



# Edgewater Scrapbook

"Notes from the Past, News from the Present"

Vol. XXII, No. 3

Fall-Winter 2011

## Edgewater Grocery /Stores 1890-2000

By LeRoy Blommaert

The historic pattern of grocery store development in Edgewater follows that of many of Chicago communities as they developed. First there was one - there was always a first one. Then it was followed by another, then a few more; and then as the community was built up, there were many. A further phase was the coming of the major chains - A&P, National and Jewel. They in turn were followed by other chains, such as Kroger, Eagle and Dominick's. The early chains were not that much larger than the individually owned stores and at first they occupied storefronts in existing buildings rather than buildings of their own construction. The next phase was the construction of larger stores by the chains. While generally larger than the earlier storefronts, they were certainly nothing like the large supermarkets that we have today. The last phase was the domination in terms of sales by the chains. And they became big, really big as compared with their earlier predecessors and current competitors, and in their expansion they became not just grocery stores, but meat markets, bakeries, delicatessens, and later pharmacies, coffee shops, photo processing centers and even branch banks as well - all under one roof, and, reflecting the change in society's transportation habits, they came with plenty of off street parking.

Grocery shopping in urban areas

was quite different at the start of the 20th century, and even in the 1930s, than it is today. It was different in several respects. One, people shopped more often; in an age before reliable refrigeration they had to, at least for perishables. A daily trip was not uncommon. Two, they walked rather than drove. Car ownership was not as widespread as it is today and grocery stores were plentiful and within reasonable walking distance. Three, it was the women who shopped; it was part of the "job" along with cleaning and cooking and washing clothes. Four, shoppers went to specialty stores: that were usually close to each other: the grocery store, the meat market, the fish market, the bakery, and the delicatessen. And five, there was no self-service. That would come later, an innovation introduced by the chains. The shopper would tell the clerk what she wanted and he would get it for her and then add up the bill. Credit was

often given too.

While Edgewater followed the familiar pattern, there was at least one way that it differed from other, older neighborhoods, and that was that Edgewater's grocery stores, with only a few known exceptions, were all on commercial streets or immediately adjacent, and not within residential neighborhoods. Clark Street between Foster and Bryn Mawr saw an initially heavy concentration; another area was Clark between Ridge and Norwood and each of the streets east of Broadway with an "L" station had at least one - Berwyn, Bryn Mawr, Thorndale, and Granville. And then Devon Avenue between Broadway and Clark, another shopping area, also saw several. Only west of Clark street, and on Glenwood, Bryn Mawr, and Ridge in the central core were grocers found on non-commercial streets.

Edgewater's first grocery store appropriately enough began in



James McManus in front of his store.

(Continued on page 4)



## From the President

You are probably reading this as 2012 takes hold. We want to wish you and your family all the best for a great New Year. We also thank all our members, volunteers, and supporters for their contributions to support your local museum this past year. The holidays give pause to consider some highlights since the last issue and to give you a hint of what's to come in the next year.

We are excited about our current and upcoming exhibits. You'll read more about the delightful grocery store exhibit and LeRoy Blommaert's wonderful research article in this issue. We should all thank Kathy Gemperle for another superb job as curator and her enthusiastic team that included Tom Murphy (whose aesthetic and mechanical talents brought a valuable Van Berkel antique meat slicer back to life), LeRoy Blommaert (who did some extraordinary and interesting research on Edgewater's grocery traditions), Tiffany Middleton (whose research on technology trends in food shopping gave us a broader and fascinating context in which to consider Edgewater trends), and Dorothy Nygren, Marty Stewart, Morry Matson and all those who devoted many hours or brought in antique boxes and food tins for the exhibit. The exhibit will run through March 24. In keeping with the theme of food and community's, we are accepting food donations for Edgewater's Care For Real Pantry. You will find a large bushel basket ready to accept your non perishables.

We are enthusiastic about the Crime and Community exhibit which follows in April. We are grateful to Morry Matson, who has agreed to take charge of this exhibit which promises to be most interesting and instructive. While Edgewater has had its share of infamous criminals and crimes, it will be also

instructive to explore the role of community in response to crimes. Edgewater has a long and effective history of community and grassroots activism that has confronted safety and crime issues for decades.

Later in the summer, Morry will again dazzle us with a very special exhibit Greetings from Edgewater that will stroll nostalgic through Edgewater's era as a summer destination, when the Edgewater Beach Hotel was not our only excursion highlight, tracked by the wonderful visuals of a post card history.

Our annual Fall Home Tour will revisit the northwest corner of Edgewater on Sunday, September 16, 2012, when we explore the charm of the area represented by the Neighbors of Edgewater West (west of Clark and North of Elmdale), including a home recently added to the National Register of Historic Places.

In October we plan to again have the Plein Air artists show their talents, painting Edgewater and Chicago scenes, during the Andersonville Arts Weekend. October will also be a very special month, as it will be the tenth anniversary of the opening of our museum. We will be planning activities, displays, and a special event to commemorate the anniversary. Speaking of anniversaries, St. Gertrude's celebrates 100 years in 2012 and we will bring you more in coming issues. And don't forget that 2013 will be the 25th Anniversary of the founding of EHS and the centennial for Sem High School - so stay tuned.

Modernity is catching up with our museum. We have caught the technology bug. We are pleased to report that we are instituting a number of improvements to make your membership and museum visit more enjoyable. We have added an orientation alcove in the front of the museum to present a brief orientation video; in the main gallery we upgraded our old TV with a flat screen where we can show the DVDs of Edgewater and the Edgewater Beach Hotel, and we have a

work station where visitors can do research on our website, or look at a video orientation about the current exhibit. Dorothy Nygren brought her exacting and fervent scripting skills to prepare these presentations. Dorothy has also enlisted a laptop to help us visually record oral history interviews in the museum. We also still have WiFi available in the museum. We must thank Dorothy, Tiffany Middleton, Barb Strauss, Marty Stewart, Larry Rosen, and Tom Murphy who have worked so hard to upgrade our AV and other technology.

You may also have noticed the new look to your emails. We recently went to a new email provider and we hope the look and feel will be ever more enticing and useful. Thanks go out to the project team of Betty Mayian, Barb Strauss, and Tiffany Middleton. You also may have noticed our Facebook page, which is now administered by Megan Hudgins - so please "Friend Us"! Thanks also to Megan for instituting a periodic "Did You Know" item you don't want to miss.

While we continue to explore funding options for our ambitious Edgewater History Project (EHP), we nevertheless will move ahead on our ambition to develop archives and collections relationships with over 80 civic organizations, religious institutions, and schools in Edgewater. This past year, for example, we gratefully accepted the archives of the Edgewater Community Council, whose 50 plus years of services can be preserved. We also have a formal relationship with West Andersonville Neighbors Together (WANT) to receive and digitize their archives. We continue with our ties to our local Chambers of Commerce and others to document and collect their histories.

While we have collected archived material on all of Edgewater's block clubs, we will accelerate our effort to approach all 15 Edgewater neighborhoods to formalize those relationships and make presenta-

*(Continued on page 3)*

tions. If your organization or block club would like us to make a presentation on EHP, please don't hesitate to contact us; we are more than glad to come out to meet with you.

All of the work we do to preserve, protect, display, and disseminate our local history would not be possible without the unselfish contributions of our volunteers and your board of directors. If you are not already a volunteer, please consider giving of your time, even if only a few hours now and then. We have a lot of volunteer opportunities, from being a museum docent (at least 3-4 hours per month) to helping out on the house tours, to research, to helping put up exhibits, or yes, even the more prosaic tasks like stuffing envelopes. All those functions are terribly important and make your historical society what it is. We would love to have you.

A huge volunteer effort is put in by your board of directors, all of whom actively volunteer in more than just board meetings. This coming March, your general membership meeting will vote for and install an incoming class of new board members; we are actively looking for people who would like

to serve. If you have an interest in local history, or perhaps like to organize events or fundraiser, or would like to bring your skills and backgrounds to our aid, please let us know. Reggie Griffin and Al Borenstine are co-chairing our Board Development Committee and they would be pleased to talk with you about board duties and how you could fit in.

You will soon be receiving your membership renewal letters, and I urge you to continue your support, which will entitle you to continue to receive this award winning Scrapbook. There will be a slight increase of five dollars in the family and individual memberships, but we have added some important membership benefits: for example only EHS members will be eligible to purchase house histories; you will also be invited to member previews to upcoming exhibits, and more. But most important your membership contributes about one third of the cost of keep the museum building open and free.

Thank you for your support, and we look forward to serving you again this coming year.

Bob Remer

## Upcoming Anniversaries

The Edgewater Historical Society will celebrate 10 years in the museum in October 2012.

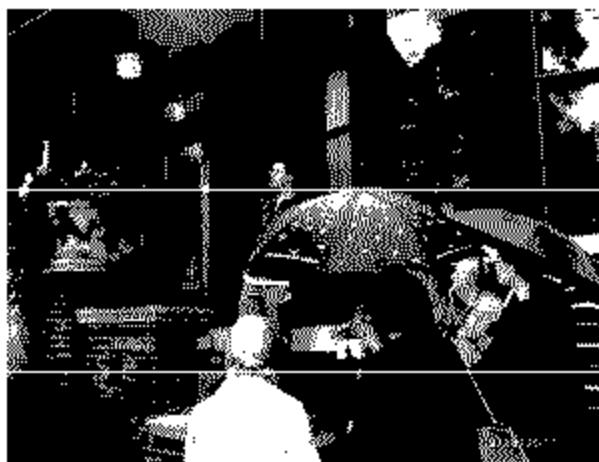
St. Gertrude Parish celebrates 100 years of service in Edgewater in 2012. They began with a celebration on Nov. 13th and they are looking for photos and artifacts.

Senn High School will celebrate 100 years in 2013 and there is a planning committee already working on the event that will be held at the Field Museum.

The North Lakeside Cultural Center has closed its doors after twenty five years of service to the community as a gathering place for the arts. The Center was housed in the Gunder Mansion, 6219 North Sheridan, in Berger Park that was saved from demolition thru the efforts of ECC under the leadership of Kathy Osterman. The Chicago Park District will take over the operation of the building.

The Edgewater Historical Society is happy to receive the archives of this group.

## POSTCARD



*Jonas Middleton describing the beauty of an Arts and Crafts home on Balmoral for the sheltered tourgoers.*

Dear Friends in Edgewater,

The 2011 Home Tour in the Lakewood Balmoral Historic District was a lovely event despite the rain.. We started at the Unity Lutheran Church (with special thanks to those who helped with rearranging due to the rain.) and ended at the Gar Bar at LBRC's President's home. Some of the highlights were two homes by Edgewater Architect Myron Church and two homes by Berkeley Brandt. Other homes were Craftsman gems.

The attendance was great with 250 people walking the neighborhood. Our generous owners and docents made this tour a great success. It is a most pleasant way to support your local historical society.

Hope to see more of you next year.

Kathy

## Grocery Stores

(Continued from page 1)

Edgewater's first commercial building - the Guild Hall built by Cochran in 1886 and designed by Joseph L. Silsbee at the southwest corner of Bryn Mawr and Winthrop. The store, which first opened between May 1891 and June 1892, was a partnership of William J. Marshall and William F. Wilson. Both partners lived at separate quarters within a short walk from the store. Sometime between July 1895 and June 1896, the company became known as the William Marshall Co. and Wilson had been replaced by James McManus. The City Directory for 1897 shows that the store had moved across the street to what is now 1102 Bryn Mawr. The City Directory for 1898 shows that grocery store was in the name of James McManus alone.

Edgewater's first grocery store was also one of Edgewater's longest operating independent grocers, ending only in 1936, only after a fire destroyed the building in which it was located. The Society has a number of items from this first grocery store including a number of old photographs, one of which is reproduced here. (See figure #1).

Edgewater's second grocery store came a year or less after the first and was not very far away. It was the Dole Company (apparently a partnership of William L. and George A. Dole) and was located on "Evanston Avenue near Bryn Mawr." The 1893 City Directory shows George Dole as living at the southwest corner of Bryn Mawr and Evanston, though working downtown as a bookkeeper. Given what little had been constructed at that time in the area, the store was either in the same building (which had been built the previous year by John C. Scovel) or else it was in the frame business structure to the north at the northwest corner of Broadway and Ridge. In any event, it did not last very long. It is not listed in the 1896 City Directory.

The third grocery store followed

closely behind coming in 1894 or 1895, but further west at what is now 5706 Clark. The proprietor was Charles C. Schuette, who was also the owner of the building which had been built in 1894. Interestingly, the 1900 City Directory shows the grocer at this address being a William Heidman, but in 1903 and 1905 the store is back in the name of Charles Schuette. In 1915, the store owner is given as Gerhard Meyer. This address is absent from the list of grocers in the 1923 City Directory. Remarkably, this very early frame store and flat building still stands, though considerably (and badly) altered.

The City Directories show 2 grocery stores in Edgewater in 1893, 3 in 1894, 3 in 1896, 2 in 1900, 9 in 1903, 13 in 1905, 30 in 1910, 39 in 1915, 44 in 1923, and 56 in 1928. In August 1935, there were 41 retail grocers. By way of comparison there were 41 in 1994 and 24 in 2008. Thus 1928 appears to be the "high water" point for grocery stores in Edgewater. (See figure 2 for a map showing where they were located.)

There was considerable turnover in grocery stores during the early years. Of the 13 stores operating in 1905, only three were operating under the same owners in Edgewater five years later in 1910; and of the 30 stores operating in 1910, only eight were still operating in Edgewater in 1915. Of the 39 grocers operating in 1915, only 12 were still

operating in Edgewater eight years later in 1923. Two had moved outside of Edgewater. The remaining 25 had ceased operations altogether. Only two grocers were in operation for the entire 18 year period from 1905 to 1923 - the Edgewater Grocery operated by James McManus on Bryn Mawr and the Meltzer Brothers grocery store in the 5500 block of Broadway.

## The coming of the chains

The first chain to establish a presence in Edgewater was not one of the major, well-known Tea companies - A&P, National or Jewel. It was one that had a very short life, in Edgewater and in Chicago. The United Food Product Company started in 1911 and ended in 1911. In its short life it had 23 stores in Chicago, of which three were in Edgewater: 5551 Broadway, 6016 Broadway (then called Evanston Ave) and 5235 Clark. In August 1911, the chain was acquired by another chain, the Hazel Pure Food Company - an event that would be repeated by different players again and again. The Chicago Tribune article of August 18, 1911, that dealt with the take over described the stores appearance and operation. The stores were uniform in appearance, "with bright red fronts and gilt lettering. From the beginning, novel

(Continued on page 5)

Table 1: Chain Stores by Year

	A&P	Dominick's	Eagle	Jewel	Kroger	National
1923	0	0	0	0	0	0
1928	0	0	0	0	0	18
1930	0 (7)	0	0	0	0	1
1935 (Aug)	2	0	0	2		5
1940 (June)	2	0	0	4	2	16
1950	0	0	0	4	2 (47)	5
1960	2 (99)	0	1	3 (101)	1 (25)	2 (109)
1970	2 (26)	0	0	3 (102)	1 (14)	3 (83)
1980	0 (32)	3	0	2	0	0 (0)

## Grocery Stores

(Continued from page 4)

methods of getting business have been followed. Everything was sold in sealed packages. The housewife got her potatoes in a sealed sack, her bread wrapped in tissue paper, sealed at the bakery, her cuts of meat encased in a sealed parcel." The Hazel Pure Food Company apparently abandoned the neighborhood stores, for there is only one listing for the company in 1912.

The second chain to establish one or more stores in Edgewater was the Piggly Wiggly chain, with a store at 6175-77 Broadway in 1919. The chain grew rapidly in Chicago with 43 stores in April 1920 and 59 in August of the same year. But it too was short-lived. In 1923 it sold its

**Table 2: Number of Chain Stores**

Name of Chain	Number of Different Locations
A & P	6
Dominick's	4
Eagle	1
Jewel	13
Kroger	5
National	35
Piggly Wiggly	1
Sure-Save	1
Treasure Island	1
United Food Products	3

Chicago stores to National Tea.

National Tea appears to be the next major chain to establish a presence in Edgewater and, unlike the first two, it established a long presence. The 1928 city directory identifies 18 stores in Edgewater. There were no other chains. By August 1935, National Tea had but five stores, all but one at a different location than in 1928. The four new stores appear to have been in buildings newly built for National. (In the summer of 1930 National had but one store in Edgewater.) Jewel

Tea had only two stores in 1935, as did A&P. However, National bounced back and in 1940 had 16 stores in Edgewater. In 1953, National had 5, Jewel had 4, and A&P had 1.

Jewel never had more than five stores in Edgewater at any one time; A&P never had more than two as did Kroger. One Kroger store was located at the southwest corner of Thorndale and Broadway in a new yellow brick building (5930). The author remembers as a youngster being fascinated by a new device in the store that he had never seen before that allowed for carts to slide down an incline when the can at the bottom was removed (an operation which he did several times to see it happen). Kroger later closed this store after it opened a bigger one at 6125 Broadway on August 1, 1962.

**Table-1** shows the number of major chain stores in Edgewater at various times. (The number in parentheses is the number of stores in the city.)

**Table-2** shows the minimum number of different locations for each chain during the time it operated in Edgewater. As expected, National led the pack by a wide margin.

Not all of the chains to establish a presence in Edgewater were major national or regional ones, or later developed into ones. Some were quite small and located in Chicago only. Two such chains were Sure-Save and Treasure Island. Both of these were formed by Christ Kamberos. He started the Sure-Save chain in 1947 with his brother. The first store of the 10-store chain was in Edgewater at 1055 Bryn Mawr. In 1961 the chain was sold to the National Tea Co. In 1963, again with his brother and a group of partners, he founded a new chain, Treasure Island. The first store was at 3460 N. Broadway. The Edgewater store was at 5245 N. Broadway. It was open from April 5, 1973 to March 20, 1986.

## Present Configuration

The present configuration of

Edgewater's four major supermarkets (two Jewels and two Dominick's) began to take shape in 1958. That's when Eagle opened its store at 6009 Broadway (October 15) and Jewel opened its store at 5518 Clark (December 6). The Eagle store would be purchased by Dominick's in 1965 which would later expand the store considerably in 1997-1998. The grand opening was July 15, 1998. Jewel would also either modernize its store at 5518 or else build a new one on the same site in 1975. What actually happened is not clear. On March 31, 1977, Jewel would open another store at 5343 N. Broadway on the site of the former Lill Coal and Oil Company.

The last of the four was constructed by Dominick's in 1978 at 5235 Sheridan Rd (Grand Opening December 18). In 2010 Dominick's demolished this store and built a larger new one at 5201 Sheridan. The Grand Opening was in 2011.

Although the chains increasingly dominated in terms of sales, they never dominated in terms of the number of stores devoted to the sale of food items. Even as of this writing, there are more independently operated grocery stores and produce markets than chain stores. Some of these are ethnic in orientation. Then too, there are other places that sell food items in addition to other items - drug stores and gas stations readily come to mind. And then there are the small convenient stores, such as 7-11 and White Hen.

And what happened to those first chain mini-supermarket buildings - the one story buildings that they constructed or rented for their use in the 1930s, 40s and 50s? A few, of course, have been razed. The Jewel that this author's mother shopped at (6016-18 Clark) is long gone. The land is now part of the Fire Department complex. But most have remained, given over to other uses for the most part. **Table-3** is a partial list

What grocery store was in business the longest in Edgewater?

(Continued on page 6)

## Grocery Stores

(Continued from page 5)

That's not so easy to answer. The factor of longevity can be measured in a number of different ways. Here are several: What family or organization has operated a grocery store in Edgewater, regardless of location, for the longest period of time. Here the answer has to be Jewel. It has had a grocery store in Edgewater since at least August of 1935 and still does today (a total of 76 years). What address was operated continuously as a grocery regardless of company for the longest period of time? The answer appears to be 6157 Clark. It opened as a Kroger store as early as 1950 (perhaps even earlier) and was operated by different companies through 2008, for a total of 58 years. It is now the home of the Raven Theater. The runner up appears to be 6009 N. Broadway. It opened as an Eagle store in 1958 and still is occupied by a grocery (Dominick's since June 1965) for a total of 53 years. In five years 6009 Broadway will take the title, for this address is still in operation as a grocery. What building was operated continuously as a grocer by the same family or organization without expansion? Here the answer appears to be 5343 N. Broadway, which has been operated by Jewel Foods since March 1977. If the building had been expanded the answer appears to be 6009 N. Broadway, which has been operated by Dominick's since 1965.

All told, there were, at a minimum, 340 distinct addresses in Edgewater that at one time housed a business classified as a retail grocer. When this article is posted on our website, it will include a list of all these addresses, as well as separate tables for all of the chain stores.

## Edgewater Artifact

The Edgewater Grocery Stores exhibit features an unusual item from the first Edgewater store., a Van Berkel meat slicer. The slicer was invented by Wilhelmus Adrianus Van Berkel in Holland in 1898.

Address	Chain	Current Use
Broadway, 5930	Kroger	Medical Center
Broadway, 6116	National	Quicker Printers
Broadway, 6126	Kroger	Multi-use, including Walgreen's
Bryn Mawr, 1055	National	7-Eleven
Bryn Mawr, 1100	A&P	Nookie's Restaurant
Bryn Mawr, 1130	Jewel	Shoe Center and Sports Merchandise
Clark, 5306	Kroger	Charlie's Sweets
Clark, 5343	Jewel	Calo Restaurant
Clark, 5446	A&P	Thybonny Paint Store Walgreens (2011)
Clark, 5951	National	Martial Arts Center
Clark, 5965	Jewel	
Clark, 6132	National	Auto repair
Clark, 6157	Kroger	Raven Theater
Devon, 1549	Jewel	Animal Hospital
Granville, 1125	Jewel	Gerber Hart Library
Granville, 1127	National	U'n Joy Beauty
Thomdale, 1132	A&P	Dove East Cleaners

It was a complex, hand-driven mechanical machine that revolutionized the task of meat slicing. It moved meat-slicing beyond a sharp knife, a good eye and a steady hand. Within years, thousands were being sold worldwide and a factory was located in the United States in 1909 [first in Chicago then from 1915 in LaPorte, Indiana]. The first model of the slicer produced in the U.S. was Model 70, and the McManus slicer seems to be one of them.

Our VanBerkel meat slicer was acquired from the estate of Dorothy McManus by LeRoy Blommaert in 1998. It was in sorry shape and the reason it was saved in Dorothy's basement is cause for speculation. It must have been an important piece of equipment at the store the store at 1102 West Bryn Mawr. It may have survived the fire (1936) at the store although it showed no sign of being in a fire. Nevertheless, it was brought to the museum and then there were many discussions of how

to deal with this 200 lb. artifact.

Enter Tom Murphy, a man with many skills and great curiosity. Tom undertook to move the slicer out of the shed to his home basement and began taking it apart. In the exhibit you can see photos of the results of his endeavors. It was unclear how to proceed next, but Tom was convinced that this artifact could have some restoration and be made operable. He worked to polish the metal plate identifying the manufacturer, U.S. Slicing Machine Co. in La Porte Indiana. When the idea for a Grocery store exhibit came up, Tom was already in the process of working on the slicer. Exhibit curator asked about the slicer and learned that it was a possibility for an exhibit.

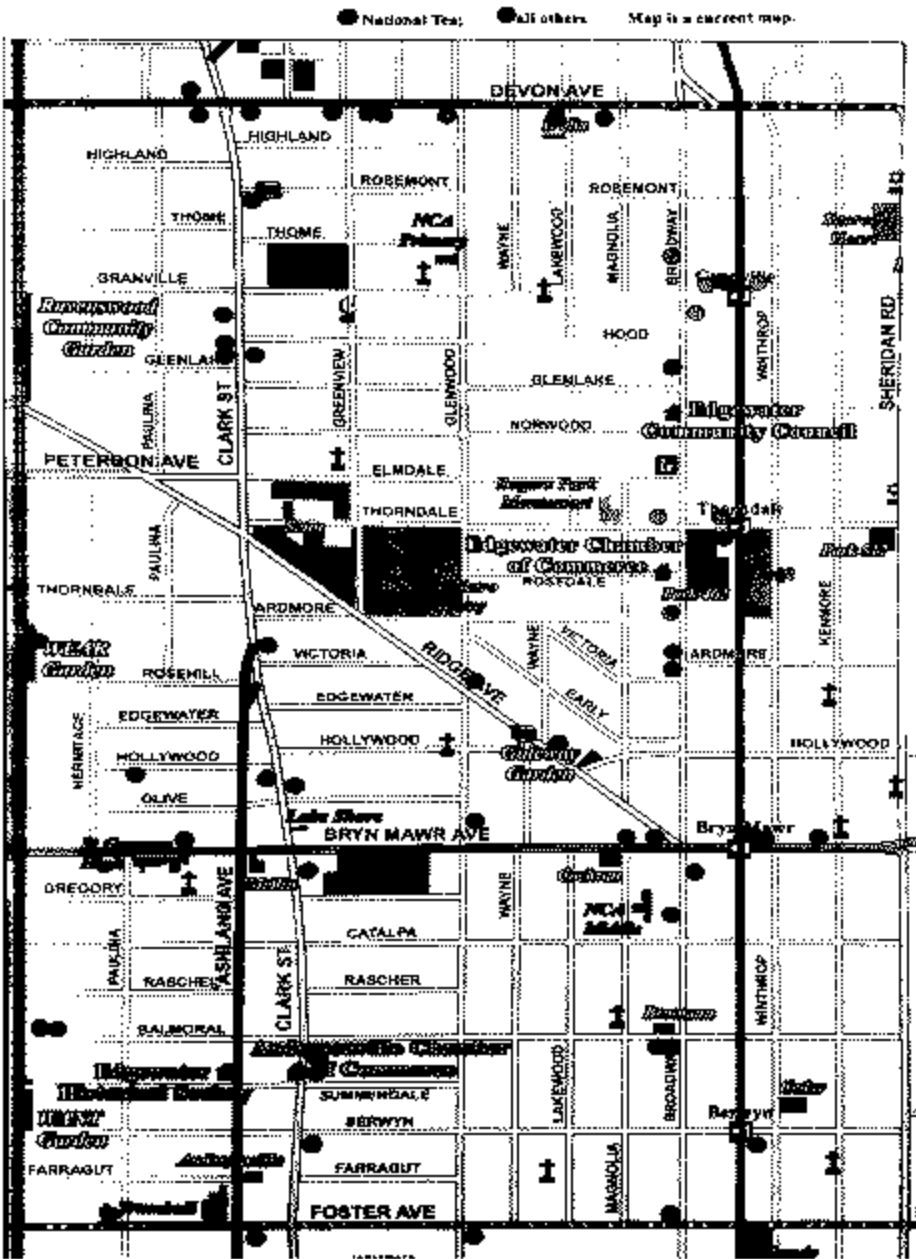
With some experimentation and research over the course of several months, a lot of steel wool and naval jelly [solvent to remove abundant congealed meat fat and fiber still

(Continued on page 7)

# GROCERY STORES—1928

## Specialty Stores on Clark Street

According to the Historic District Application these locations had specialty stores beginning in the 1890s. Eventually stores moved, closed or consolidated to become larger stores.



- 5019 Isadore Hadden Meats
- 5033 Moreland Fruit Market
- 5046 Lakeview Quality markets
- 5049 International Fish Market
- 5116 Werner Herman Fruits
- 5125 Nelson's Meat Market
- North Shore Fruit Market
- 5133 Uptown Fruit Market
- Edgewater Fish Market
- 5201 Randolph Fruit Market
- 5247 Schott Fish market (later Wikstrom's)
- 5250 Erickson's Deli
- 5314 Central Produce Market
- 5333-37 B. Akerholm, Lauer Bohmann Co. Meats
- 5351 Nelson's Market
- 5422-26 Capital Fruit Market
- 5547 Capital Meat Market
- George Bosshart Meats
- 5556 Central Produce Markets
- 5555 Carl's Meat market

Missing from this list is the Tip Top Meat market which was mentioned in an oral history recollection. We are sure there are more missing. If you can add to the list please go to our web site, [edgewaterhistory.org](http://edgewaterhistory.org) and contact us.

In more recent times Erickson's Deli and Edgewater Produce have offered specialties to Andersonville shoppers. These are current stores and so did not appear on the historic district application.

We continue to look for photos of these shops and would appreciate the opportunity to make a copy of anything you might have.

### Grocery Stores

(Continued from page 6)

present], and a final application of automobile wax, the slicer was back in business.

The tray that carries the meat to the blade is missing but the intact features remain operable. These include a concave blade to slice cleanly; a heavy fly-wheel to smooth the operation; a complex mechanism to advance the meat into the blade, with the thickness of the slice being adjustable; and a built-in apparatus to sharpen the intact blade, even



Metal plate logo of the Van Berkel's Slicer

with all of the rust and deterioration, the blade was still sharp enough to easily cut a finger, Tom says.

Come in and give it a good crank!

# News from the Front: Committee Communiqués

## HISTORIC SITES

Co-Chairs: Thom Greene and LeRoy Blommaert



The long vacant house at 6023 N. Kenmore has been purchased and as is undergoing updating by a family who intends to live there.

The demolition of the library is complete and we are waiting... There is a book mobile next to the Armory.

## PROGRAM

Co-Chairs: Bob Remer and Kathy Gemperle



Our program about the Edgewater Grocery Stores exhibit at the Broadway Armory on Nov. 30th was a great success and the video produced by Dorothy Nygren was wonderful. We hope to show it to more people. Watch for more programs about the exhibit and go to the Edgville-Buzz blog to see a review of the program.

## COLLECTIONS

Chair: LeRoy Blommaert



As we continue scanning and recording our collections we are getting more ideas for exhibits in the future. At the end of this year we have completed a total of 1852 entries into the Past Perfect database. Of these the majority have been photographs (1303).

## BOARD DEVELOPMENT

Chair: Reggie Griffin



In March at the general meeting we will hold elections of board members for the three-year term. If you are interested in serving on the board, I urge you to contact me through the website or just call the museum and leave your name and contact info. Our meetings are monthly on Saturday mornings. We welcome anyone with an interest in neighborhood history, but you don't have to be able to give a lecture on it. Contact us.

## MEMBERSHIP

Co-Chairs: Betty Mayian and LeRoy Blommaert



Membership renewals will go out for the new year. It may be that you think you are a member but have forgotten to pay your dues for a year or two.

The year-end total membership is 400. We are hoping to increase this number next year. Since membership supports the operation of the museum, the rates are going to be raised for 2012.

We have not had an increase for many years and now we are faced with an increase in costs for insurance and, of course, water.

## PROPERTY

Chair: Marty Stewart



Tom Murphy repainted the front entrance this Fall and everything looks good before the coming of the winter weather. He also helped Sandee with the protective barriers around the front flower beds which save them from destruction by salt.

The front entrance in the museum had been redesigned and now there is a place to see our new video about Edgewater history which Dorothy Nygren produced.

## FINANCE

Chair: (open)



The third quarter report was satisfactory and we are looking to developing the budget for the new year. Our projections for income and expenses were pretty accurate and we look forward to planning ahead.

Our 2011 Home tour in the Lakewood Balmoral Historic District was especially successful with over 250 attendees.

## COMMUNICATIONS

Chair: Kathy Gemperle



This committee is expanding to include marketing in hope of attracting more visitors to the museum and more members to support our efforts to present community history. Marty Stewart will head up the marketing efforts and has already drafted a plan on how to move forward. It seems that we are going to review our web site and would welcome any constructive comments. Send them to us thru the website, contact us

*(Continued on page 9)*



## Dedication and memory

The Ralph Pomeroy Senior Housing building at Hollywood and Kenmore was rededicated on November 4, 2011. The ceremony was a celebration of the CHA project to rehab the apartments in this 80+ year old Edgewater building. The building was named for Ralph Pomeroy when the CHA purchased it in the 1980s.



Rev. Ralph J. Pomeroy became assistant pastor at Bethany Lutheran Church, 1244 W. Thorndale, in July, 1945. He quickly became an active leader not only of the church but of the community. He met his wife Dorothy at Bethany, where her father was the organist. They were married on Easter Sunday 1948 and were blessed with four children - Justin, David, Deborah and Mark (who died in infancy). After the

senior pastor at Bethany retired in 1949, Rev. Pomeroy became the church's full time pastor.

He and his wife also cared for over 80 foster children during their marriage. And adopted three of them, Eric, Lori and Robert. Pastor Pomeroy was a community activist until his death in November 1977. He was one of the founding members of the Edgewater Community Council, the Edgewater Clergy and Rabbi Association and Care for Real. He was particularly interested in helping children and teenagers and began many programs at Bethany for them. There were active gangs in the community and he worked with them and the police to improve the situation. He was also well known at Sem High School and many, many teenagers came to him when they needed help. He was always there for them whether it was a place to stay, food, and even bond money. On the day of his funeral, there was a line over a block long outside of Bethany of students from Sem High School who wanted to pay their respects. His legacy has lived on in the organizations he helped to organize and it would be impossible to say how many young people had their lives changed and became productive citizens because of his care and concern.

## Collectibles Corner



The EHS appreciates the contributions made to date of items of historic value.

Sheli Lulkin- Invite to benefit concert for Rabbi Schaalman, ASCO Documents and reports

RPWR Historical Society- Younger Dairy (Edgewater) route book from 1919

LeRoy Blommaert- two mechanical pencils from the Edgewater Beach Hotel

James Madigan, Sr.- student report on Andersonville 1969

Sandee Remis- Wooden Cheese boxes for the Grocery exhibit

## Meet Your Docent

MAE JOHNSON loves living in Edgewater. Whatever you want, its near. In fact, a nearby neighbor, Rose, thought Mae would make a good docent at EHS and convinced her to become involved in the Home Tours. Since then, Mae has been involved in many EHS projects, such as our ice cream socials and fundraisers, as well as participating on the Collections Committee. Although all the exhibits have been interesting and informative, Mae's favorite was the one on the Chicago "L".

Mae's passion is photography. In addition to her official capacity since 1983 as Treasurer for her church, Holy Family Lutheran, she has served as the unofficial photographer. She also loves all kinds of music ranging from country to jazz. Mae has four adult children, three sons, one daughter and six grandchildren. A big smile and hearty welcome greet visitors at EHS whenever Mae is there.

### Committee Communiqués

(Continued from page 8)

## FUNDRAISING

Chair: Betty Mayian



After the new year we will be meeting to discuss the plan for our Spring fundraising event. We could use some help with the Silent Auction which can bring in about half of the funds. If you have anything to donate to this auction, especially theater tickets and event tickets we would be grateful. Contact us through the web site or call the museum.



Mae Johnson as docent at the grocery stores exhibit in December.

## Edgewater Teaser

In the Vol. XXII No. 1 issue of the *Scrapbook*, we asked "Who or What is "C. N. Michels" on the top of the building at 1130 Bryn Mawr?"

### Answer:

"Michels" stands for Christian N. Michels – one of Edgewater's first merchants. He purchased the west half of lot 14, block 9, in Cochran's first addition to Edgewater, April 8, 1898, and was the first purchaser of the property from the Cochran syndicate. [Interestingly, it remained unsold for more than 10 years.] On May 28, 1898, he took out a permit for the construction of the small flat and store building that stands to this day on the land he bought. The architect was William W. Blair (an Edgewater resident) and the estimated cost was \$3,500. The City Directory for 1899 shows C.N. Michels Hardware at 1218 Bryn Mawr [the pre-1909 street number], but no home address. Presumably he and his family followed a common practice and lived in the flat upstairs.

Before moving to Edgewater Christian Michels had a hardware store on the near north side at 735 Larrabee (today 2154 Larrabee). The first City Directory listing for him is 1893. The 1898 directory shows his home address as 735 Larrabee, but the name of the business was "N & J. S. Michels." It appears he sold the business to two relatives, and the hardware store at that location continued to be listed under the same names for several years afterwards.

The City Directories of 1902, 1903, and 1904 show a change in type of business at the Bryn Mawr address. Instead of hardware store it showed, "plumber," "plumbing and steam heating," and "plumbing" respectively.

Business must have been good, because just a few years after establishing his business on Bryn Mawr, he purchased additional

property and the following year had another building constructed. This time it was on the west side of Broadway, in Cochran's 3rd addition to Edgewater. Specifically, the purchase, made February 19, 1903, was for lots 3 and 4 [a full 50 feet], in block 1. On September 3, 1904, he took out a permit for the construction of his new building—a combination of two store-fronts and two stories of flats above. The architect was Clarence Hatzfeld and the estimated cost was \$20,000, a substantial sum for the time. The building was originally numbered 2573-75, but is now 5552-54, and still stands, only slightly changed at the top. This time he did not have the building show his name. Styles must have changed.

He must have moved into the new building sometime before June 1905 because the 1905 city directory shows the hardware store at the 2573 Evanston Avenue, under the title "C. N. Michels Co." [The 1905 Sanborn fire map shows the Bryn Mawr building being used as a laundry.] The 1907 City Directory shows "C. N. Michels Co., Christian N. Michels, Pres. and Jos. P. Oliver, Sec. This listing continued through 1910.

The 1913 City Directory shows Christian N. Michels back at 1130 Bryn Mawr, but with a business classified as "real estate." The 1914 and 1915 directories show his home address as 1130 Bryn Mawr but no business reference. He is not listed at all in 1916, but in 1917 his home address is listed as 4953 Monticello and there is no listing for him in 1923 directory (the next one following 1917). Christian N. Michels died January 18, 1928, in Cook County.

The 1910 census shows Christian Michels as age 42 living at 5552 Evanston Avenue with his wife and nine children. Records in the Cook County Recorder of Deeds show that he sold his Evanston Ave (Broadway) building in February 1913, and his Bryn Mawr building in June 1915.



Christian N. Michels was one of Edgewater's first merchants and the proprietor of its first hardware store. He was probably its first plumber as well. The building he had built at 1130 Bryn Mawr in 1898 was the eighth commercial building built in the Bryn Mawr-Broadway-Ridge commercial district and it is one of less than a dozen Edgewater commercial buildings built before 1900 that survive today. It has "housed" a number of different businesses over its long life: laundry (1905), grocer (A. J. Todd 1915-1923 minimum; Jewel Foods 1935-1942 minimum), launderette (1962) and dollar store (2011). And, remarkably, it still bears his name!

### Teaser #16

On May 16, 2011, Edgewater resident Harry Osterman was sworn in as alderman of the 48th ward. He followed his mother, Kathy Osterman (1987-1989) to that position. What other Edgewater resident succeeded one of his parents as alderman?

## Art in the Gym

Students at St. Gregory High School completed a year long project to beautify their gym at 1609 Gregory with paintings celebrating sports teams which were installed on December 13, 2011. Twenty-five students worked under the direction of Kathy Gemperle, their art teacher.

## We remember

Recently we learned of the passing of two supporters of the Edgewater Historical Society.

### Pearl Plesener

Pearl Plesener grew up in the Lakewood Balmoral area on the 5300 block of Magnolia and later lived on the 5200 block of Lakewood. She was a founding member of the EHS and generously donated some early pictures from her childhood including her attendance record for Sunday School on a Church of the Atonement postcard. She and her brother George were fans of the Radio Players and attended many performances at the EHS Museum. She is survived by her brother George. The funeral was held at Immanuel Lutheran Church.

### Theodosia C. Duskey

Theodosia C Duskey, mother of Kathy Gemperle passed away after a long hospitalization. She grew up in Uptown and attended St. Thomas of Canterbury School and Immaculata High School. After retirement in Arizona she returned to the Admiral on Foster and became involved in EHS. She was a volunteer for two Home Tours and enjoyed seeing exhibits at the museum and the Radio Players. She was with us at the kick off of the fundraising effort to rehab the museum back in 1996, and marveled at all the activities at EHS. She is survived by Kathy, John Duskey, Mary Duskey (Joey) Fort and James Duskey (Debbie), 4 grandchildren and 2 great grandchildren. The funeral was held at St. Gertrude Church and the choir that she was a member of sang for the service.

## Research your history

Cook County Clerk David Orr has sent out information that is vital to anyone wanting to research their family history. There is a new web site, [Cookcountygenealogy.com](http://Cookcountygenealogy.com) which is the official site for the county's Vital Records Bureau. Users can explore the county archives with the click of a mouse and can download and print birth, marriage and death certificates at home day or night.

There is no reason to put this off if you've been talking about finding a long lost relative or learning more about your grandparents. Try it and let us know how much you've found. Perhaps you'll discover a connection to Edgewater that you didn't know you had. We'd like to learn more.

### Edgewater Historical Society - 2012 Membership Application

I would like to support the **Edgewater Historical Society** by becoming a member for 2012.

#### Type of Annual Membership (Check One):

- |  |       |   |        |
|--|-------|---|--------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Individual                              | \$25* | <input type="checkbox"/> Senior (65 and over) | \$10   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Family                                  | \$35* | <input type="checkbox"/> Business Org.        | \$75   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Patron                                  | \$100 | <input type="checkbox"/> Individual Lifetime  | \$1000 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Community Organization (Not for Profit) |       |   | \$25   |

(\* fee assistance is available upon written application)

Additional Museum donation: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Copies of *Edgewater Through the Eyes of Experience* DVD (mailed at \$20/copy): \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Make checks payable to:

**Edgewater Historical Society**

Mail the completed form with your check to:

**Membership  
Edgewater Historical Society  
5358 N. Ashland Avenue  
Chicago, IL 60640**

For further information, call: 773-506-4849

Are you interested in learning more about committees and activities of the Edgewater Historical Society? If you check the box below, a board member will call you to discuss where your interests may match our needs.

I would like to volunteer to help EHS continue their work in preserving history in Edgewater.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City/State/Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone: (        ) \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

**Amount enclosed:** \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**Date paid (office use only):**        /        /

The Edgewater Historical Society is an Illinois not-for-profit corporation. Donations are tax deductible to the extent allowed by law for 501(c)(3) organizations.



Edgewater Historical Society  
 5358 N. Ashland Ave.  
 Chicago, IL 60640-2023

**Non-Profit  
 Organization  
 U.S. Postage  
 Paid  
 Permit #2826  
 Chicago, IL**

**Hear Ye!  
 Hear Ye!  
 Public Notice**

This newsletter is published by the **Edgewater Historical Society**, a not-for-profit organization founded in 1988 and affiliated with the Edgewater Community Council.

Correspondence may be directed to the editor: Kathy Gemperle; 5358 N. Ashland Ave.; Chicago, IL 60640.

Or EHS voice mail: 773-506-4849

Newsletter Staff: Larry Rosen, David Gemperle, Gloria Evenson and Tom Murphy, LeRoy Blommaert. Special thanks to Barbara Strauss



**For the Family Tree**

Membership to date for 2011:

Individual	68
Family	88
Senior	140
Patron	12
Business	51
Lifetime	12
Non-Profit	2
	---
Total	373

Thanks for your support and encouragement. We recorded 50 new members this year.

If you have not yet sent in your renewal, please remember to do so soon. We count on your support to keep the museum open.



Visit our Website at:  
[www.EdgewaterHistory.org](http://www.EdgewaterHistory.org)

Previous Issue: Vol. XXII, No. 2  
 The deadline for the next issue is January 25, 2012

Copyright © 2012, by the **Edgewater Historical Society**.  
 All rights reserved. Reproduction of the newsletter in whole or in part without written permission from the **Edgewater Historical Society** is prohibited.

