emma Helmke**, wife of Jacob Helmke and lives on Milwaukee Avenue; **Charles & Luella Moisle** - Charles with his wife Sophia and two daughters and lived at 5475 Higgins.

Second Row; Left to Right: **Geo. Wright**; **Mrs. Wm. Deitcher** - Adella lived at 5505 Higgins with her husband William, daughter Edica and granddaughter. William was a blacksmith; **Mrs. Geo Wright**; **T. E. Bourne** - Deacon; **Mrs. K. Bourne**

Third Row; Left to Right: **Mrs. H Moisle**; **Mrs. C. Lowell** was married to Chester Lowell, grandson of Charles Dickinson whom owned the Dickinson Tavern on Milwaukee Ave; **Katherine Wulff**, wife of Henry Wulff. Henry Wulff was Clerk of Cook County and Illinois State Treasurer. For a picture of their house, see Newsletter # 6 - July 2007; **Mrs. C. K. Wright**; **Mrs. L. Alting** - Liz live at 5440 Gale Street.

Bottom: Left to Right: **Mrs. E. Meyers**; **Milton Smith** was a real estate agent and lived at 4441 n. Milwaukee Avenue with his wife Ida and six children, Olive, Milton, Leslie, Roy, Herbert and Harold.



The 2nd Jefferson Park Congregational Church on London and Giddings with the congregation in front. Pastor Lewis A. Convis is shown on the bottom row, 2nd from the left. Ruth Studio, which was located at 4782 Milwaukee Avenue, took the photo.

By the year 1927, the congregation had again outgrown its building. Enthusiastic fundraising brought in \$67,000 in pledges in just one year. Members dedicated their third and present building in October of 1929 just as the stock market crashed and the Great Depression began. Jefferson Park Congregational Church struggled and survived its own economic hardships along with the nation. Through the untiring and creative efforts of a united membership to raise money, coupled with the financial support of denominational offices in New York and Boston, parishioners saved the building from foreclosure.

In 1957, the Congregational Church of Jefferson Park joined with the vast majority of Congregational churches to help form the United Church of Christ, a merger of the Congregational Christian Churches and the Evangelical and Reformed Church. Both denominations developed from Calvinist roots in Reformed tradition.

The beautiful house of worship reflects the colonial style, with its tall spire and clean interior design, blended with England's Georgian tradition of brick structures so common in New England, birthplace of the Congregational Church in America. The sanctuary holds a full set of magnificent eight stained glass windows, that in the year 1929, were the first in the United States to be manufactured using a secret one-step process that simultaneously stains and weathers the colored glass. The theme throughout tells the story of Humanity's Search for God. The lighted cross atop the cupola bids welcome to one and all.

Some Early Members of the Congregational Church of Jefferson

D. S. Dunning, came to Jefferson Township in 1866 and was named a deacon of the church in 1869. With the help of his oldest son, Andrew, subdivided his land that is now known as Dunning. He started Dunning branch of the Jefferson Sunday School, which later became the Watson Park Congregational Church, now located at 6337 W. Cornelia Avenue.

James B. Farnsworth was an early officer at the Jefferson Park Congregational Church. He also organized the first Jefferson Township High School and the Farnsworth school at 5414 N Linder Ave is named after him. For photo and more information see NWCHS Newsletter January 2011 – James B. Farnsworth - Educator.

William Hazelton was an early officer at the church and his signature appears in early Congregational Church record books. A Forest Glen resident, Hazelton donated the land and started the Congregational Church of Forest Glen at 5400 N. Lawler Ave. For photos and more information see Newsletter January 2008 – William Cross Hazelton

Dickinson/Lowell families were early members at the Jefferson Park Congregational Church. They own and lived in the famous Milwaukee Avenue landmark the Dickinson Tavern.

Laughlin Falconer and family were early members at the Congregational Church. In 1848 they homestead a farm that was located at Cicero and Wellington Avenues. Laughlin Falconer established his district's first school and served on the school board for forty years. The Falconer Elementary School at 3020 N. Lamont bears his name.

Mrs. Herman Esdohr & Fred Esdohr - Fred was president of the Jefferson Park National Bank located at Milwaukee and Lawrence at what is now the Hoyne Bank building. Fred lived across the street from the church at 4736 N. London. Fred's mother, Mrs. Herman Esdohr live at the southeast corner of Giddings and Long. For photos and more information see Newsletter January 2005 – Life Sketch of Herman Esdohr.

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Some of the members of the Jefferson Park Congregational Church from 1929
Photos Courtesy of the Congregational Church of Jefferson Park.

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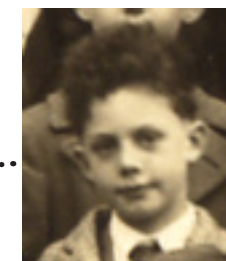


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Pastor Reverend Lewis A. Convis shown standing with the congregation.



Standing in the center of the photo, this young man in 1955 would become Scout Master Russ Gremel of Boy Scout Troup 979.

The 3rd and present Congregational Church of Jefferson Park. Photo was taken in 1930.

Photo Courtesy of the Congregational Church of Jefferson Park.

Dr. Lewis A. Convis - Pastor, Lecturer, Traveler and Survivor

By Frank Suerth

Dr. Lewis A. Convis, pastor of the Congregational Church of Jefferson Park from 1922 to 1944, is best remembered by his outstanding sermons and by leading the congregation through the difficult depression years immediately following the building of the 3rd and present church. Because of his past experiences, no pastor was better equipped for such a difficult undertaking as the "Doc", as his parishioners sometimes called him.

In 1918, Dr. Convis, traveled to Siberia as a Y.M.C.A. secretary. He served in the Polish Legion, which was recruiting Poles from the Russia army and the Russian prison camps. Sixteen thousand strong, the Legion would go up against the Bolsheviks with the support of Aleksandr Kolchak's army. The Legion was cut to pieces but Lewis Convis escaped by taking to the forest. Only 870 of the 16,000 Polish Legion members survived by marching across 3,000 miles of frozen Siberia; Convis was one of them. As a tribute to his services in the army, he was made an honorary captain in the Polish Legion. He was then honored at a banquet in Warsaw, he was honored with a silver cup presented by Legion officers.

Dr. Convis has lived among the Poles, Russians, Kirghiz of Kazakhstan, Mongols, and Buriats in Russia. He has traveled extensively in Japan, China, Singapore, India, Arabia, Egypt, Spain, England, Denmark, Germany, Czech Republic and France. He has traveled across America, lecturing on Russian, Siberian and Poland conditions from first hand experiences.

There is no doubt, that Dr. Lewis A. Convis was one of the most remarkable pastors to serve the Jefferson Park Christian Community.



Dr. Lewis A. Convis, Pastor of the Congregational Church of Jefferson Park from 1922 to 1944.

Photo Courtesy of the Congregational Church of Jefferson Park.

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The Polish Museum of America



The Polish Museum of America (PMA), housed in the building of the Polish Roman Catholic Union (PRCUA), 984 N. Milwaukee Avenue, 1930s

Photo Courtesy of the Polish Museum of America

In the historic “Polish Downtown”, near the first two Polish parishes established in Chicago, is the hidden jewel of the Chicago’s Polish community. Here are gathered artifacts that remind us of the long history of this group that helped develop and build the City of Chicago.

The Polish Museum of America, one of the oldest and largest ethnic heritage museums in the United States, is celebrating the 75th Anniversary of its founding as the Museum and Archives of the Polish Roman Catholic Union of America. In January of 1937 the Museum was opened to the public. The original museum and archives were located in former office space on the PRCUA’s second floor. Our institution is indebted to Mieczyslaw Haiman, a Polish American writer who had arrived in the United States prior to the outbreak of WWI. He settled originally on the East Coast and eventually became a newspaperman in Buffalo, NY. Eventually, he came to the Midwest and was hired to be the head librarian of the Library established in 1915 by the PRCUA in its headquarters.

He eventually became the first curator of the museum that was to replace the PNA Museum that burned down in 1931 in Cambridge Springs, PA. This new Museum was to be in an urban setting, in the largest Polish community in the United States. Under Haiman, the Museum and Archives grew and expanded. 1941 was an important year, since the Museum was a recipient of two large collections: artifacts and correspondence from the Polish Pavilion at the 1939 New York World’s Fair. Later, during the preparations for



Procession marching in front of the PRCUA building to the St. John Cantius Church; events commemorating 70th Anniversary of the PRCUA, 1943.

Photo Courtesy of the Polish Museum of America

the invasion of Europe, Naval Intelligence visited the Museum and used historic maps to trace old roads in Central Europe to chart supply lines for the Allies and deny them to the Germans.

During this time, with the destruction of Polish Culture, first under the German occupation and then under Soviet rule, the Museum became one of the chief institutions preserving and promulgating Polish culture. Exiled scholars did research here and artists would present programs for large groups of interested persons.

In 1971, the PRCUA, a 501c8 institution, broke legal ties with its Museum, Archives and Library, which were renamed The Polish Museum of America (PMA), and incorporated in the State of Illinois as a 501c3, a not for profit cultural institution. Cooperation with the People’s Republic of Poland was established, but cooperation with exiled Polish communities was also retained.

In addition to the regular tourist, the PMA has served researchers, scholars and the occasional international figure. The late Pope John Paul II, as Karol Cardinal Wojtyla gave speeches in 1969 and 1976 in the Museum’s Great Hall. Among Polish politicians, we have hosted General Wladyslaw Sikorski, Tadeusz Mazowiecki, and Lech Walesa. We were to have been a stop on the late President Lech Kaczynski’s trip to Chicago on May 1, 2010.



Ceremonial opening of the Museum, January 12, 1937. On the stage in the center PRCUA President Joseph L. Kania, on his left Polish consul Waclaw Gawronski, on his right Chicago Mayor Edward Joseph Kelly



Help for the poor. Alderman Stanislaw Adamkiewicz (first from left) gives away food baskets in front of the PRCUA building, CA 1927.



Example of one of the artifacts from the collections of the PMA: Pulaski at Savannah, Stanislaw Kaczor Batowski, oil on canvas, 1933. This painting had been exhibited at the 1933 Century of Progress International Exposition in Chicago. After the fair closed, it was exhibited at the Art Institute of Chicago, where it was ceremoniously unveiled by Mrs. Eleanor Roosevelt July 10, 1934.

Photos Courtesy of the Polish Museum of America

The PMA is seeking to increase its membership. While our “natural audience” of Polish Americans makes up the bulk of our membership, the PMA has been hosting events that are of interest to a larger audience.

Taste
of
Polonia

LABOR DAY WEEKEND
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www.copernicusfdn.org

Polish Food & Beer	Arcade Games	Festival Market Place	Big Nick's Casino
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More up to date information about Museum activities and how to support the PMA can be found on the PMA website www.PolishMuseumofAmerica.org

All text and photos used with permission from the Polish Museum of America

HISTORIC SIX CORNERS

FROM PORTAGE TO PAVEMENT

1860
The Six Corners intersection's first building is constructed on the southwest corner of Irving and Cicero to house a general store.

1889
Jefferson Township, which includes the Six Corners area, is annexed to Chicago. At the time of annexation, longtime residents call Native American settlements in the area. Major reasons for the annexation are better sewer connections, water service and fire protection.

1700s — The portage that ran roughly along what is now Irving Park Road linked the Chicago River to the Des Plaines River, making it possible for voyagers to journey from the mouth of the St. Lawrence Seaway all the way to the Gulf of Mexico.

1860 — The first building to be constructed at Six Corners was the Borok Drugstore at 3929 North Cicero Avenue. Part of the building dates from at least the 1860s; however the exact date of its construction is unknown. Formerly a tavern and coach stop, the building still stands without the flagpole or distinctive cone pictured here.

1926 — The People's Gas, Light and Coke Building at 4839 West Irving Park Road was built in 1926, and is an officially recognized landmark of the City of Chicago. Designed by George Grant Elmslie, an assistant to famed architect Louis Sullivan, it is one of Elmslie's few remaining works.

1926 — Facade detail of the People's Gas, Light, and Coke Building.

1913-14
The area's dirt streets of Cicero, Irving and Milwaukee are paved and curbs installed.

1926
The Chicago landmark People's Gas, Light & Coke building is constructed. The gas company originally used the building to introduce new gas appliances. Today, it is occupied by Lydia Home Association.

1951
The first parking meters are installed at Six Corners. As the area became popular, the meters were meant to turn over parking spaces.

1950
A new building is constructed on the southwest of Irving and Lamon. The building, which still stands, is the home to many banks over the years, including Cragin, Talman, LaSalle and finally, Bank of America.

1981
The sidewalk beautification project before the 2009-11 improvements is completed at a cost of \$300,000.

2009
Construction work begins on the Six Corners streetscape beautification, which includes new sidewalks, lightpoles and planters. The \$20 million project adds 300 trees to the sidewalk landscape.

Circa 1915 — Pictured here is a view of Six Corners along Cicero Avenue with a view of Paul Fabich's Restaurant, Marek's Home Treading Store, and the Logan Tea Company. This shot shows the rapid commercial development brought by the expansion of streetcar lines along Milwaukee Avenue, Cicero Avenue, and Irving Park Road, giving shoppers easy access to the area.

1926 — The People's Gas, Light and Coke Building at 4839 West Irving Park Road was built in 1926, and is an officially recognized landmark of the City of Chicago. Designed by George Grant Elmslie, an assistant to famed architect Louis Sullivan, it is one of Elmslie's few remaining works.

See all five historical markers around Six Corners.

Take a virtual tour of Six Corners with ForgivenChicago.com

www.sixcornerschicago.com

© 2011 Six Corners Kiosk Project. Timeline photo © Sarah Christie. Top left photo © Chicago Historical Society. Top right photo © Harold Washington Library. Bottom left photo © Irving Park Historical Society. Bottom middle photo © John Meloni. Bottom right photo © John Meloni.

Six Corners Historic Kiosks

Did you know when the first streetcar line came to Six Corners? What year the streets were first paved and curbs installed? Or when the first parking meters were installed? Did you know that Milwaukee Avenue had tollbooths? Or when or where the Jefferson Town Hall was built? All these questions and more can be answered by visiting the new historic kiosks at Six Corners.

Six Corners (Milwaukee Ave., Cicero Ave. & Irving Park Rd.) shopping district has placed five historical markers highlighting the rich historical history that took place in the neighborhood. These Kiosks display historic timelines, photos and information.

1. From Portage to Pavement
2. A Tavern, Talkies and a Tollbooth
3. Fresh Start, New Opportunities on Chicago Frontier
4. Crossroads Creates a Commercial Powerhouse
5. Sears: Retail Innovator, Art Moderne Masterpiece

See all five historical markers around Six Corners.





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ForgottenChicago.com**

Located on each kiosk is a QR code, offering the ability to scan with a Smartphone. The website displays a map highlighting different points of interest around Six Corners, as well as photos.

NOTE: We like to extend our thanks to Northwest Chicago Historical Society members Dan Pogorzelski and Rich Lang who spent long hours working on the contents of these Kiosks. Dan Pogorzelski is the Vice-President of the Northwest Chicago Historical Society and Rick Lang is past President of the Irving Park Historical Society. Thank you for your hard work!



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The Milwaukee Avenue Streetcar tracks were exposed for a short time during the resurfacing of Milwaukee Avenue a few years ago. These tracks, along with the ones on Irving Park Road and Cicero Avenue, help spur the growth of Six Corners to what once was the largest shopping district outside of the loop.

Photo by Frank Suerth.