

Copernicus
center

HAPPY
New Year!
2024

The Copernicus Foundation
wishes you a happy, healthy,
and prosperous New Year!

WWW.COPERNICUSCENTER.ORG



Northwest Chicago Historical Society

Your Neighborhood Historical Society

Newsletter January 2024

Number XXXIX

Gambling in Chicago • The Norske Klub

This month's newsletter offers a broad overview of local (illegal) gaming, and we also take a look into an important Northwest Side ethnic community.

While researching Gambling in Chicago, we were surprised how commonplace and accepted that betting has always been, particularly on the Northwest Side. From Chicago's first European settlers to today's internet gamers, Chicagoans have always embraced the activity of playing games for stakes. Today, one can partake legally with the blessings of the controlling authorities.

When it comes to early European settlement, we often think of the Germans, the Irish and the Poles. However, Chicago also had a flourishing enclave of Norwegian Americans living on the Northwest Side. Learn a little about their social clubs in the Norske Club. When gathering information for the article about the Logan Square building at 2350 N. Kedzie Avenue, we came across a Norwegian-American artist, Emil Biørn, who's artwork appeared in a previous newsletter. If you would like to see it too, go to www.nwchicagohistory.org, click on "newsletters" in the menu bar, and find the July 2015 edition in the list. On page 14, you will see Emil Biørn's painting, *The Viking Ship*. Born in Norway, he lived less than a mile from the Norske Klub, at 1920 N. Albany Avenue.

Recently, we have been receiving correspondence from all over the United States and even other parts of the world. We are thrilled that the history of Northwest Chicago is now being discovered everywhere. We will continue to do our best to answer your inquiries.

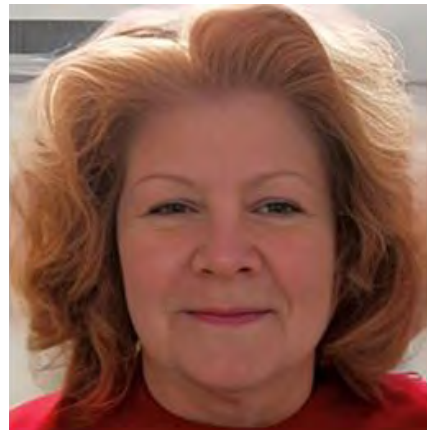
Thank you for reading the NWCHS newsletter. - *Susanna Ernst*

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 We will accomplish this through discussion at meetings, public tours and events, and dissemination of historical documents and photos through publications.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.

In Memoriam

Del Norwood, former board member of the Northwest Chicago Historical Society, recently passed away at the age of 83. She was a Jefferson Park resident and a founder of the Saint Robert Bel-larmine Community Spirit Garden. The garden, which is run by volunteers, has about 40 flower beds. Any produce grown there is donated to local food pantries. For her efforts, she was recognized in 2018 by the city of Chicago as a "Senior of the Year," and presented with a Distinguished Service Award.



Del Norwood was born in Chicago to Joseph and Aurelia Romb and was here along with her elder brothers Eugene and Anselm. She graduated from St. Ferdinand School before attending Good Counsel High School. Later, she studied chemistry at Wilbur Wright Junior College. She is greatly missed by people who knew her.

Visit our website: <http://nwchicagohistory.org>

Keep track of what is happening at the Northwest Chicago Historical Society

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

www.meetup.com/The-Northwest-Chicago-History-Meetup-Group/

NW Chicago Historical Society

P. O. Box 30067

Chicago, IL 60630

e-mail: nwchicagohistory@sbcglobal.net

© 2024 Northwest Chicago Historical Society - All rights reserved

Membership:

\$15.00 per calendar year

\$10.00 for 65 years old and over

Phone: 773-725-5774

Letters

Letters may have been edited for clarity and space

Good morning,

I am writing from Leeds in the UK with a question I sincerely hope you can either answer for me or, at least suggest or point me in the direction I should next take.

Family history has held me in fascination for over 20 years and currently I am writing notes on my great grandfather, Thomas Gaunt. (1857-1946), his eldest daughter Edith (1883-1938) was my grandmother having married my grandfather Arnold William Lewis (1880-1947) in 1908 here in Leeds.

Thomas Gaunt was a cloth designer and whilst having been born in the north of England moved south to Stroud in Gloucestershire which at that time was also a hub of woollen cloth manufacturing. He worked at Marling & Co one of the largest manufacturers based at both Ebley Mill (weaving) and Stanley Mill a few miles away which was where design and company management resided. You will see from the attached newspaper cuttings mention of the lecturing he provided to local mill workers and there is mention of his being awarded Diploma H M Chicago. Until I came across this no one in the family ever knew or has evidence of this award. He had 7 children, sadly now all deceased and their descendants all confirmed ignorance of this award.

Is the North West Chicago History Society able to assist me in identifying the 1894 event and perhaps provide me with what appears to have been a commercial competition?

I look forward to hearing from you.

Kind regards,

Adrian J. W. Lewis - Leeds, England

Thomas Gaunt could have shown his clothing design work at the World's Columbian Exposition in Chicago in 1893 but this event was not in 1894. Perhaps this event took place in some other city. - NWCHS

You may want to contact the Chicago History Museum at: 1601 North Clark Street Chicago, Illinois 60614-6038 <https://www.chicagohistory.org/contact/>

Or contact the Newberry Library at: 60 W Walton St., Chicago, IL 60610 • 312-943-9090 <https://www.newberry.org/>



Thomas Gaunt and most likely his wife.

Photo Courtesy of Adrian J. W. Lewis

Letters

Letters may have been edited for clarity and space

Dear all,

I am contacting you because I read your newsletter from 2018 (link below) about Hans Muench- he is the brother of my great grandma and my dads great uncle.

<http://nwchicagohistory.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/11/NWCHS-JUL-2018.pdf>

I am looking for relatives in the US, descendants of Hans Muench. My great grandma was called Münch (Muench), see picture below. Part of family emigrated to the US, (we all know why), but we haven't been in touch since. My dad is now 83 and he keeps asking if I can find out what happened to his family's ancestors. Do you have any idea/connections of relatives of Hans Muench living in Chicago?

Picture of my great grand parents - Family Münch (Muench) from Offenburg. Her brother was Hans Muench.

Thank you so much an kind regards,

Diana Schneider, M.A. B.Sc. Apothekerin


Sorry but there are no descendants in left in Chicago. Hans' two daughters are gone.

I spoke with both grandchildren, Grandson Michael Shannon and granddaughter Martee Shannon, on the phone. They said they would send a picture of Hans, but they havenot yet done that.

Contact information for grandchildren as of 2018 was emailed to you. Good luck on your reseach. - NWCHS




Photo Courtesy of Diana Schneider



MOODY

Plumbing Inc.



- RESIDENTIAL
- INDUSTRIAL
- INSURED

- COMMERCIAL
- LICENSED
- BONDED

Joe Moody

Bus. Ph. (773) 777-1614 Fax (773) 777-6614

Letters

Letters may have been edited for clarity and space

Question for you the result of the latest newsletter. Is William P. Gray the reason the train station on Milwaukee Ave near Schurz is Grayland?

A good friend has a hobby shop named Grayland Station on Devon. He grew up nearby the train station and named his business after it.

Be Well,

Frank Chambers – Portage Park
NWCHS Member

No, the Grayland Station is named after William's more famous brother, John Gray. Cicero Avenue divided their property. John was east of Cicero Avenue and William P. was west of of Cicero Avenue.



John Gray's house in Old Irving Park in 2023.

Photo Courtesy of Donald Faliszek

Clark Street Sports – 4506 W. Lawrence Ave. Was there a car dealership at this address?

Art De Leon

Here is what we found at the 4506 W. Lawrence address:

*May 1927 - Mayfair Motors – Sales for the Elcar Motor Co. of Elkhart, IN
1949 - 1979 – Chicago Switchboard Co. - Manufacturer - NWCHS*

Letters

Letters may have been edited for clarity and space

Hello NW Chicago Historical Society,

I came across your July 2017 newsletter while researching information about my great grandpa Joseph Rudikoff and the store he owned in the early 1920's or 1930's. He and his family lived in the apartment above the store. I don't have a lot of information about him except that he migrated from Russia to Chicago and had this store. With a little research I found that the building is still standing (amazing!). If you have any info related to the store or him - I'd love to hear more!

3851 W North Ave, Chicago, IL 60647

Regards,

Cara Baldonado



Joseph Rudikoff, standing in front of his store at 3851 W. North Avenue

Photo Courtesy of Cara Baldonado



How the building at 3851 W North Avenue looks today.

Google Photo

We have no more information on your great-grandfather or his store. We did find a Madame Evon, offering Card Reading and "advice on all problems," working out of this store front in the 1950s. The police arrested Madame Evon in 1958 for practicing palmistry and clairvoyance after taking over \$200.00 from Mrs. Rose Bauer who, according to Evon, was possessed by evil spirits. - NWCHS



At Heritage Tile, our mission is to guide and inspire customers on their search for **authentic tile and stone** products. With an emphasis on historical preservation, we are a trusted curator of tile that embodies cultural traditions, historical authenticity, and extraordinary craftsmanship.

heritagetile.com



Experience Heritage Tile products and consult with design professionals at our Oak Park showroom:

144 N. Oak Park Ave. • Oak Park, IL 60301

Hours: Monday-Friday, 10am-4pm (by appointment)

Schedule a visit: (708) 919-1600 or showroom@heritagetile.com

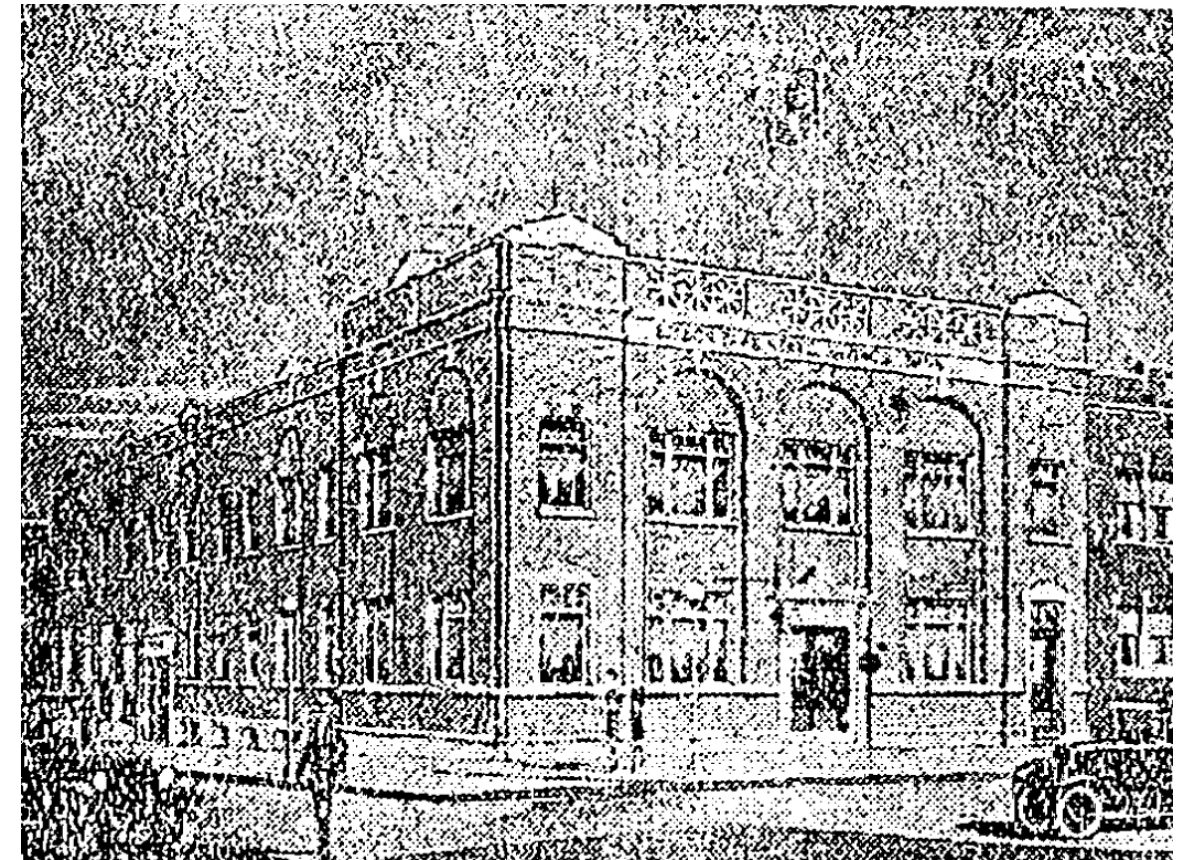
Letters

Letters may have been edited for clarity and space

I recently noticed the Edison Park State Savings Bank sign at the top of the Moretti's pizza building on N Omsted Ave by the train station. When I tried searching for any info online about the building, I could find very little. I was wondering if you could provide any info on the history of the building, or where I might be able to find anything myself. Thank you!

Benjamin Tims

The first owner of this two story building, on the corner of Olmsted and Oshkosh Avenues, was the Edison Park State Savings Bank and they commissioned architect Albert Ruttenburg to design this building. It was built in 1926 for about \$100,000. Besides housing the bank, three small apartments and a community center in the basement were part of the plan. - NWCHS



Architect sketch of the building at 6733 Olmsted Avenue.

Gambling in Chicago

By Frank Suerth

In 2023, Chicago celebrated the opening of the first gambling establishment with great fanfare. However, it is more accurate to say that Chicago celebrated the opening of the first legal gambling establishment, as gambling has existed in Chicago since before its inception.

In the early years, when Chicago was merely a small outpost in the western frontier, poker and other card games entertained the men in taverns that lined the river. According to the Encyclopedia of Chicago, it was an important feature of Mark Beaubien's Sauganash tavern. Bettors not only played card games, but they also wagered on checkers, backgammon, horse racing and prize fights. In the 1830s, Protestant clergy denounced gambling and city officials jailed proprietors of two gambling houses.

As the years went by, the types of gambling increased and became more prevalent. By the 1850s, gamblers gathered to bet at rat and cock fights. Slot machines, craps, roulette and black jack tables also became elements of booking houses. The owners of the gambling establishments opened up more possibilities for customers to place bets, usually on sporting events. Bingo, with origins in the Italian lottery, was embraced by the Chicago Catholic Church and other charitable institutions. One could even gamble on chicken poop! That's right... bet on a spot where you hope the chicken will poop and win if you are correct.



Copyright secured by A. T. Andreas, 1884.

THE SAUGANASH HOTEL.

Mark Beaubien's Sauganash Tavern.

10.



Top photo is the exterior view of the Dev-Lin gambling house at Lincoln and Devon Avenues in Lincolnwood, Illinois.

Bottom photo is taken from a hidden camera of illegal gambling at the Dev-Lin gambling Roadhouse.

Chicago Tribune
historical photos -
1935

11.

While Chicago, Cook County, and other nearby municipalities tried to put a stop to this untaxed entertainment, gambling dens did their best to avoid the laws. In 1886, Captain George Streeter ran his steamboat into a sand bar about 400 feet offshore of what is now Superior Street. More sand and landfill created more than 100 acres of new land. Houses were added, and he sold plots on his new territory. Captain Streeter pointed out that his land was not on any Chicago or county map and therefore not subject to any of their laws, therefore allowing open gambling on his claimed land.

Riverview Park was an amusement park that existed between 1904 and 1967 on Chicago's Northwest Side. In 1922, the Park debuted dog racing, where dogs chased a mechanical rabbit around the Kennel Club's oval. The Park featured a wide range games of chance, from something as simple as someone guessing your weight to something as elaborate as betting on which live monkey would cross the finish line first while driving a small race car. Additionally, patrons could venture their luck by throwing balls at dolls or pins, hurling darts at balloons, or by tossing ping-pong balls into goldfish bowls.



Early style slot machine used in the gambling houses.

Some businesses on the northwest side and suburbs with slot machines in 1952

- Barry's Bair Tavern – Rand and River Roads
- Al Mar's Chicken Hut - Rand and River Roads
- Union Hotel – Wheeling, Illinois
- Bubbling Inn Tavern – Wheeling, Illinois
- Ridgemoor Gardens Tavern – 6221 Gunnison Street
- Emil's Barbecue Restaurant – Higgins and Mannheim Roads
- Eden Inn – 9900 Irving Park Road
- Alby's Tavern – 9645 Irving Park Road
- Koziol's Whitehouse – River and Irving Park Roads
- Trale Inn – 6554 Milwaukee Avenue
- Harlem Tap – about 4800 N. Harlem Avenue

During the prohibition years (1920-1933), some gambling establishments hosted private clubs where a password was required to enter. Of course, patrons could imbibe while wagering. One such club was the Western Social Club located at 7050 W. Belmont Avenue.

To avoid the city police, gambling boats traveled miles east of Navy Pier with the argument that the city lacks jurisdiction over lake waters and is powerless to arrest the owners of the gambling ships. In 1935, Chicago police arrested the employees and owner of Showboat Sam, a floating gambling resort. The courts agreed with the city in that it could enforce their laws in Lake Michigan within 3 miles of the shore line.

Many entrepreneurs famously set up their businesses in unincorporated areas in outlying roadhouses to avoid the local police. One of the more famous gambling houses on the Northwest Side was the Wagon Wheel, which opened up around 1938 in unincorporated Cook County. It was located at 6412 W. Montrose (now Harwood Heights). To gain entry, a "lookout" would judge if someone were a suitable risk by assessing them through a two-way mirror at the entry. The Wagon Wheel also had some sister locations: 4416 N. Narragansett and 6416 W. Gunnison Street, both also in unincorporated Cook County. Another Northwest Side houses that were part of the Wagon Wheel brand included the Ballard Inn (on the south side of Ballard Road, just west of Potter Road) and a newly built building at 6444 W. Gunnison Street. The Wagon Wheel operated until the late 1950s, and the building was destroyed by fire in 1963.



Typical Gambling Speakeasy.



Matchbook cover advertising the Mayfair Club on Elston Avenue.



Al Mar's Chicken Hut located at Rand and River Roads. This roadhouse offered chicken with slot machines while betting on the ponies.

Lake Clubs and resorts in Lake County Illinois offered gambling to both locals and vacationers. Others closer to the City included: the Forest Lounge at 6548 Milwaukee Avenue, the nearby Florentine Saloon on Milwaukee Avenue, Beverly Tap on Higgins Road near Elmhurst Road, Horseshoe Club at 4721 N. Kedzie (with the Senrab Social and Athletic Club at 4745 N. Kedzie), Devlin at Lincoln and Devon Avenues, Wilbur's 9501 Club at 9501 Irving Park Road in Schiller Park, the Casino Club at 4715 Irving Park Road, Mayfair Club at 4837 Elston Avenue, the Forty-Eleven Club at 4011 Monticello Avenue, Crawford Club at 3946 W. School Street, and The Dome at 7466 W. Irving Park Road.

In 1934, a roadhouse at 4301 N. Harlem called the Harlem Stables opened. It was large enough to accommodate 600 guests. Some of these larger gambling establishments protected their money with security men armed with machine guns. Customers with large winnings were offered security guards to accompany them to their bank.

In 1947, it was reported in the Chicago Tribune that a gambling ring operated out of the Municipal Tuberculosis Sanitarium at 5600 N. Pulaski Road. The bookies had a captive audience with the hundreds of patients at the sanitarium. The patients would place their bets on horse races, while one of the bookies would station themselves in one of the tunnels on the property.

Today, gambling is more genteelly referenced as "gaming." Betting on professional sports is now legal and is often done virtually. Football squares are still being sold today at many taverns in the city, especially for the Superbowl. Gaming will likely continue, whether it's sanctioned or not. So, go out now and find a Queen of Hearts drawing near you!



RETURN OF THE QUEEN

ST. ROBERT† BELLARMINE QUEEN of HEARTS

50/50 RAFFLE

\$5/ticket, cash or check only

Drawings on selected Thursdays starting January 19th
at Firewater Saloon - 6689 N Oliphant Ave, Chicago



**Family.
Friends.
Community.**

David A Wians, Agent
5870 N Milwaukee Avenue
Chicago, IL 60646
Bus: 773-774-1500
www.davidwians.com

We're all in this together.
State Farm® has a long tradition of being there. That's one reason why I'm proud to support Northwest Chicago Historical Society.

Here to help life go right.®



The Norske Klub

By Frank Suerth

The Norske Klub was a Chicago based Norwegian-American cultural and social organization that operated from 1911 to 1971. It began with the merger of two prior Chicago organizations: Norwegian Club and the Norwegian Quartet Club. Businessmen and professionals of Norwegian descent made up most of the members, and programs were intended for sociability and fellowship.

Until they could build a new home, the club would meet on the 2nd floor, at the “Old Hall,” located on the northwest corner of Kedzie and Milwaukee Avenues. The new Chicago Norske Klub building was opened officially on July 4th, 1917, at 2350 N. Kedzie Avenue.

Many diplomats and government officials, both foreign and domestic, were invited to speak over meals at their headquarters. Roald Amundsen, discoverer of the South Pole, Fridtjof Nansen, explorer and humanitarian, and Sonja Henie, Norwegian figure skater and film star, were just a few of the “Norwegian royalty” honored at the Norske Klub. Plays by Norwegian playwrights were performed in the club’s auditorium. At the time, the Norske Klub was the cultural center of Norwegian life in the very Norwegian neighborhood of Logan Square.



The first meeting place for the club was at the “Old Hall,” located on the northwest corner of Kedzie and Milwaukee Avenues



The home of the Chicago Norske Klub at 2350 N. Kedzie Avenue.



Photo of the Dining Room. This room was arranged as a dining room in the ship the SS Norway. Paintings by Emil Biørn portrayed scenes from the Norway coast, so it appeared to the patrons that they were looking through windows on the ship. *Photos Courtesy of the Library of Congress*

18.



A 1920s photo of the Chicago Norske Klub building at 2350 N. Kedzie Avenue.

Photo Courtesy of the Newberry Library

19.

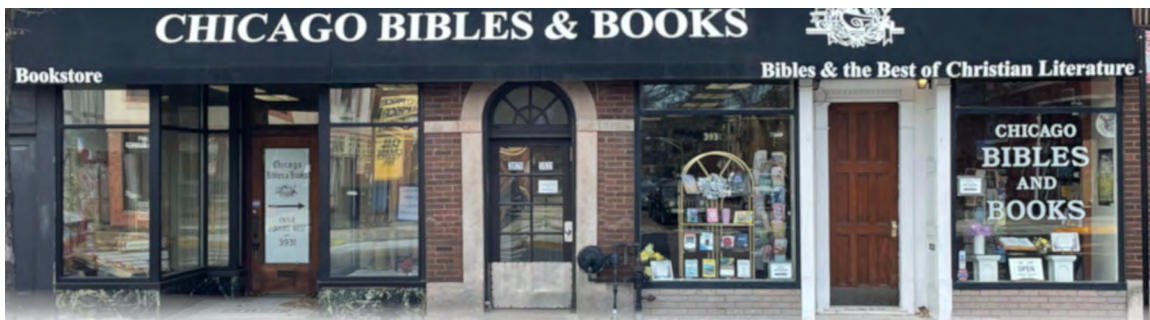


To generate money for operating cost, both the Norske Klub and the Torske Klub rented out the building for events.

Photo Courtesy of the Library of Congress

Other organizations, like the Logan Square Lions Club, Luther College Club, the Employers' Association of Chicago, and the Young People's Club of the Norwegian Old Peoples Home, at 6016 Nina Avenue, had meetings or luncheons at their club building. In 1958, the residents of Washington Island, Door County, Wisconsin held their annual reunion at the Chicago Norske Klub. The club building hosted 250 people at this event.

In the early 1950s, the walls of the Norske Klub were filled with artwork from famous Norwegian artists, and the club was opened to the public when hosting art exhibits. At that time, the club featured slot machines. Women were welcome to the club every day except Friday. *(Cont'd on page 24)*



Jesus said...., I am the resurrection and the life; he who believes into Me,... shall live." John 11:25

3931 W. Irving Park Road • (773) 478.0550 • Monday to Saturday 10-6 • www.biblesandbooks.com • Serving Chicago Since 1981



Two photos of art exhibits held at the Norske Klub.

Photos Courtesy of the Library of Congress



Norwegian Fireplace – located in the Main Club Room was designed by club member Chr. U. Bagge. Note a reindeer head mounted above the mantle.



The High Seat. Emil Biørn decorated the High Seat in Norse tapestry style. It depicts Leif Erikson, in the year 1000 C. E., landing in Vinland (America). The High Seat was located in the Main Club Room.

Photos Courtesy of the Library of Congress



View of the third floor room, a small room with low ceilings. The round window at the right is the front of the building.

Photo Courtesy of the Library of Congress

Around 1971, the Norske Klub filed for bankruptcy stemming from a lawsuit from someone who hurt themselves in their building. The building was lost in the bankruptcy and the organization was disbanded.

The Torske Club (Chicago Sons of Norway) was another local Norwegian organization, created in 1960. They purchased the building in 1971 for about \$75,000 and renamed the building the Norway Center. The Norway Center was operating at a loss, so in order to generate revenue, they decided to rent out the hall on the property. Within a year, they generated \$25,000 from weddings, formal dances, and other celebratory occasions. They also instituted a Sunday afternoon smorgasbord to generate funds. For the next ten years, these additional sources of income covered Norway Center's fixed operating expenses.

By 1988, Norway Center was again back in debt, forcing the sale of the building. The building has now been converted to condos and is still standing at the 2350 N. Kedzie Avenue address.

The Torske Klub is still meeting at their new location, the Scandinavian American Cultural Society in Arlington Heights.

Thank you Windsor Tavern
 for hosting us for one of our meeting!
 The Windsor Tavern and Grill - 4530 N. Milwaukee Avenue



Photo of the main club room. The fireplace can be seen on the right and the "High Chair" at the left. The room also had a grand piano. In 1934, the "Tuesday Singers Evenings" performed, which in earlier days had been very pleasant. The singers and their friends sat around a long table in the middle of the club room, singing and telling stories. Decorated with paintings and a large tapestry, "The Discovery of Vinland" by Emil Biørn is displayed on the south wall. Emil Biørn also designed the lighting fixtures.

Photo Courtesy of the Library of Congress

<p>NADIG PRESS Newspapers REPORTER JOURNAL</p> <p><i>Serving Northwest Chicago & Suburbs Since 1940</i></p> <p>Brian Nadig 773-286-6100 Publisher 4937 N. Milwaukee Avenue Chicago, Illinois 60630-2191 Fax 773-286-8151</p> <p>www.nadignewspapers.com</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"> MOODY Plumbing Inc.</p> <p>• RESIDENTIAL • COMMERCIAL • INDUSTRIAL • LICENSED • INSURED • BONDED</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Joe Moody</i></p> <p>Bus. Ph. (773) 777-1614 Fax (773) 777-6614</p>
--	--



The Library, shown above, was on the 2nd floor with art displayed from Norwegian-American artists.
Photo Courtesy of the Library of Congress



Shown above; some of the fine detailed work that was removed from the building when it was remodeled.

Please support our advertisers.



www.delightfulpastries.com

Jefferson Park Chicago – Store

Address – 5927 W. Lawrence Avenue
 Chicago, IL 60630

Phone - (773) 545-7215

Email - info@delightfulpastries.com

Mon-Fri 6:00 am to 6:00 pm

Sat. 6:00am to 4:00 pm Sun. CLOSED

*Quiche Bits – Caprese Canapés – Mushroom Turnovers – Mini Latkes
 Deviled Eggs - Mini BLT's - Mini Roasted Veggie - Mini Tuna*

Salad platters - Frittata

Petite pastry Tray

Cheese Platter

Fresh Fruit & Berries

Finger Sandwiches

Catering

Brownie Tray

Mini Avocado BLT's

Mini Egg Salad

Veggie Frittata

Breakfast Pastry Tray

Mini Ham – Mini Thanksgiving – Holiday Cookies – Cookie Tray

Sandwiches - Petite Pastry Tray - Crudités and Dip – Pierogi Tray



Savory Quiches



Croissants



Doughnuts

TRY OUR AWARD WINNING CROISSANTS