

## WAUCONDA HISTORY TIMELINE

Compiled by Lynn McAlister, 2007–9

- 1818:** Illinois admitted to the Union as the 21<sup>st</sup> state. At this time only the lower 2/3 of Illinois was populated by settlers, the northern part being inhabited primarily by Amerindian tribes. The northeast corner of the new state was home to bands of Winnebago and Potawatomi Indians, driven west and south by conflicts with the French and with other native groups.
- 1819:** An expedition underway this year, passing through northern Illinois, described the area as “almost entirely destitute of inhabitants. Many parts of the country must remain uninhabited for many years to come, on account of the scarcity of timber, and other deficiencies, such as the want of mill-seats, springs of water, &c. There are however, numerous and extensive tracts within this region, possessed of a rich soil, and in other respects well adapted for settlements.”<sup>1</sup>
- 1820s:** Chicago was only a village at this point, a few dozen homes clustered around Fort Dearborn.
- 1823:** *Account of an Expedition from Pittsburgh to the Rocky Mountains* was published in two volumes. In this book the word *Wahconda* first appears, understood by the expeditioners as the Omaha Indian word for God. In fact, it seems to be a Siouan equivalent of Algonquin *gitchi-manitou*, ‘great spirit’, the creative life force that connects and inhabits all things. It appears to humans in various, usually animal, forms; must sometimes be placated; and is called on personally by individual Omaha for aid or to stand witness to something said or done. Edwin James, who compiled the *Account*, reports a conversation he had with an Omaha chief: “Big Elk remarked, that . . . his life was at the disposal of the great Wah-conda only, and he could not die before his time. . . .” Other Siouan languages have similar words: *Wahcondah* (Oto), *Wokkon-doh* (Konza), *wacatunca* (Sioux proper).<sup>2</sup>
- 1827:** Publication of James Fenimore Cooper’s popular novel, *The Prairie*. Cooper, who wanted to accurately portray a part of the country not previously introduced to a general readership but whose own knowledge of the west was minimal, “obviously used the *Account of an Expedition* as a handbook during the whole period of composition”, and he borrowed from it both names and vocabulary. In draft manuscripts he named the Indian god *Manitou*, but “[a]t some stage of revision Cooper remembered that ‘Manitou’ was an eastern term . . . and that the *Account* had information on vocabularies of western tribes.” As a result, the name was changed to *Wahcondah*.<sup>3</sup>
- 1831–2:** “During the years 1831 and 1832 the beginnings of settlement were made in northern and eastern Illinois.” These first white settlers in the north of Illinois were hunters or traders coming in mainly from southern states; most of them fled to more established settlements at “the first alarm of the Black Hawk War” (1832) and did not return.<sup>4</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup>Edwin James, comp., *Account of an expedition from Pittsburgh to the Rocky Mountains performed in the years 1819 and '20 by order of The Hon. J. C. Calhoun, Sec'y of War: under the command of Major Stephen H. Long*, 2 vols. (Philadelphia: H. C. Carey and I. Lea, Chestnut Street, 1823); vol. II, pp. 335–6.

<sup>2</sup>*Ibid.*, vol. I, p. 194; vol. II, p. 370. The Oto word also means ‘thunder’. Unlike the Judaeo-Christian God, this spirit could be maleficent. In his travels with Lewis in 1804, William Clark came across a creek called by the Omaha *Wau can di Peeche*, which he translates as “Great Spirit is bad” ([www.nps.gov/archive/jeff/LewisClark2/TheJourney/NativeAmericans/Omaha.htm](http://www.nps.gov/archive/jeff/LewisClark2/TheJourney/NativeAmericans/Omaha.htm)); James translates the very similar *wah-con-dah-pish-co-na* (Oto) and *wok-kon-doh-pe-she* (Konza) to mean ‘devil’.

<sup>3</sup>Orm Överland, *The Making and Meaning of an American Classic: James Fenimore Cooper’s The Prairie* (Oslo: Universitetsforlaget, 1973; published in North America by Humanities Press); pp. 67, 80-1.

<sup>4</sup>Robert P. Sutton, ed., *The Prairie State: Colonial Years to 1860*, part I of A Documentary History of

- 1833–4:** **1.** Potawatomi Indians agreed to leave their land in northeast Illinois within three years in exchange for acreage west of the Mississippi. Many of them began to move west immediately, and by the time the first permanent settlers arrived from the east, most of the Indians had left the area. (There were, however, still a handful of Winnebago in the Lake County area during the early years of Wauconda’s existence.)
- 2.** The federal government encouraged people to migrate west by offering lands newly acquired from the Indians to settlers at low prices. “Pamphlets advertising Illinois lands flooded the states from Ohio to the sea-board.”<sup>5</sup> In 1833, this poem appeared in a Boston newspaper:

*Come leave the fields of childhood, worn out by long employ,  
And travel west and settle in the state of Illinois.*<sup>6</sup>

By 1834 settlers from the east began to move in.<sup>7</sup> Unlike earlier settlers in the area, these new arrivals were farmers who came west intending to stay. “[T]hey had large families, . . . and it was difficult farming [out east] and to make a living. They came for the land.”<sup>8</sup> As word of the land in Illinois and its resources got back to family and friends in New England and New York, others began to follow the new Illinoisans to the north of the state. Some travelled by water, through the Erie Canal and the Great Lakes. Others came west in covered wagons. “The pioneers made their way out into the wilderness from Chicago or Little Fort (Waukegan) in wagons and ox carts and had a lifestyle similar to that described in [Laura Ingalls] Wilder’s *Little House on the Prairie*.”<sup>9</sup> They staked their claims on the good farmland, built log cabins to live in, and waited for the government to finish its survey of the land. Although settlers in the far northeast of the state probably had little to fear from prairie fires, health problems such as ‘the ague’ (i.e., malaria) and ‘milk fever’ (which killed Abraham Lincoln’s mother in Indiana) were common everywhere, especially in marshier areas. The wildlife also presented challenges. Gershom Flagg in 1817 wrote to his brother in Vermont: “Sheep will do very well here if they can be kept from the Wolves, but this cannot well be done in the newsettled parts the wolves are so very numerous.”<sup>10</sup> Two years later Ferdinand Ernst, the promoter of a German settlement scheme further south, reported that “In this prairie I found many rattlesnakes; but all small, of gray color, and of one species.” He added how-ever, that “[d]uring my entire journey I have heard of no fatality produced by their bite.”<sup>11</sup> These dangers continued throughout the frontier period.

- 1835:** **1.** First white settler on Diamond Lake

---

Illinois (Grand Rapids, W. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1976), p. 242.

<sup>5</sup>William Vipond Pooley, “The Yankees Arrive”, p. 242, in Sutton.

<sup>6</sup>Quoted by David Parro in “The Pioneer Families of Tower Lakes”, Village of Tower Lakes web site ([www.villageoftowerlakes.com](http://www.villageoftowerlakes.com)), under ‘history’.

<sup>7</sup>Lake County (Ill.) Genealogical Society publication, *Lake County, Illinois, 1861 Landowners Map & Index* (Libertyville, Illinois, 1997), p. 1

<sup>8</sup>Mary Lueder interview in “Memories 2004”, publication of the Wauconda Township Historical Society (also see Sutton, p. 243).

<sup>9</sup>Parro, “Pioneer Families”

<sup>10</sup>Sutton, p. 143

<sup>11</sup>Sutton, p. 211; travelling in 1855, Scotsman William Ferguson reported that the snakes “sometimes bite the cattle, when whisky and tobacco is applied, and this allays the inflammation. It is affirmed, there is no authenticated instance of any one in Illinois having ever died from the bite of these prairie rattlesnakes” (ibid., p. 352).

2. Indian title to the soil was extinguished in this year.<sup>12</sup>
- 1836:**
1. Justus Bangs (1806–1895) set out from Vermont with his neighbor (possibly his relative<sup>13</sup>) Elihu Hubbard to see if land in Michigan was as good as they'd heard. Not being impressed with Michigan, the men continued to the homestead of Justus's older brother David, who had settled at Meacham's Grove, near Bloomington, Illinois. Travelling up the Fox River and following Indian trails, they ended up at Diamond Lake, where they camped the first night with some Indians living there. The following day they came across what is now Bangs Lake. Bangs declared that he had found his home. With the help of his friends, he put up a log cabin in two days.<sup>14</sup>
  2. The three men built another log cabin, for Elihu, north of the lake. They then set about planting their first crop and spent, in Bangs's remembrance, an idyllic summer in their new home. At this time there were a few other settlements scattered about the area, mostly west of the Des Plaines River.
  3. *Autumn* Justus Bangs injured his side and could not work for a while. He returned to Vermont, but sent his parents and two of his sisters (Lydia and Anna) to Illinois to hold his claim. (Because the Indian land had not yet been surveyed, land claims were vulnerable to new arrivals.)
  4. Also this year, Hugh Davlin and his wife Rose arrived with their children in the future Cuba Township. The Davlins were Irish but had lived for a time in Troy, NY. The family probably travelled by boat through the Erie Canal and across Lake Erie, then out from Chicago with oxen and carts. They claimed 80 acres of government land and built a log cabin. This Lake County pioneer family helped to build not only Cuba Township but also the town of Wauconda. They were the area's first known Catholics.
- 1837:**
1. Thomas F. Slocum (1812–1875) constructed a log cabin on the north bank of what is now Slocum Lake; his daughter Ellen (1837–1873) was the first white child to be born in what became Wauconda Township. The Slocums were related to Elihu Hubbard (who may have been related to the Bangs family). Other early settlers were Mark Bangs, Peter Mills, A. J. Seeber, D. H. Sherman [D.H. Martin?], John C. Wooster, Daniel Martin, W. H. Hawkins, and Stephen Rice.<sup>15</sup> Most of these men were farmers.
  2. Townships began to be formulated. Usually a township encompassed six square miles, but Ela, Wauconda and Antioch townships are 6 x 4. (When Wauconda high school was formed, the township took two additional miles from McHenry township.) "The lands [that became Wauconda Township] were originally mostly woodlands and oak openings. It has, however, a small prairie . . . containing an area of about 600 acres."<sup>16</sup> Other than a military trail passing through the

---

<sup>12</sup>LCIGS, *1861 Landowners Map*, p. 1

<sup>13</sup>One source says Hubbard was Bangs's nephew, though some sources say that Hubbard and Bangs travelled *with* Bangs's nephew. Another source claims that Hubbard's wife was Bangs's niece. Yet another simply calls him a neighbour. Whatever the case may be, most of Wauconda's early settlers were related in one way or another.

<sup>14</sup>"Wauconda began with the house of Justus Bangs in 1836 on the shore of the lake that now bears his name" (Federal Writers Project, *Illinois: A Descriptive and Historical Guide* [Chicago: A. C. McClurg, 1939], p.503).

<sup>15</sup>Rice settled on a prairie just south of Forksville, and his property gave to Wauconda its first, unofficial name: Rice's Prairie.

<sup>16</sup>Elijah M. Haines, *Historical and Statistical Sketches, of Lake County, State of Illinois, in two parts. The first consisting of General Observations; The second gives a minute Review of each Township, in its order* (Waukegan, Ill.: E. G. Howe, 1852), p. 97.

southern end of what is now Cuba Township, and many Indian trails, there were no roads in the area. “The Potawatomi occasionally returned for short visits and were generally friendly.”<sup>17</sup>

3. Not long after settlers began to arrive, there was a travelling minister who made the rounds of the various communities.

**1838:** Sarah Slocum, wife of Jeremy (the brother of Thomas) died in this year. She is the first person we know of to be buried in the Slocum Family Cemetery (SW of Rt. 176 and Darrell Rd). This cemetery is now heavily vandalized.

**1839:** 1. 1 March Lake County separated from McHenry County (of which it was originally part) by an act of the Illinois legislature.<sup>18</sup>

2. Justus Bangs returned to Illinois with his wife, Louisa (–1851) and their sons, Andrew (1830–92) and Ambrose (1831–1920). Like other early settlers, Bangs bought a large tract of land, planning to sell bits of it off to relatives and friends whom he encouraged to follow. Bangs’s land included all of what is now Wauconda; his farm stretched from the lake past today’s Liberty Shopping Center.

3. Andrew C. Cook (1801–1884), of Stamford, Vermont, purchased 380 acres in Wauconda, at \$1.25 per acre, and established a farm. His wife, Mary Oaks (1807–1901) of Athol, Massachusetts, was the sister of Louisa Bangs.<sup>19</sup> Their first home was a log cabin. Just south of the farm buildings stood a small grove of hickory and oak trees; the trunk of one oak had been bent almost to a right angle when the tree was a sapling so that the Indians could use it as a trail marker. The Cook children, who often played in the grove, called it ‘the Bent Tree’.<sup>20</sup>

4. Area Baptists met for the first time under the leadership of Elder Joel Wheeler of McHenry. The church first met in the homes of Mark Bangs and Zebina Ford<sup>21</sup>, and they continued to meet in private homes until the schoolhouse was built, after which they met there.<sup>22</sup>

5. Area’s first school was built for community children.<sup>23</sup> It was called the ‘Little Red School’ and was constructed on land donated by Justus Bangs. It was a log cabin, 20 feet long, heated by a fireplace at one end. The books used were *Cobb’s Speller*, the Bible, Second & Third Readers,

---

<sup>17</sup>Parro, “The Pioneer Families of Tower Lakes”; he may mean the Winnebago, some of whom do seem to have visited the area in the early years of settlement.

<sup>18</sup>LCIGS, *1861 Landowners’ Map*, p.1

<sup>19</sup>At least two of the Oaks brothers, Andrew and Daniel, also settled in Wauconda Township. Bethiah, the wife of a third brother, Luke, is buried here, although he is not; she was a cousin (or sister) of Justus Bangs. In fact, most of the new arrivals to Wauconda were related to the Bangses or the Slocums—or both—by either marriage or birth. They were primarily Protestants of English descent.

<sup>20</sup>Wauconda Township Historical Society, “Cook House Dates to 1850s” Historical Notes column, *Wauconda Leader*, 31 January 1980.

<sup>21</sup>Jane E. Petzold, “Justus Bangs, Prince of Pioneers”, *Lake County Market-Journal*, 31 March 1982; Tony Wishik, “1877 Election Favors Village”, *The Herald*, 17 August 1977, and “Sun Rises on Village’s Second Century”, *The Wauconda Herald*, 17 August 1977; Wishik says the Baptists started meeting in 1838.

<sup>22</sup>Roger Ruthhart, ed., “Federated Church,” *Wauconda Leader*, 4 August 1977; Wishik, “Sun Rises on Village’s Second Century”

<sup>23</sup>Federal Writers Project, *Illinois*, p. 503; Chicago Historical Society, *Electronic Encyclopedia of Chicago*, 2005, article on ‘Wauconda’ (<http://www.encyclopedia.chicagohistory.org/pages/1327.html>)

and an arithmetic.<sup>24</sup> The school year started in September and ended in May, though some of the older boys didn't start until November, after the crops were harvested.<sup>25</sup>

**1840s – early 1850s:** Wauconda's peak growth years (at least until the suburbs overtook it in the late 20<sup>th</sup> C). The first main street ran along the banks of the lake; the streets leading onto it were lanes. There were no bridges, so people who wanted to enter or leave the town had to ford the inlet or the outlet to the lake. "To obtain the cash to improve his land, [Justus] Bangs contracted to carry mail between Chicago and Janesville."<sup>26</sup> Because the road was too difficult to travel by coach, this mail route was done on horseback. In these years, Pioneers "had to be thrifty and imaginative. They braided corn husks for foot or door mats. Their only lights were candles, which they made. . . . They churned their own butter, spun the wool and flax into thread and wove it into cloth, made their own clothes. . . ."<sup>27</sup> Quilting bees and barn raisings were common, the latter often followed by a 'barn dance'. Farmers in the area raised grain and many also raised livestock of various kinds. "When it was time to take the crops and stock to market, farmers gathered together and went as a group to Chicago, the nearest market. Wives would gather at one of two homes while several men would remain behind to guard them from possible dangers."<sup>28</sup> As elsewhere in the state, most farmers supplemented their livelihood by hunting. Aside from hunting and farming, the early population was engaged in mining limestone near what is now Volo, which led to the establishment of several brickyards. In the winter, local men would cut blocks of ice from the lake; these ice blocks would be stored in Grantham's Ice House on the shore and sold throughout the year for use as refrigeration. Another local industry was the making of butter; at one time there were three creameries in the area.

- 1840:**
1. Population of Lake County in this year: 2,634<sup>29</sup>
  2. About this time a remnant of the Winnebago Indian tribe returned to Wauconda to trade. They were living on the banks of the Fox River and seem to have camped near Slocum Lake. The Cooks became friendly with them, and they often visited the pioneer family.<sup>30</sup>
  3. Also in this year, the first immigrants from Ireland arrived in the village. Like the Davlins of Cuba Township, they were Catholics.<sup>31</sup>
  4. Methodist country circuit riders from Wheeling began visiting the township on occasional Sundays.<sup>32</sup>

---

<sup>24</sup>Tony Wishik, "Life and Doings of Justus Bangs: The 'Grand Old Man' of 1891 Recalls", *The Herald*, 17 August 1977.

<sup>25</sup>Richard Warfield, "The History of Lake County's Schools", speech given to the Wauconda Township Historical Society, 6 November 2006. Warfield explains that most one-room schools faced either east or west, with a window in the north so that the light would come in over students' left shoulders.

<sup>26</sup>*Electronic Encyclopedia of Chicago*.

<sup>27</sup>Wauconda Township Historical Society, "Early Pioneers Fought to Live", Historical Notes column, *Wauconda Leader*, 1979.

<sup>28</sup>Ruthhart, ed., "Farmers Helped Build Wauconda", *Wauconda Leader*, 4 August 1977.

<sup>29</sup>LCIGS, *1861 Landowners' Map*, p. 1

<sup>30</sup>WTHS, "Cook House Dates to 1850s"; Petzold claims that relations with the Indians were so cooperative that sometimes the Indians helped out on pioneers' farms ("Justus Bangs, Prince of Pioneers").

<sup>31</sup>Wishik, "Sun Rises . . ."

<sup>32</sup>Wishik, "Sun Rises . . ."

- 1841:** 1. Transfiguration Parish, the oldest in the Catholic Archdiocese of Chicago, was established this year, preceding the establishment of the Chicago Archdiocese itself by three years. Hugh Davlin and eight of his Irish fellow settlers, including brothers John and Michael Murray (originally of Wexford, Ireland), organized the first Catholic church. Like other religious groups, they met in homes initially. A visiting priest from a nearby settlement came through every four weeks, led the Mass, and performed marriages and baptisms.<sup>33</sup>
2. By this year, two Methodist congregations had been established, one in Half Day and one in Fairfield. The Fairfield congregation included families from Wauconda, who later organized a Wauconda congregation.<sup>34</sup>
- 1842:** The Slocum Lake community, known as Cornelia, by this year had enough residents to justify opening the area's first post office. Thomas and Mary Slocum were the postmasters. However, the Slocums were less outgoing and aggressive than Justus Bangs in Wauconda, and they did less to promote their settlement. As a result, the Bangs Lake settlement grew while Cornelia did not.
- 1844:** 1. John Murray donated land two miles east of Wauconda (where the Transfiguration cemetery is now located) for the building of the area's first Catholic church. It was constructed of logs. The church was called St. John's Mission, and services were held once a month. This was the first church building to be built in the Wauconda area.<sup>35</sup>
2. In this year "it had become a recognized fact that the dead of the village and of those living near were being buried on what at the present time is known as the Academy lot, being at the time the property of Mr. Justus Bangs, Esq."<sup>36</sup>
3. Marietta born to Thomas and Mary Slocum
4. At this time a man could be hired to shuck corn for 10¢ an hour.<sup>37</sup>
- 1845:** 1. The road to Janesville was improved to allow stagecoach travel, and Justus Bangs ended his one man pony-express mail service.<sup>38</sup>
2. Justus Bangs built the first store in the Wauconda area. Another early business was established by Luther Kimball (1823–1874). It later burned down and was replaced by a store owned first by Robert Harrison, then by the Golding Brothers, Albert Peck, and James Carr. Most early businesses were housed in buildings of wood-frame construction. They were connected by wooden sidewalks.<sup>39</sup> General stores had been established where farmers traded produce for merchandise.
3. By now there were more people in Wauconda than in Cornelia.
4. Lewis H. Todd, originally of Connecticut, moved out from Chicago to settle in Ela Township.

---

<sup>33</sup>Ibid.

<sup>34</sup>Ibid.

<sup>35</sup>Ibid.

<sup>36</sup> "Wauconda Township Cemetery Inscriptions, Lake County, Ill.," booklet compiled by the Lake County Genealogical Society Cemetery Committee, p. 14.

<sup>37</sup>Wauconda Township Historical Society, "Husking Bees Were Fun Times", Historical Notes column, *Wauconda Leader*, 1979.

<sup>38</sup>In "Justus Bangs, Prince of Pioneers", Petzold says that Bangs's horseback mail service began in 1845 and ended in 1853. However, by 1849, stagecoach was regularly making this trip, and in 1852, Elijah Haines described the road to Janesville as a 'stage road'. It seems likely therefore that 1845 was the terminating date for this run rather than the year it was started—though Wishik also says it started in 1845.

<sup>39</sup>Mary Lueder, the great-granddaughter of Justus Bangs, remembers her grandmother [Fannie Bangs Pratt]'s heels clicking on these wooden walks (Lueder interview, "Memories 2004", compiled by the Wauconda Township Historical Society).

- Mid-40s:** The Bangs Lake settlement was in the mid-forties known only as “Township 44, Range 9, in the county of Lake”. Justus Bangs and Andrew Cook called it Bangs Lake; it had previously been known as Rice’s Prairie. But others had begun to call the village *Wauconda*. Local legend holds that this was the name of a young Indian chief, whose name meant ‘Spirit Waters’ and who is buried somewhere along the banks of Bangs Lake, but this is highly unlikely: *Wauconda* is one form of the name of an Indian deity<sup>40</sup>, and A. Berger, writing to a local paper in the late 20<sup>th</sup> century, points out that “As far as we know, Indians in this area did not . . . name themselves ‘God’.” He adds that “common sense refutes the notion that they buried their dead on lake shores. A grave dug on a lake would soon fill with water, and a corpse planted there would soon pop up as it decayed.”<sup>41</sup> In fact the name seems to have been suggested by Lafayette Mills, teacher at the Little Red School, who had encountered it in a book—probably James Fenimore Cooper’s *The Prairie* (see 1827).<sup>42</sup> Most likely, as Berger observes, “The link between ‘Wauconda’ the Indian deity and the name of the village involved no Indians.”
- 1846:** Elijah Haines platted the town of Hainesville.<sup>43</sup> It was a planned community from the start, and in a few years it became the first incorporated village in Lake County. Located about halfway between McHenry and Little Fort, it soon became a way station for those making the full-day’s journey between the two, and a place to stop for those travelling at night, which took longer.<sup>44</sup> About this time also, settlement began at the Fork, where the roads to Chicago, McHenry, and Little Fort (Waukegan) met. This area was initially called Forksville; its modern name is Volo.
- 1847:** 1. 23 March Hugh Davlin of Cuba Township died. Justus Bangs served as executor of Davlin’s will.  
2. Lewis Todd was hired by Justus Bangs to build a hotel in Wauconda<sup>45</sup>; he settled permanently in the town.
- 1848:** Justus Bangs left his original farmhouse to his son Andrew and built a new house at Bangs and Main.
- 1849:** 1. November A countywide vote led to the county being divided into ‘towns’ (i.e., townships); at this point Wauconda was formally organized.  
2. 27 June The post office established at the Cornelia settlement near Slocum Lake was relocated to Wauconda proper. The first postmaster in the Bangs Lake settlement was Hazard Green.

---

<sup>40</sup>Robert Stephenson of the Smithsonian Institute, the Curator of Anthropology at the Chicago Natural History Museum, and Jim Hamilton, a member of the Omaha tribe, all gave this explanation for the word in letters to local resident Katherine Scott in 1964. According to *Oregon Geographic Names*, “Wakonda is used by tribes of the Siouan family to mean something consecrated and, as a verb, it means to worship” (Oregon Historical Society Press. There are numerous editions; which this comes from is not noted). Scott’s letters are in the possession of the Wauconda Area Public Library.

<sup>41</sup>A. Berger, “Origin of ‘Wauconda’ ” *Daily Herald*, 29 April 1999, Section 1, p. 15.

<sup>42</sup>Jerry Smith, of Boom Towns & Relic Hunters [jerry@ghosttownsusa.com], whom I contacted about the history of Wauconda, Washington, tells me that the town in Washington State was named by the Hedges brothers, natives of Wauconda, Ill., who went west during the gold rush. They said the word meant ‘upper valley’, which has no relation whatsoever to any of explanations given for our town’s name—or to local geography. Whether there was a reason for this beyond their own imaginations is unknown.

<sup>43</sup>Biographical sketch of Elijah Haines from *Portrait and Biographical Album of Lake County, Illinois* (Chicago: Lake City Publishing Co., 1891); quoted as a preface to the reissue of *Haines’s Historical and Statistical Sketches*.

<sup>44</sup>Ruthhart, ed., “Haines’ Hainesville started it all”, Lakeland Publications, 1976.

<sup>45</sup>Probably the Pratt House, which stood about where the current village hall and parking lot are. It served as the site of civil functions (such as elections), and was one of the town’s numerous hotels during its resort years.

3. At this time, most of the roads leading into and through the town were “blazed through prairies, streams, and woods. Some roads were covered with planks to make traveling easier, especially for stagecoach passengers.” One of the plank-covered roads was McHenry Rd., which led to Janesville and was later known as the Old Plank Road.

4. The stagecoach route from Chicago to Janesville, Wisconsin, went through Wauconda. One round trip took a week to make. Ambrose B. Bangs, the son of Justus Bangs, drove the stage from Chicago to Janesville for eight years. “He says that he suffered a good many hardships, but he . . . had no trouble with the Indians. . . . [I]n those days Wauconda received mail once a week only. Not many letters were sent because the postage was twenty-five cents for each letter, and none of the letters were enclosed in envelopes.”<sup>46</sup>

5. John Lewis Brooks (originally of Boston) helped “more fully organize” the Baptist congregation in Wauconda, which at this time had 11 members.<sup>47</sup> Rev. Brooks “was to continue as the dominant figure in the Baptist movement in the area for the next 40 years, serving as preacher . . . for a total of 27 years.”<sup>48</sup>

**1850:** 1. The first brick house constructed in this part of the township was built and occupied by Andrew Cook and his family. The original floor plan had a kitchen, living room, parlor, and one bedroom downstairs, with five bedrooms upstairs<sup>49</sup>; first-floor rooms were heated by wood-burning stoves and the upstairs rooms were unheated. The Cook house still stands, though several additions have been made and it has been renovated. It is currently the home of the Wauconda Township Historical Society.

2. *First Tuesday in April* The first township meeting was held in the Cook home. Jonathan Wood was chosen as moderator, and LaFayette Mills acted as clerk. Officers elected were: Pete Mills, supervisor; E. L. Huson, assessor; A. J. Seeber, collector; Andrew Cook and J. McKinney, commissioners of highways; Hazard Green [Haines says Howard Green] and J. Wessecher, Justices of the Peace; E. L. Huson and Seth Hill, constables.<sup>50</sup>

3. Justus Bangs and Andrew Cook platted a village to aid in the sale of area land. Originally there was only one street, which followed the banks of the lake, until Hampton Colgrove, who lived in the north part of the town, petitioned to have the road changed to its present location. Justus Bangs, who desired that the town be as beautiful as possible, decreed that barns were not to be built along the main street.<sup>51</sup> The assessed value of Wauconda property for the year 1850, including both real and personal, was \$61,907.00. The amount of tax computed on the same was \$827.18. Records of the early justice courts and early trials have not survived; according to Mrs. Maria Powers, one of residents at the time, the records were lost when the house in which they were kept burned.<sup>52</sup>

---

<sup>46</sup>Village of Wauconda web site.

<sup>47</sup>Ruthhart, “Federated Church”, 1977

<sup>48</sup>Wishik, “Sun Rises . . .”

<sup>49</sup>Gail Kahover, “Lack of Funds May Shutter Cook House”, *Daily Herald*, Fri., 20 September 1985, section 2. However, Barbara

Parelius Davenport, whose father is the one who turned the upstairs into an apartment, remembers there being only four bedrooms upstairs.

<sup>50</sup>Haines, *Sketches*, pp. 98–9.

<sup>51</sup>Mary Lueder interview, in “Memories 2004”.

<sup>52</sup>Village of Wauconda web page.



4. “The increasing size of the village . . . made it imperative on the citizens that the Burying Ground be removed to quarters more remote from the Town, and acting on the suggestion of Mr. Justus Bangs (who proposed to donate a fractional piece of ground lying beside the public road and adjoining W. Winch and L. Oaks). In the autumn of 1850 ground was broken, trees removed and other improvements entered upon on what now constitutes part of the cemetery grounds. The dead from the old burying ground were removed very soon after.”<sup>53</sup>
5. Plank Road was laid between McHenry and Little Fort. Toll booths were set up to finance it, including one at Hainesville.
- 1851:** Death of Louisa Bangs.
- 1852:** 1. 23 *January* Justus Bangs married Caroline Cone of New York. They met in Waukegan through mutual friends.
2. Elijah Haines wrote in this year that “Wauconda is a Village of about 200 inhabitants, or upwards, and affords three good Stores, two Public Houses, and various Mechanics. Its location is delightful and as the country advances, will become one of the most delightful and pleasant Villages in the County. . . . A Division of Sons of Temperance has recently been organized here which speaks well for the sobriety and morality of its citizens.”<sup>54</sup>
3. Forksville described as “a Village of recent growth, [which] contains about 150 inhabitants. It affords two Stores, a commodious Hotel, and such Mechanics as are usually found in like country Villages.”<sup>55</sup>
4. Northern Illinois Railroad Company chartered to build a line through Cook County to the state border. Justus Bangs was one of the first to get behind this venture, but “for reasons still not known today, that plan never went through.”<sup>56</sup>
- 1853:** First Methodist Episcopal Church of Wauconda organized by Rev. Charles French.<sup>57</sup>
- 1854:** 1. John and Lydia (Webster) Pratt came to Wauconda from Stamford, Vermont, with 19 others. They bought land from Justus Bangs (to whom they were related). They also took over the hotel Bangs had built, which came to be known as the Pratt House. Many civic functions, such as elections (*see 1877*), were held at the Pratt House.
2. Justus Bangs resigned his position as postmaster, which he had held for several terms, to become the Justice of the Peace, a post he held for the next twelve years.
- 1855:** 1. *or 1857* “Elder” Brooks took over as pastor of the Baptist congregation. He served in this capacity until 1874, and then intermittently through 1886.
2. In this year, Justus Bangs was Township Supervisor.
3. The Creamery, a cheese factory, built on land purchased by Michael Synnett in 1841. This business flourished well into the 20<sup>th</sup> century.
- 1856:** 1. Wauconda Academy was built. It was one of three schools (the others were Lake Forest Academy and Waukegan Academy) chartered by the Illinois legislature. The first teacher was Euphemia Valentine. Conditions were primitive: Gas lamps and stoves predominated into the 20<sup>th</sup>

---

<sup>53</sup>“Wauconda Cemetery Association Record Book”, p. 14 of the Wauconda Township Cemetery Inscriptions booklet.

<sup>54</sup>Haines, *Sketches*, p. 98.

<sup>55</sup>Ibid.

<sup>56</sup>Ruthhart, ed., “Everything Stopped When the Whistle Blew”, *Wauconda Leader*, 4 August 1977.

<sup>57</sup>Wishik, “Sun Rises . . .”

century, and sometimes inkwells would freeze in the winter (*see 1900, 1931*).<sup>58</sup> Originally the second floor was used as a meeting hall for various local societies.<sup>59</sup>

**2.** The Baptists and Methodists formed a joint task force to prepare for the building of a church, which both would use. The building was erected by the Methodists on the Common; it was occupied by both Methodists and Baptists, who used it on alternate Sundays until February of 1870. Mary Lueder says the land was donated by Justus Bangs.

**3.** Birth of Thomas Vedder Slocum to Thomas and Mary Slocum.

**4.** Birth of Fannie Bangs to Justus and Caroline Bangs; Justus was again Township Supervisor.

**1857:** Thomas Slocum, Justus Bangs, Andrew Cook, and J. R. Wells were trustees for the Academy.

**1858:** Lake Side Inn began operating. It was built by Lewis H. Todd, father of Laura (later Mrs. Arthur Cook). In the early days it had prominence as a stagecoach stop. Though the name and the owners have changed many times, the building still stands; today it serves as a restaurant and is once again called Lakeside Inn.

**early 1860s:** **1.** Shortly before the Civil War, a farm equipment and hardware store was opened by Reuben and Mary Hill. Not long after this a saw and grist mill was established by John Spencer on Mill St. There was also a foundry and blacksmith shop built by Kirwan and Fuller.

**2.** Justus Bangs fitted out a company of soldiers to go fight in the Civil War. Some soldiers killed during the war, who were unidentified or who did not have families, were brought to Wauconda for burial.

**1864:** Justus Bangs elected Township Supervisor again.

**1865:** **1.** Death of President Lincoln. Among the “line of guards who accompanied the mortal remains of President Lincoln” was Henry Mavric Davis, now buried in the Wauconda Cemetery.<sup>60</sup>

**2.** Lillian Smith born to William R. and Marietta (Slocum) Smith

**1866:** Early map shows several businesses on Main Street (then called the Chicago-McHenry Road), including blacksmith shops, S. Hill’s Meat Market, Hubbard’s Hotel, a harness shop, P. Swenson’s store, and Luther Kimball’s store. In this year also, Henry Maiman, a tailor from Germany, opened Maiman’s Store on Main Street. This family-run business was a Wauconda institution for 100 years.

**Late 1860s:** A Sunday school picnic was held at the Wauconda home of Jay Bennett. At this picnic the hymn “The Sweet Bye and Bye” was performed for the first time; it was written by Bennett’s brother Sanford.<sup>61</sup>

**1867:** **1.** F. W. Morrison, editor of Wauconda’s first newspaper, began a campaign for a railroad to Wauconda. Land was donated and about \$10,000 of the needed \$45,000 was raised, but momentum soon died, and the paper was sold a few years later.<sup>62</sup>

**2.** About this year Wauconda Academy folded as a chartered school. However, the school district began to rent it and classes continued.<sup>63</sup>

**1868:** **1.** Beaders Smith born; his parents were William and Marietta (Slocum) Smith; he died in youth.

---

<sup>58</sup>Richard Warfield speech, Wauconda, 2006; Wishik, “Sun Rises . . .”

<sup>59</sup>Wishik, “1877 election . . .”

<sup>60</sup>*The Village Star*, September 1999.

<sup>61</sup>“Lake County Man Wrote Famous Song”, *Wauconda Leader*, date unknown (copy held by the Wauconda Township Historical Society).

<sup>62</sup> Tony Wishik wrote in the *Wauconda Leader* that 28 February 1867 was the day the railroad’s charter was granted (Wishik, “Railroad Days Were Great Days”, 17 August 1977). Another source says that the *Star*, not est. until 1888, was the area’s first paper.

<sup>63</sup>Federal Writers Project, *Illinois*, p. 503; Wauconda Township Historical Society.

2. Timothy Bacon farm established on Darrell Rd., just north of Case Rd. Bacon and his wife, Elizabeth Miller, built the house and barn.
  3. *27 November* The post office and village of Forksville was changed to Volo.
- 1869:** Theodore F. Slocum was president of the school board, whose annual budget in this year was \$2,000, according to school district record books.<sup>64</sup>
- 1870:**
1. *Summer* The first Wauconda Baptist Church was built across the street from the Methodist church by the Baptists who had begun meeting in 1838 under Joe Wheeler; the cost was \$5,500.00. According to an article in the *Wauconda Leader* (1977), this was necessitated by the Methodists' decision to use the shared building every week.
  2. *30 October* Baptist church dedicated, free of debt. This building eventually became the main part of the Federated Church building, which still stands.
  3. Mary E. Smith born to William and Marietta (Slocum) Smith (elsewhere she is called Marianna). She married Henry Ford, and they had one son, Budd. His widow, Katie, was still living in Wauconda in the mid-1970s.
- 1871:**
1. Wauconda Baptist Church by this time housed a Sunday school and a library.
  2. Wauconda Academy purchased by the school district and enlarged. According to Mary Lueder (great-granddaughter of Justus Bangs), the first three grades met on the ground floor and fourth through eighth grades on the upper floor, with the seventh and eighth graders sharing a room separated from the others. Later, two years of high school were added, taught together with the eighth grade.<sup>65</sup> Kids played ball on the lawn in front of the building, and for several years it was the center of local activity—plays, debates, religious meetings, etc.
- 1872:** Death of William Smith, first husband of Marietta Slocum
- 1873:** Death of Ellen Slocum Dresser
- 1875:**
1. Lewis H. Todd became the first police justice of Wauconda (another source says he became postmaster in this year, but he also served as police justice); he served until 1885. Over the years he also served as village treasurer, was a school-board member, and held various offices in the Methodist church.
  2. The town's first business, Justus Bangs's mercantile store, ceased operation.
  3. Death of Thomas Slocum at age 63
- 1876:**
1. The Oakland Hotel at the corner of Mill St. and Maple was perhaps the finest of the Wauconda hotels, according to a mid-1970s survey of historic hotels in the *Wauconda Leader*. The hotel had three stories, including the basement, and on the third floor it had a dance floor where "the finest entertainment available could be enjoyed."<sup>66</sup> Pre-1877 buildings still standing on Main St. include those now housing the Village Inn (formerly Kirwan's Tavern), Tom's Tap-a-Barrel, Tony's Barber Shop, the Bulldog Grill (formerly Carr's Sweet Shop), Lakeside Inn, Thomas Gooch & Assoc., and Bliss Wine & Gifts.
  2. At this time there was a brickyard on the Cook farm and another one on the Kent property on Maple Ave. A limestone kiln was located on the bank of the lake on Kimball's property. Elijah

---

<sup>64</sup>Carol Culp Robinson, "Schoolgirl's Lens Captured History", *Lakes Countryside*, Thursday, 9 December 1976. If Theodore Slocum is related to the original Slocum family, he must be a descendent of Jeremy (Thomas's brother) or perhaps a more distant relative. To my knowledge the only male child of Thomas and Mary died without children.

<sup>65</sup>Robinson, "Schoolgirl's Lens . . .", p. 7.

<sup>66</sup>Ruthhart, ed., "The Glory Days of Wauconda's Grand Hotels", no date. The site is now a municipal parking lot.

Haines reported that “Limestone are found in abundance in the vicinity, and the burning of lime at this place, has been a source of considerable profit to several individuals who have engaged in the business.”<sup>67</sup>

3. In this year the Catholic Church east of town, which had become a Mission with masses held once a fortnight, was claimed by the McHenry Parish Settlement.

**1877:** 1. *19 July* Petition was made by townsmen to the Honorable John L. Turner, Judge of the County of Lake and State of Illinois, to incorporate the Village of Wauconda under the State Statutes approved April 10, 1872.<sup>68</sup>

2. *6 August* Dedication of the new Roman Catholic Church, built within city limits of Wauconda by Charles Davlin (son of Hugh) and the Murray brothers, among others, on land purchased from Justus Bangs. Its priest was Father O’Neill, who named the church Transfiguration because it was dedicated on the Feast of the Transfiguration. The first trustees were: James Murray, Charles Davlin, Felix Givens, Hugh Davlin, and Owen McMahon. People came to this church from all over the county because of its sturdy construction and the beauty of its sanctuary dome. The original building still stands, now serving as a chapel for the current Transfiguration congregation. Stained glass windows in the Church depict the first services in John Murray’s cabin as well as the original log church.<sup>69</sup>

3. *18 August* Election held for all legal voters resident in the Village of Wauconda, at the Pratt House from 8 a.m. to 7 p.m., on the question of whether or not Wauconda should be incorporated. Robert Harrison, W. H. Seymour, and Justus Bangs, appointed as judges of the election, counted 49 votes for and 24 votes against incorporation.

4. *18 September* Election held at Pratt House to elect trustees for the Village of Wauconda. Robert Harrison (44 votes), Daniel Oaks (39), A. C. Bangs (44), P. S. Swenson (34), Peter Johnson (41), and J. A. Hubbard (41) were elected as trustees.

5. *24 September* Board of Trustees met at the office of Justice Henry Dobner. He administered to them the oath of office. The Board then elected, by ballot among themselves, Robert Harrison to be the first President of the Village.

Population at time of incorporation (1877): 309

First constable: Henry Golding (1877)

First street commissioner: Stebbins Ford (1877)

First village treasurer: Lewis H. Todd (1877–1884)

Clerk in 1877: Albert Calkins

During its first year, the village board authorized two village licenses, one for liquor and one for peddlers.<sup>70</sup>

6. Some of the businesses thriving in this year: “Brewster & Johnson, dealers in hardware, stoves, farming goods, and guns. Also manufacturers of tin, sheet iron and copperware; R. Harrison,

---

<sup>67</sup>Haines, *Sketches*, p. 98.

<sup>68</sup>The petition was signed by H. H. Seymour, Eden Whitcomb, John L. Griggs, A. Calkins, Peter Johnson, Reed Burritt, Henry Maiman, David McClain, P. Stein, E. W. Barker, John Pratt, H. Golding, G. W. Pratt, C. L. Pratt, J. Bangs, B. K. Duers, M. S. Hill, H. B. Duers, E. F. Faggart, Seth Hill, R. Burton, George Mill, C. M. Hill, Charles K. Wait, William Marble, J. R. Wells, H. B. Burritt, William Tidmarsh, J. D. Blanck, Thomas L. Grantham, J. L. Ketchum, B. E. Gardinier, J. M. Kirwan, L. Bundy, Robert Harrison, Albert Baseley, J. Golding, and A. C. Bangs.

<sup>69</sup><http://transfigurationwauconda.com/AboutUs/ChurchHistory/tabid/73/Default.aspx>

<sup>70</sup>“Incorporation ousts skinny dipping; but Wauconda’s first hundred flows, grows in full raiment” (no author named), *Lakes Countryside*, 19 May 1977: 8.

dealer in all kinds of dry goods, boots and shoes, hats, caps, groceries of all kinds, crockery, glassware, and first class general merchandise. . . . M. S. Hill, dealer in general merchandise; F. R. Harrison's Wauconda Drug Store, drugs, medicines, dye stuffs; Henry Maiman, merchant tailor, clothier and gents furnishings; . . . Emerson Powers, carpenter; Lewis H. Todd, contractor; Eden Whitcomb, manufacturer and dealer in boots and shoes."<sup>71</sup>

- 1878:** 1. 2 January Special election held to let voters decide for or against a tax being levied to raise \$300 to buy property for building a village office and jail. Final vote was 47 to 2, in favour. Two weeks later property for this purpose was purchased from the Slocum family.<sup>72</sup>  
2. 13 May Ordinance #16 passed, decreeing that every able-bodied man in the village must work on maintenance of village streets and alleys for a period not to exceed two ten-hour days. Those who wished to get out of it could do so by paying a fine of \$1 per day not worked to the village.<sup>73</sup>  
3. 3 December Ordinance #17 passed, making it unlawful for anyone to bathe or swim in the village within a quarter mile of the beaches in "a naked state amounting to indecent exposure of the person" at any time between sunrise and a half hour past sundown. Infringement could mean a fine—not less than 50¢ but not more than \$200—or six months in jail.<sup>74</sup>
- 1879:** 28 January H. B. Duers Penmanship School opened.
- 1870s or 80s:** 1. Pratt House sold by its owner to his son-in-law, Dennis Murphy. He may be the one who turned it into a hotel.  
2. In the early part of the 1800s, farmers were "so persistent . . . in hunting [wolves] down that after the Eighties one was rarely seen."<sup>75</sup>
- 1880:** Board of Trustees recommended that village streets be gravelled.
- 1882:** Death of Lillian Smith, granddaughter of Thomas and Mary Slocum, aged 16, of scarlet fever.
- 1883:** There were 569 children in the district 118 school board's jurisdiction, "a wide area composed of nine small districts".<sup>76</sup>
- 1884:** 1. 31 March Swenson Hall had roller skating.  
2. Death of Andrew Cook. His daughter Lucy and her husband, Will Clough, assumed ownership of the Cook House, though Andrew's wife Mary continued to live there.
- 1885:** 1. September Ringling Brothers Circus issued a license to rent grounds and put on their double show.  
2. 3 December Board voted to install street lamps with power.<sup>77</sup> Before this, people "didn't go out very much" at night "because it was pitch dark. There were no lights." Even after street lamps were installed, "they didn't penetrate, they were very dim."<sup>78</sup> At this time the Board also petitioned for fire protection, something that had probably been under consideration since the Great Fires of Chicago and Oswego in 1871.<sup>79</sup>

---

<sup>71</sup>Ruthhart, ed., "Early Businesses Thrive in Wauconda", *Wauconda Leader*, 4 August 1977.

<sup>72</sup>"Incorporation ousts skinny dipping . . .", *Lakes Countryside*, 1977.

<sup>73</sup>Ibid.

<sup>74</sup>Ibid.

<sup>75</sup>Excerpt from August 1963 editorial by Leslie Brooks Paddock, editor of the *Barrington Courier-Review*, recalling his childhood on what is now Roberts Rd. (Parro, "Pioneers of Tower Lake").

<sup>76</sup>Robinson, "Schoolgirl's lens . . .", p. 7.

<sup>77</sup>"Incorporation ousts skinny dipping," 1977.

<sup>78</sup>Mary Lueder interview, "Memories, 2004".

<sup>79</sup>Bill Glade, "The History of Wauconda's Fire Department", speech given to the Wauconda Township Historical Society, 10

- 1887:** 1. 18 July Vote held for taxpayers to choose the type of fire protection they preferred; 23 voted for a tank system and 24 for a hand pump.<sup>80</sup>  
2. *Wauconda Star* purchased by Frank Carr. He changed the name to *Wauconda Leader*.
- 1888:** 1. 29 May J. W. Newkirk's offer to furnish the village with a hand engine and hose cart was accepted. The Board also authorized the construction of cisterns on "the four corners"—probably Mills St. and Main; these cisterns were to hold not less than 350 barrels of water.<sup>81</sup>  
2. December On the 7<sup>th</sup> it was decided to rent J. Pratt's barn for use of the fire engine at \$2 per month. On the 21<sup>st</sup> the Board decided instead to purchase land from A. C. Bangs to build an Engine House.
- 1889:** 1. 9 November Wauconda Niagara Fire Company, the town's first fire department, founded. W. H. Strayer was elected president. Probably the volunteers who had been fighting fires up to this time continued to be the firefighters; the only difference was that it was now organized as a proper company. The company was named after the make of hand pump they had been using to fight fires. Originally the department only served the village itself; later local subdivisions and farms received service by subscription. According to the Fire Department's web site, "Not much is known about the department for its first thirty years." Firefighters were volunteers, most of them local businessmen.<sup>82</sup>  
2. According to the Wauconda Fire Department's history article, the local paper of this time was the *Wauconda Torpedo*.<sup>83</sup>
- 1890:** 1. Leslie Brooks Paddock, grandson of Elder Brooks, was born.  
2. 4 February constitution and by-laws of the Wauconda Niagara Fire Company approved. The Board authorized that all equipment be turned over by the village clerk to the Fire Department. At this time the Board also authorized the purchase of a metal fire bell, two lanterns, one black lamp, one hand lamp, and a set of ladders.<sup>84</sup>
- 1890s:** An electric car running to Palatine was proposed, to be powered on self-contained storage batteries. John Spencer offered his mill as a recharging station. As this decade went on, "railroad fever truly gripped the village of Wauconda", as residents became convinced that the railroad was needed to bring food, supplies, and tourists from the city.<sup>85</sup>
- 1891:** Justus Bangs wrote *Life and Doings of Justus Bangs*, reminiscence about his life.<sup>86</sup> By this point, Bangs had constructed six buildings in the area—more than any other resident.
- 1893:** 1. 27 January: Village Board adopted the first Ordinance to prevent the spread of infectious diseases. At this time the first local Board of Health was set up; Dr. W. C. Quincy, Dr. C. R. Wells, L. N. Fennel, and James Murray were appointed to serve on the board.  
2. Thomas Vedder Slocum, along with six others, petitioned to have a telephone line brought to Wauconda from Barrington via Lake Zurich. Thomas Vedder ran a farm implement store on Mill St.; he owned the first steam threshing machine in the area.
- 1895:** 1. 12 August: Board authorized the placement of hitching posts in front of the school grounds.

---

<sup>80</sup>Ibid.

<sup>81</sup>Ibid.

<sup>82</sup>This information comes from the Wauconda Fire Department's web site ("Department History", [www.waucondafire.org/Historypage.htm](http://www.waucondafire.org/Historypage.htm)), and Bill Glade's 10 September 2007 speech to the Wauconda Township Historical Society.

<sup>83</sup>Wauconda Fire department website ('Department History')

<sup>84</sup>Bill Glade speech, September 2007

<sup>85</sup>Wishik, "Railroad Days . . ."

<sup>86</sup>I have been unable to locate any copies of this booklet.

2. Free School Act passed: Communities of ten to fifteen parents could now form a school district and pick its location; usually a local farmer would donate the land. Unlike some of these new districts, Wauconda had a high school.<sup>87</sup>
3. The Boat House (now Lindy's Landing) first operated by Walter Waelty. Here boats could be rented, bait purchased, and fishing equipment acquired.
4. *December*: Death of Justus Bangs
5. Soo Line Railroad established a train station in Grayslake. Hainesville began to decline. A few years later, when a tornado ripped through the village, most of the buildings that were destroyed were never rebuilt. A lot of the people moved into Grayslake or Round Lake.
- 1897:**
1. *15 January*: Board adopted a legal map of the village, drawn by J. H. S. Lee, the county surveyor. Board members received a copy for 50 cents; others could purchase their own for a dollar.
2. *23 June*: Board granted the Chicago Telephone Company the right to put in a telephone line in the Village of Wauconda.
- 1898:** Rev. R. C. Dutton became pastor of the Methodist church. In the next few years, quite a few developments occurred, including additional building to provide space for Sunday school.
- 1899:**
1. Hughes' Furniture Shop and Haas' Barber Shop were established in this year; other specialized businesses included Reuben and Mary Hill's saw and grist mill and a blacksmith shop run by Kirwan and Fuller.
2. Mr. & Mrs. C. L. Pratt sold to the village a piece of land lying between Main St. and the Bangses' property, after the village threatened to condemn it. The property was used to widen Main Street.<sup>88</sup>
- 1900:**
1. Shops in Wauconda in this year included Maiman's Dry Goods, Graham Drug Store, Otto Welter (jeweller), Price Brothers (general merchandise), Gustav Fidler's butcher shop, Carl Erkson's shoemaker, and Sarah Geary's dressmaker.<sup>89</sup> Kirwan's Tavern was opened this year by Arthur Kirwan.
2. At the turn of the century, the main street was a "wide dirt swath bordered by pencil straight wooden businesses and trees that have since been leveled".<sup>90</sup> Winters were colder than they are now; Grace Harris remembers that sometimes the school was so cold it took until noon for the stone fireplace to heat up the one-room schoolhouse, and lunches were kept in the potbellied stove so that they wouldn't freeze. Bathroom facilities were outside, the boys at one end of the school and the girls at the other.<sup>91</sup> For the first few decades of the century, mail came by stagecoach from Chicago. People would gather at the post office waiting to see if they would get any mail, though most people rarely did. There was no direct mail delivery to Wauconda until after the 1930s.<sup>92</sup> Wauconda was known in this era as "quite a Saturday night town", and lots of

---

<sup>87</sup>Richard Warfield speech, 2006. 'Non-high' districts such as Ela, Cuba and Fremont levied per capita taxes to pay for transportation of their secondary students to other districts' high schools. For instance, some of Ela's children went to high school in Wauconda; others went to Spring Grove, and some took the train to Libertyville.

<sup>88</sup>"Incorporation ousts skinny dipping . . .", 1977.

<sup>89</sup>*The Village Star*, December 2000.

<sup>90</sup>Robinson, "Schoolgirl's Lens . . .", p. 6.

<sup>91</sup>Nancy Serritella, "Grace Harris' Early Photography Jobs Now Help Her Remember the Past", *The Herald*, 17 August 1977, p. 13.

<sup>92</sup>*Ibid.*

folk would come here to dance at places like the Oakland Hotel.<sup>93</sup> According to Harris, the Oakland “was the big hall of the town. . . Everything was held there.”<sup>94</sup>

3. Parsonage built for the Methodist Church

4. In this year the licensing fee for running billiards and pool tables was \$10 per year per table.<sup>95</sup>

**early 1900s:** 1. By this time Wauconda was a top resort village.<sup>96</sup> Bangs Lake was dredged and sanded to make it suitable for beaches.

2. 18-year-old Harry Geary was working at the Creamery and living on the third floor of the building, in a room he shared with hired hands in the summer. The Davis family, who managed the factory, lived on the second floor. A steam-driven engine rotated the churn and there was a horse barn behind the building which housed five horses. Some blacksmithing was done at the cheese factory by Charley Davis (who also served as the rural postmaster on occasion.) Years later, Geary remembered the Creamery as “a kind of a meeting place for the farm boys around here to talk about politics and crops or just plain settin’ and spittin’. And whittlin’ was always going on. . . much to the disgust of Davis’ wife, who thought he should be tending to cheese making.”<sup>97</sup>

3. Ice cream socials were popular in the summers; in winter, skating parties and sleigh rides provided recreation.

4. Some of the area’s roads were so bad that stretches of them were simply abandoned in the spring.<sup>98</sup> This is one of the reasons that residents were so keen to get the railroad.

**1901:** 1. *1 July:* Village Board agreed that all dogs found unmuzzled on the streets of the village between 10 July and 15 September were subject to shooting by village authorities.

2. Death of Mary Oaks Cook. The Cook house passed to her youngest daughter, Lucy, whose husband, Will Clough, had been farming it as Mary grew older. In the years that followed, the Clough family moved out. Lucy’s brother Arthur lived there until his death in 1906 (whether he moved in with his family after the Cloughs left or had lived there all along is unclear).

**1902:** 1. *5 May:* An ordinance was passed by the Board granting Edward W. Stees, and his heirs as assigns, the right to build and maintain a railroad through the village.

2. *3 November:* An ordinance was passed granting the same right to W. D. Ball, Willard T. Block, Charles Lenhart, Frederick D. McKinnon and Edwin B. Smith.

3. *5 December:* death of Thomas Vedder Slocum in the Lincoln Hotel fire, Chicago<sup>99</sup>

**1903:** (*2 June*) Village reforestation program established with the purchase by the village of sixty elm trees from Klehm’s nursery, at a cost of \$15.

**1904:** (*19 March*) Volo Church destroyed by tornado

**1905:** At age 15, Leslie Brooks Paddock began working the printing press at the *Wauconda Star*.

---

<sup>93</sup>Ruthhart, “Glory Days . . .”

<sup>94</sup>Serritella.

<sup>95</sup>“Incorporation ousts skinny dipping . . .”, 1977.

<sup>96</sup> Wishik, “Railroad Days . . .”

<sup>97</sup>Harry Geary, quoted in Ruthcart, ed., “It’s More Than Just a Creamery”, reprinted from *Wauconda Leader*, 1973.

<sup>98</sup>Ibid.

<sup>99</sup>Slocum’s obituary; T.V. Slocum is among the fourteen casualties named in the *Racine Journal* [“Chicago Fire Claims Many: 14 Deaths Due to Suffocation, the Result of Early Morning Blaze in Hotel. Majority of Victims Visitors to the Live Stock Show – Dense Smoke Prevented Escape – Building Condemned as a ‘Fire Trap’”, *Racine Journal*, 5 December 1902.], though he is said to come from Waoala, Illinois; three others had not been identified at the time of the article.



- 1906:** 1. John Spencer's saw and grist mill at the foot of Mill Street near the lake burned.<sup>100</sup> Many people at the time said it was the worst fire the village had seen. This shelved plans for an electric car-train.  
 2. Village's first speed limit signs were posted, and some cement sidewalks were to be put in.  
 3. Death of Arthur Cook; his family were the last of the Cooks to live in the Andrew C. Cook House; after this, the house was rented out.
- 1907:** 1. John J. Brown (of McHenry) and Annie Margreth Stilling (of Johnsburg, McHenry Co.) married at St. John's Church. They moved into the Cook house, where they lived until 1919; two of their children were born in the house.<sup>101</sup>  
 2. The old village hall (now the Citizens' Activity Center) built by the Brumm Brothers. Village president at the time was H. T. Fuller.  
 3. Arthur Kirwan moved his tavern to 202 S. Main St.
- 1908:** 1. Roller skating on cement sidewalks was banned.  
 2. Graduating Class of Wauconda High School consisted of Minnie Meyer, Grace Toynton (later Mrs. George Harris), Bessy Clough (later Mrs. Rollin Hallock), and Mertie Kuebker (later Mrs. Homer T. Cook)—“all the boys had gotten bored and dropped out.”<sup>102</sup> At this point Wauconda High School was a three-room building at Main St. and Barrington Road, with eighth grade and high school taught in the same room by the same teacher.<sup>103</sup>
- 1909:** 1. Emil Dahms became clerk; he served until 1928.  
 2. Palatine, Lake Zurich, and Wauconda railway line conceived by Robert Wynn—“the organizer of a not-too-successful trolley company in Waukegan”—as part of a scheme to build a trolley line from Waukegan to Fox Lake and then to Rockford.<sup>104</sup> Wynn planned for a ‘T’ line which would extend from Fox Lake through Wauconda, Lake Zurich, and Palatine to terminate in Elgin. Along with Wynn, a Waukegan attorney named Justin K. Orvis “organized the Waukegan, Rockford, and Elgin Traction Company to connect with the Chicago and Northwestern railway lines.” The two men “barnstormed [*sic*] the area with the virtues of Wauconda as the ‘Midwest’s Natural Playground’. Due to promotion done by the pair, soon Charles A. Patten, a Palatine banker, became interested in helping out with the railroad’s financing. Right of way for the railroad was donated by Wauconda farmers and on August 25, 1910, the *Wauconda Leader* reported that \$20,000 was raised while only \$2,000 was needed for the train.”<sup>105</sup>
- 1910:** 1. Population at this time: 368. “[T]he community had achieved some prominence as a vacation spot for blue-collar Chicagoans enjoying the waters of Bangs Lake. Numerous summer homes ringed the lake and a small commercial center developed.”<sup>106</sup> Vacationers would take the train out to Barrington and then take a coach the rest of the way; Ambrose Bangs drove the coach.<sup>107</sup>

---

<sup>100</sup> Wishik, “Railroad Days . . .”

<sup>101</sup>The Browns were tenants of the Cooks, who owned the house well into the 20<sup>th</sup> c. This information comes from documents provided to the Historical Society by one of the Browns’ younger children when she visited the Cook House in 2007; she also told us about her siblings having been born there.

<sup>102</sup>Robinson, “Schoolgirl’s Lens . . .”, p. 7.

<sup>103</sup>Peggie Elgin, “Class of 1908 Reunited”, *Wauconda Leader*, 5 October 1966.

<sup>104</sup>Dave Urbanek, “A railroad’s trip through history with ‘Old Maud’ ”, *Daily Herald*, 8 December 1982.

<sup>105</sup>Ruthhart, “Everything Stopped When the Whistle Blew”; Wishik, “Railroad Days . . .”; *Encyclopedia of Chicago*.

<sup>106</sup>*Encyclopedia of Chicago*.

<sup>107</sup>Ruthhart, ed., “Everything Stopped . . .”

2. Robert Wynn’s “failure in Waukegan doomed the Rockford line before it got off the ground,” but he found considerable enthusiasm for the proposed T-line.”<sup>108</sup> Rand Road (Rte. 12), “the old mail route to Janesville . . . remained a muddy or snow-clogged track” and “residents searched for a way to ease travel to Wauconda. . . . As grain prices rose, Wauconda citizens quickly contributed almost \$20,000 for the line. Construction began immediately from Palatine, but economic and engineering difficulties delayed the entry of the restructured steam line . . . into Wauconda.”<sup>109</sup>
3. The Slocum homestead sold by Marietta Slocum, the last of the family to live there, to Herman H. Hoelseler for \$13,000. Marietta and her second husband, Charles Gardinier, are believed to have moved to California, where she died in 1921. Their only child, Daisy, married a Davis but is not believed to have had any children of her own.
4. Blackburn and Broughton Hardware established by George Blackhorn and Lyle Broughton “in a small wooden frame building.”<sup>110</sup>
- 1911:**
1. Will Clough, husband of Lucy Cook, hanged himself in the barn. The writer of his obituary, who was a friend, wrote, “We believe that the loss of few men could be more keenly felt by all of us.”<sup>111</sup>
2. P, LZ, & W railway reached Deer Park.
- 1912:** (November) P, LZ, & W had reached Lake Zurich<sup>112</sup>
- 1913:**
1. 14 May: Palatine, Lake Zurich, and Wauconda Railroad (*aka* the Old Maud) finally pulled into Wauconda.<sup>113</sup> This was the occasion of the first Wauconda Day parade. Ambrose Bangs (then 83) drove the train. The railroad hauled agricultural products; delivered the mail; transported local passengers, and brought vacationers and day-trippers out from Chicago—to the town and to “the many picnic groves along the line.”<sup>114</sup> However, the “underfunded and poorly constructed line did not help develop Wauconda”, which remained a small town.<sup>115</sup> The engines, as well as much of the equipment, were leased—the number one engine, ‘Maud’, and the number three engine, ‘Betsy’, were leased from North Western; the number two engine, ‘Molly’, was on loan from the F, J, & F line.<sup>116</sup> Still, the railroad led to the town’s flourishing as a resort, and Wauconda residents depended on it for supplies and for mail.
2. J. H. Patterson built the Wauconda Lumber Yard. The yard was operated by three people, including Velda Bangs, the first bookkeeper.
- 1914:**
1. 23 February: Brown & Boehmer Auto opened on Main St. “They started out just repairing horse-and-buggies”, according to Steve Boehmer.<sup>117</sup>

---

<sup>108</sup>Richard Whitney, quoted in Urbanek.

<sup>109</sup>*Encyclopedia of Chicago*.

<sup>110</sup>WTHS, “Business Forms Wauconda Backbone”, Historical Notes column, *Wauconda Leader*, 1979.

<sup>111</sup> This obituary is in the possession of the Wauconda Township Historical Society.

<sup>112</sup> Wishik, “Railroad Days . . .”

<sup>113</sup> Wishik, “Railroad Days . . .”

<sup>114</sup>“Engineer Paul Broncheon made several stops between Palatine and Wauconda because every little social event and inter-city type of sports competition depended on the train, whether it was a Deer Park picnic or a weekly basketball game” (Ruthhart, “Everything Stopped . . .”).

<sup>115</sup>*Encyclopedia of Chicago*; Urbanek reports that the population in 1913 was about 400.

<sup>116</sup>Urbanek

<sup>117</sup>“Boehmers Head Parade”, *Wauconda Leader*, August 2002.

2. Public Service Company granted by Ordinance the right to lay and maintain pipes to distribute gas though the village.
  3. *19 December*: According to Baptist records, the first meeting to discuss possible federation with the Methodists, took place on this day. Initially, the congregations would maintain their own properties and retain their denominational connections, but one pastor would serve both churches, first a Methodist, then a Baptist.<sup>118</sup>
- 1915:**
1. *15 March*: High school district established
  2. Death of Charles Davlin. He was one of the first in Wauconda to own a car.
  3. Methodist & Baptist congregations united to form the Federated Church. The Methodist church building was used for worship services and Sunday school, and the Baptist building was used as a community centre. This worked well until the early 1930s.
  4. *August*: Kuebker purchased 66 acres bordering on the lake and fixed it up to serve as Cook's Grove, one of the earliest beaches on Bang's Lake; admission: 25¢ per car.
  5. The P, LZ & W was losing money and the idea of extending it to Elgin was abandoned.
  6. By this time the school board was renting (for \$350 a year) room on the second floor of the village hall for area high-schoolers to go to class.
- 1916:**
1. *20 May*: Referendum held on selling \$20,000 worth of bonds to finance a new school building. "The records of the exact vote are missing . . . but evidently the townspeople bought the idea."<sup>119</sup>
  2. *May*: Bids opened for an architectural firm to build the new building. Lewis and Daugherty had the winning bid and Otis Potter was hired as general contractor. The building they erected, at the corner of Slocum Lake Road and Maple, still stands; it now houses Wauconda Grade School, "though a modern facade hides the original exterior."<sup>120</sup>
  3. Graduates of Wauconda Township High School this year were Ralph Alverson, Winnifred Brown, and Harry Kirwan.<sup>121</sup>
- 1917:**
1. Wauconda voted to outlaw the sale of liquor, two years before nationwide Prohibition.
  2. Graduates of Wauconda Township High School in this year were Mary Daley, Martha Hughes, Grace Jacobson, Della Kirwan, Mable Matthews, Frances Meyer, Gertrude Schaeffer, and Neva Toynton.<sup>122</sup>
  3. Grace Toynton married George Harris, janitor of the local schoolhouse and caretaker of Wauconda's two cemeteries (Wauconda Cemetery and Transfiguration).
  4. Beginning of a flu epidemic that lasted into 1918: "Schools, churches and theaters were closed. All public gatherings were forbidden. Many died."<sup>123</sup>
- 1918:**
1. "During a snowstorm a train derailed at Putnam's Crossing in Lake Zurich and the rail broke, leaving the engine rolled over and on its side. Most of the passengers got out of the coach."<sup>124</sup>
  2. *May*: By this month, there were 40 Wauconda men and one local woman serving the country in WWI; Arthur Daley was the first Wauconda resident to die in the war.<sup>125</sup>

---

<sup>118</sup>Ruthhart, ed., "Federated Church", 1977.

<sup>119</sup>Robinson, p. 7.

<sup>120</sup>Ibid.

<sup>121</sup>*The Dial*, yearbook of Wauconda Township High School, 1928, p. 37.

<sup>122</sup>Ibid.

<sup>123</sup>WTHS, "Wauconda Did Its Part in World War I" Historical Notes column, *Wauconda Leader*, 1979.

<sup>124</sup>Ruthhart, ed., "Everything Stopped . . ."

<sup>125</sup>WTHS, "Wauconda Did Its Part in World War I"

3. 7 June: After several accidents “and [a] coal famine that stranded Old Maud in Wauconda, the line was sold for only \$68,000 at a junk sale” to a group of Wauconda businessmen.<sup>126</sup>
4. Graduates of Wauconda Township High School this year were Edna Gossell, Yvonne Herren, Robert Lung, Marion Matthews, and Ruby Peterson.<sup>127</sup>
- 1919:**
1. \$1,420 was spent on an addition to the new high school.
2. 2 June: Village’s first demolition order approved by the Board; it ordered Al Orrock to remove his building on Mill Street within thirty days following the issuance of a public nuisance order.
3. Graduates of Wauconda Township High School in this year were Harold Brooks, Wilma Farnsworth, Effie Francisco, Marion Johnston, Esther Mickey, Grace Mueller, John Olinger, Martha Peterson, Matilda Ryan, and James Young.<sup>128</sup>
- 1920s:**
1. The Cook farm was at this time in the possession of Raymond Lusk, great-grandson of Andrew C. Cook.
2. Wauconda had one telephone, housed in the general store.<sup>129</sup> Grace Harris remembers that the store “had china in the front and big kerosene cans in the back for people to fill smaller cans with.”<sup>130</sup>
3. 5 July: P, LZ & W conductor Paul Harris, 29, caught his foot while jumping from the coach and was pulled under the wheels and killed.<sup>131</sup>
4. An electric “Wauconda” sign was hung over Main Street. “It was up for several years, but it was just one more thing that had to be kept up.”<sup>132</sup>
- 1920:**
1. January: Rail station in Lake Zurich closed for lack of business.<sup>133</sup>
2. 2 February: Special election held at the Village Hall for electors to decide for or against an Issuance of Bonds in the amount of \$52 to pay for the construction of village water works. Votes were 46 against and 113 for the project.
3. Tile factory in town was destroyed by a tornado; it was never rebuilt.
4. Graduates of Wauconda Township High School this year were Sarah Eddy, Priscilla Fenton, and Ralph Stroker.<sup>134</sup>
- 1921:**
1. P, LZ, & W sold again, to Myron Dietrich, a foundry owner who had a summer house in Wauconda. “He renamed the line the Chicago, Palatine, and Wauconda because of a feud with Lake Zurich officials.”<sup>135</sup>
2. Graduates of Wauconda Township High School this year were Alvin Case, Harriett Foss, Milo Gilbert, Myron Hughes, Clarence Jenks, Mildred Jenks, Ralph Meyer, Bessie Mueller, Arthur Stroker, and Eugene Stroker.<sup>136</sup>

---

<sup>126</sup>Urbanek

<sup>127</sup>*The Dial*, p. 37.

<sup>128</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>129</sup>Petzold, “Prince of Pioneers”.

<sup>130</sup>Serritella, “Grace Harris’ Early Photography . . .”; the general store building later housed the Wauconda Bank, until it closed during the depression, but by that time, Harris remembers, “everyone had telephones.”

<sup>131</sup> Wishik, “Railroad Days . . .”; Ruthhart says that Harris was killed in the snow-related accident of 1918 (“Everything Stopped . . .”). Harris was the brother-in-law of Grace Harris, one of the town’s earliest photographers.

<sup>132</sup>Serritella, p. 13.

<sup>133</sup> Wishik, “Railroad Days . . .”

<sup>134</sup>*The Dial*, p. 38.

<sup>135</sup>Urbanek.

<sup>136</sup>*The Dial*, p. 38.

- 1922:**
1. Fire-fighting equipment was moved about this time from the engine house, which had burned; it was now kept in the back of the old Village Hall.
  2. Main Street was paved. “Before this it was a dirt road. They oiled it in the summer. We took off our shoes and my mother would complain if we got into the oil because it was hard to get it off our feet before we went to bed.”<sup>137</sup>
  3. Graduates of Wauconda Township High School this year were; Robert Blackburn, William Brooks, Arthur Dillon, Edna Hazelton, Clarence Meyer, Hattie Powers, Kirk Werden, Harold Wheelock, Ralph Whitman.<sup>138</sup>
- 1923:**
1. Sorensen’s (now Vickie’s Personal Touch) was the most frequented store in this year.
  2. Graduates of Wauconda Township High School this year were Frederick Anders, James Carr, Edith Case, James Dowell, Lois Gilbert, Marvin Hughes, and Marion Kupar.<sup>139</sup>
- 1924:**
1. Cook’s Grove inherited by Mertie Cook (daughter of August Kuebker).
  2. P, LZ, & W lost its government mail contract because of its failure to meet timetables. The line was already nicknamed the “Palatine, Lake Zurich, and Walk-the-rest-of-the-way” because of its unreliability.<sup>140</sup>
  3. Rand Road completed. P, LZ, & W went into its final decline. The primary reason was accessibility to cars and improvements to local roads—Richard Whitney suggests that the railroad aided in its own demise by carrying supplies for the paving of Old Rand Rd. “It just wasn’t needed anymore, and the town wasn’t as isolated.” Service terminated on 14 August.<sup>141</sup>
  4. About this time the Creamery was closed down.
- 1925:**
1. Wauconda’s Volunteer Fire Department formed (again, this was probably the same group of people, just a new name and by-laws). Several of the members of the Wauconda Township Historical Society recall that in the early years of the fire department, volunteers would leave their jobs and customers when the bell rang and go running to the station.
  2. Ela High School district formed, enabling children from Ela Township to go to their own school.
  3. Graduates of Wauconda Township High School in this year were Berniece Gossell and Clayton Steel of Wauconda; Dorothea Stroker of Evanston; Margaret Roesslein of Chicago; and Vera Basey and Margaret Fink of Champaign.<sup>142</sup>
- 1926:**
1. Phil’s Beach, one of the town’s finest, opened by Phil Froehlke (one-time operator of the Boat House); admission: 50¢ per car. This beach was notable for having lifeguards from the beginning.
  2. Graduates of Wauconda Township High School in this year were Harold Rudinski, Beryl Gilbert, and Irvin Moody of Wauconda; Myrtle Darrell of Crystal Lake; Fern Wilson of Palatine; Elizabeth Fink of Decatur; Warren Powers of Elmherst; Lawrence Frank of Lake Zurich; and Calvin Prior of Loyal, Wisc.<sup>143</sup>
- 1927:**
1. Art Boehmer’s shop began dealing in automobiles; the business exists today as Boehmer Chevrolet on Liberty St. (Rte. 176)
  2. Graduates of Wauconda Township High School this year were Chesney Brooks and Arthur Koser of Wauconda; Hazel Anders of Wilmette; Grace Branding, Helen Frank, and Verna Rud-

---

<sup>137</sup>Mary Lueder interview

<sup>138</sup>*The Dial*, p. 38.

<sup>139</sup>Ibid.

<sup>140</sup>Urbanek; Wishik, “Railroad Days . . .”

<sup>141</sup>Wishik, “Railroad Days . . .”

<sup>142</sup>*The Dial*, p. 39

<sup>143</sup>Ibid.

sinski of Lake Zurich; Margaret Hughes of Bloomington; Georgia Vasey and Emma Vogt of DeKalb; Clifford Wilson of Round Lake; and Alice Washo of Chicago.<sup>144</sup>

3. Blackburn & Broughton built a brick building on the same location as their previous building.

4. *November*: Work began on new building for Homer Lincoln's barber shop (206 S. Main).

**1928:** The Oakland Hotel, which had sat empty for several years after being deemed unsafe, was torn down.<sup>145</sup> Lumber from the building was used to build summer cottages.

**1929:** 1. The right-of-way for Route 176 was purchased through Wauconda. This route travels through the center of town and is named locally Liberty Street.

2. Group of Wauconda residents (including Ray Paddock, Homer Cook, Dr. Werden and Dennis Putnam) decided, in effect, to colonize the Island Lake area. They purchased land, planning to dam up Mutton Creek and create a lakeside development similar to Wauconda.

**early 1930s:** 1. To accommodate Rte. 176, the land on which the Methodist Church building stood was needed. Since the two congregations were already Federated, it was agreed to add on to the Baptist building across the street and meet as one church. The two buildings were remodelled into a single structure.<sup>146</sup>

2. The land on which the old train depot stood was purchased by Frank Dickson, who gifted it to the Federated Church (this land forms part of the park).<sup>147</sup> George and Grace Harris bought the depot itself and had it moved to Maple Street, near to the grade school. In 1976, the renovated depot was still being lived in.<sup>148</sup>

2. The plans of Homer Cook et al. to create a lake and develop a community in Island Lake fell apart with the coming of the Depression. "[T]he newly created lake became a private fishing preserve for an exclusive group of sportsmen from Chicago."<sup>149</sup>

3. The engines of the old P, LZ, & W, which had been left near the engine house in Wauconda since the line's demise, were finally sold for scrap.

**1931:** 1. *1 January*: Lions Club organized

2. Village of Wauconda ordinance created the Wauconda Fire Department, recognizing the volunteers and equipment as the village's fire department. From this point on, minutes were kept of meetings and activities.

3. The Wauconda Fire Department began raising funds to purchase its first motorized fire apparatus, a 500-gallon per minute pumper purchased from Peter Pirsch and Sons in Kenosha, Wisconsin. Fund raisers such as the Lions' Club annual carnival and raffles brought in the money, which was put into an account with the Wauconda Trust and Savings. A month before they were to take possession of the machine, however, the bank joined thousands across the nation in shutting its doors, and all the money was lost. Fortunately, they were able to strike a deal with the Pirsch company, and in November, the pumper was delivered. (This pumper is still owned and main-

---

<sup>144</sup>*The Dial*, p. 39

<sup>145</sup>WTHS, "Old-Timers Remember All-Night Dances", Historical Notes Column, *Wauconda Leader*, 9 October 1979.

<sup>146</sup>Ruthhart, "Federated Church," 1977.

<sup>147</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>148</sup>Robinson, p. 7.

<sup>149</sup>Island Lake Area Chamber of Commerce web site ([http://www.ilcc.org/html/about\\_island\\_lake.html](http://www.ilcc.org/html/about_island_lake.html))

tained by the fire department.) The engine that held this pump was named ‘Old Betsy’, and it still works, though it is no longer used to fight fires.<sup>150</sup>

**4.** Genevieve Wells began teaching at the Murray School, located on the southeast corner of Fairfield and Dixon Rds. At the time, the school had no running water, electricity, or indoor plumbing. “Teachers that were women were not allowed to be married. I guess the school boards didn’t want to take a chance of hiring a married woman. She could become pregnant and then have to take time off work.”<sup>151</sup>

**5.** Wauconda Lumber Yard sold to George Perkins & Sons of Rockford and Marengo.

**1932:** Downstairs area of the old Creamery building was converted into an apartment for Claire Meyer. “While Claire Meyer lived at the creamery she kept a cow tied to a tree south of the building and was known to the children of the area as the ‘witch’, and the factory as the ‘witches’ [*sic*] house’. We don’t know if she was amused or annoyed by this. . . .”<sup>152</sup>

**1935:** (25 September) new Federated Church building dedicated.

**1936:** **1.** Bessie Clough inherited the Cook House at the death of her mother. She later sold it to her cousin, Homer T. Cook.

**2.** Glenn Blackburn, George’s son, began working at the hardware store.

**1937:** (16 September) Creation of the Wauconda Fire Protection District. It was probably at about this point that the company’s original Niagara hand pump disappeared; nobody is quite sure what happened to it.

(8 November) contract signed between the Wauconda Fire Department and the Wauconda Fire Protection District.

**1939:** **1.** 4 May: George Mollenkemp appointed first chief of police

**2.** Population in this year: 550. According to *Illinois: A Descriptive and Historical Guide*, the mainstay of economic life in Wauconda was farming, but “[s]upplementary incomes are gleaned from summer colonists.”<sup>153</sup>

**3.** Wauconda Woman’s Club set aside \$35 for the purchase of books to start a public library. The books were initially housed in the high school library.

**4.** Death of Arthur Kirwan. His son, Harry, who had helped with the business for years, took over the tavern.

**1940s:** **1.** State government started a consolidation program to bring various school districts together. There was a clause that allowed anyone who was dissatisfied to opt out and be part of a different district. This resulted in a lot of land grabbing and hard feelings. Some of the problems created are still with us today.<sup>154</sup>

---

<sup>150</sup>In the late 20<sup>th</sup> century, Old Betsy served as a limo for Bill Glade’s daughter and her husband on their wedding day; when a long-serving fire chief retired, it carried him to his home from the fire station after his last day of work. It is also used in local parades.

<sup>151</sup>Genevieve Wells LaMagdeleine, quoted in Edward Anderson, “Her Days in a One Room School,” *Wauconda Leader*, no date.

<sup>152</sup>“It’s More Than Just a Creamery”, 1973.

<sup>153</sup>Federal Writers Project, *Illinois*, p. 503

<sup>154</sup>For example, West Barrington annexed Carpentersville and a few other places; now socioeconomic differences between students from W. Barrington and students from Carpentersville cause problems, both between students and in taxation issues. The situation was also quite haphazard: for instance, some of Wauconda township was annexed to a McHenry school district, but some parts later returned to Wauconda.

2. Cook house inhabited by Ronald Paddock, longtime president of Wauconda National Bank and Trust Co; he and his family were renting the house from a Mr. DeWolf.<sup>155</sup> I do not know when DeWolf purchased it or whether he had any connection to the Cook family. Paddock's daughter remembers that they did not use the upper floor, and all of the family slept in what is now the parlour.
- 1940:** Glenn Bacon, grandson of Timothy (see 1868) purchased the Bacon farm. He and his wife lived there, raising hogs, Jersey cows, and grains.
- 1941:** Wauconda Fire Department became a corporation.
- 1945:** Ed, Tony, and Hank Jachec bought 3½ acres and opened up Honey Hill Beach. Several years later they put in a slide with a 40'–50' chute, which was one of the highest in the country. The owners believed this was one of the reasons their beach became so popular.
- 1946:** The end of WWII sparked growth in Wauconda, whose population in this year was 650. "The movement of large numbers of World War II veterans into the area by auto were [*sic*] the main factors which brought expansion to Wauconda. . . . Many of the new residents were ex-soldiers from Chicago's West and Northwest Sides, living in converted summer cottages."<sup>156</sup> Wauconda's reputation as a resort town continued to bring vacationers in – Barbara Parelius Davenport remembers that before the current rte. 12 was completed, "the traffic [on Main St.] was terrible. Cars would be lined up bumper to bumper on the weekends out past the house. People were waiting to get into the beaches." Over time, some of the summer people also turned their cottages into year-round residences and stayed in the community. In the next six years, the population nearly doubled. Around Slocum Lake, too, converted summer cabins formed the nucleus of new subdivisions going up.
- 1947:** 1. Cook House purchased by Roger and Emily Parelius. Their son, also Roger, was born there in 1948. Parelius's daughter, Barbara Davenport, remembers that the property had a big red barn with 'Fair Acres' painted on it in white letters. It also had the following outbuildings: a chicken house, granary, tool shed, hog house, corn crib & silo. At the time of purchase, there was a small hand-pump in the kitchen bringing water in from a well or cistern. Roger Parelius used electricity to pump water into the house. Near the house there was an orchard with apple, pear, and cherry trees. The Parelius family renovated the unused upstairs, turning it into an apartment. The first renters were Russell and Beatrice Lutz; they were followed by Ray and Myrtle Boerup (Myrtle was the aunt of Arlene and Darlene Vickery). They also fixed up one of the outbuildings, which they rented to Bob Neis.
2. George Lincoln began his career as a barber, working in his father's barber shop. He eventually assumed ownership.
- 1948:** 1. Transfiguration parish enlarged to include a rectory and convent as well as Wauconda's only parochial school, which opened this year. This parish is one of the oldest parishes in the (Catholic) Diocese of Chicago.
2. Fire Station #1 was built at Rte. 176 and Maple Avenue. Equipment was moved to the new station from the village hall.
3. Phil's Beach taken over by Tom Reilly, Phil Froehlke's son-in-law.
4. Wauconda Library by now was in need of expansion, having acquired more and more books as donations came in. Two rooms were rented above the Wauconda Sport Shop on Main Street and

---

<sup>155</sup> This information comes from Barbara Parelius Davenport, whose father bought the house from DeWolf in 1947.

<sup>156</sup>*Encyclopedia of Chicago*



called the Wauconda Public Library. This arrangement brought difficulties, as the library's resources had to go to paying rent rather than acquiring and operating the library.

- 1949:** 1. Kisselburg's Funeral Home opened  
2. Village government of Hainesville, which had gradually died away after the town's losses in the late 1800s, was reactivated. Remaining residents moved to reincorporate, only to discover that it was unnecessary—Elijah Haines had been granted a perpetual charter.
- 1950:** 1. Island Lake incorporated (though only after a fierce legal battle—see the Island Lake Area Chamber of Commerce web site for details).  
2. Cook House sold to Ralph and Doris Madea; they were the final residents.  
3. Wauconda Public Library given permission by Village Board president Frank Dickson to occupy a room in the village hall. The library remained in this location for fourteen years. As the library continued to expand, several referendums were held proposing the establishment of a township library, but none were successful.  
4. The Elm Theater opened on or near the corner of Liberty and Mill Streets, where Transfiguration's current building is. It had seating for 610 people and parking for 125 cars.<sup>157</sup>
- 1951:** Roy Kruger became a trustee; he served until 1971.
- 1952:** 1. Arthur Boehmer and his son, Kenneth, bought out Brown's interest in the business.  
2. Death of Claire Meyer.
- 1953:** 1. Meyer family rented the creamery building to Zena Cox and her family. That winter, a fire caused by an overheated stove burned out part of the roof. In the course of the next ten years, the building became known as the 'haunted house'.<sup>158</sup> (This probably had less to do with the fire than with the fact that it was earlier called the 'witch's house' by local children, who had referred to Claire Meyer as 'the witch'—see 1932.)  
2. *Summer:* A group of people got together to discuss the founding of an Evangelical Free church in Wauconda. By the end of the summer they were meeting regularly in people's homes and the group was growing rapidly. In November the first official meeting of the church was held. Dale Hines, a student at Trinity Seminary in Deerfield, was named the first pastor. The following month they moved their meetings to Wauconda High School, where they met for the next four and a half years.
- 1954:** Boehmer had expanded to the point where new location was needed; they relocated to Rte 176.
- 1955:** 1. Zoning Board of Appeals created by the village board, 21 Sept.; Robert Farman, Gerald Kanenberg, Leslie Landt, James Keller, Frank Lincoln, Leo DeBoer, Gerald Beyer appointed.  
2. Glenn Blackburn bought out Lyle Broughton. He remained manager in 1979.  
3. Federated Church embarked on a significant expansion plan.
- 1956:** 1. Wauconda's permanent population now stood at more than 2,200. An ordinance adopted 25 September by the Board of Trustees created the Planning Commission; Harold Rudy, John Mariacher, Harold Hapke, Francis Slattery, John Kuester, Bert Kisselburg Sr., Richard Warfield were appointed.  
2. Wauconda Shopping Center opened up, including Peterson's Shoes, Our Flowers, Painter's Rexall Drug Store, Parth's Men & Boy Shop, Lucille's Women's Clothing, Hornsby's Dime Shop, Raduis Furniture & Appliances, and Wauconda Hardware.<sup>159</sup>

---

<sup>157</sup><http://cinematreasures.org/theater/5769/>; "Chicago Suburban Theatres & Drive ins", Scribd (<http://www.scribd.com/doc/23753444/Suburban-Chicagoland-movie-theatres>)

<sup>158</sup> "It's More Than Just a Creamery", 1973.

<sup>159</sup>*The Village Star*, December 2000.

3. *30 September*: Federated Church dedicated their new addition.
  4. *21 October*: Ground broken for an Evangelical Free Church building on Anderson Rd.
- 1958:**
1. Death of Hermann Maiman; Maiman's store ceased operation.
  2. Discussion began about the desirability of establishing an Episcopal church in Wauconda. A newspaper poll was conducted to gauge the level of interest.<sup>160</sup>
  3. *Summer*: Evangelical Free congregation began meeting in their new building.
- 1959:** Episcopal congregation began meeting in the Wauconda Legion Hall. There were 16 members to begin with. As this number grew, the church started meeting in the grade school building. Finally, land was purchased by the Chicago Diocese (Episcopal Church) for the construction of Church of the Holy Apostles.
- Late 50s/early 60s:** Elm Theatre appears regularly in the cinema sections of the *Daily Herald*, with names of films and show times given. Among the films that were shown there are *Kings Go Forth* (1958), *Thunder in Carolina* (1960), and *The World of Suzie Wong* (1962).
- 1960s:** In this decade, Wauconda gradually ceased to be regarded as a vacation destination.<sup>161</sup> Many of the popular beaches, however, continued operating into the 1980s.
- 1960:**
1. Fire Station #2 was built in Island Lake. (The fire department had to wait a year after buying the property before building, as it was purchased in a 'tack' sale, meaning the original owner had a year to buy the land back if he could do.)
  2. Boehmer's built a new building on their Liberty Street location.
  3. Federated Church purchased 216 S. Barrington Rd., on which to construct a new parsonage, a parking lot, and a large garage that is used for education and recreation. The old parsonage was sold, and the money applied to the church's debt.<sup>162</sup>
- 1962:**
1. Old Creamery building purchased by Richard and Margaret Breeden, who set about renovating it. They, and the people who owned it after them, hoped to turn it into a sort of living museum, highlighting the area's rural heritage and displaying the blacksmith shop and postal room that had been there, as well as furnishing other rooms as a cobbler's shop, an apothecary, and a one-room school. "Essentially we are interested in demonstrating crafts that were generally practiced a century or so ago."<sup>163</sup>
  2. *20 June*: Wauconda Township voted for the establishment of a new library, bringing into being the Wauconda Township Library. In September the Wauconda Woman's club presented its library of 6,000 volumes, along with all of its equipment, to the township free of charge.
  3. Ground was broken for the Church of Holy Apostles building on Barrington Road.<sup>164</sup> The pre-fabricated structure went up so quickly that parishioners took to calling their church *St. Instantaneous*.
- 1963:**
1. Population of Wauconda (as of 4 June): 4,775.
  2. Library moved to 212 Osage, where it occupied the rented front half of the building.

---

<sup>160</sup>Information courtesy of Church of the Holy Apostles, Wauconda.

<sup>161</sup>*The Encyclopedia of Chicago* claims that at this point the town became a "suburban residential area". I think the city people overestimate their influence. Suburban sprawl did not even reach Kildeer, eight miles to the south, before the very end of the 1980s; it was well into the nineties before the exurbs enveloped Wauconda. In the early 21<sup>st</sup> Century, Wauconda retains a small-town ambiance and sense of community that is noticeably absent from other suburbs.

<sup>162</sup>Ruthhart, ed., "Federated Church", 1977.

<sup>163</sup>"It's More Than Just a Creamery," 1973.

<sup>164</sup>Ruthhart, ed., "Holy Apostles Celebrate Relief From Their Debt", *Wauconda Leader*, May 1977

3. *April*: Church of the Holy Apostles opened its doors to the public.<sup>165</sup>
- 1964:** Cook's Beach sold to Tony and Mike Barnes. They enlarged and improved the beach and charged \$2 per car to begin with. (Later this was raised to \$2 per car and 10¢ per person.)
- 1965:** 1. New addition to the Evangelical Free Church was begun; it was completed the following year.  
2. *18 September*: A small group of Christian Scientists began holding services informally in the Wauconda Grade School.
- 1966:** 1. *August*: Wauconda's population this year is about 6,000. The community has three elementary schools, a junior high, and a high school; an adequate water system, a modern and efficient sewage-treatment plant, and more than a dozen service clubs and organizations; numerous churches, a weekly newspaper, and local industries including the Alma Corp., Campbell Detachable Cab Company, and Chicago Cutlery. "Known as the gateway to the Northern Illinois lakes region, the Wauconda area . . . affords recreation to the fisherman, the hunter, the camper and the families generally interested in outdoor living. . . . [T]he area is widely known for its many fine beaches, summer homes and picnic groves."<sup>166</sup>  
2. *October*: A burning cross was found in the parking lot of an Island Lake building on Rte. 176 near Roberts Rd. The building was home to two businesses and to Mr. Frank Patrick, who at the time was making some waves in the village with accusations against the police department and with his strong support for the challenger in the upcoming mayoral election. The burning cross was dismissed by the authorities as a prank.<sup>167</sup>  
3. *Thanksgiving*: Christian Scientist congregation moved into the Jack Williams Insurance building (213 S. Main).
- 1967:** (*May*) Christian Science congregation accepted by the Christian Science Society, based in Boston.
- 1968:** 1. Evangelical Free Church dedicated its new parsonage.  
2. Christian Science Reading Room opened in room adjoining the new church.
- 1969:** Transfiguration parish purchased the Elm Theatre from Dick Kornberg. After the purchase, the cinema was rented by Len Deasey, who remodelled the lobby and continued to show films there.<sup>168</sup>
- late 1960s:** Murray School demolished
- 1970:** Pratt House torn down
- 1971:** Wauconda Township Library purchased the land it occupied on Osage, along with the building and the adjoining lot.
- 1972:** Christian Science church purchased property on Liberty Street and remodelled one of the buildings to serve as their church. Services were held there for the first time on Easter 1973.
- 1973:** 1. *3 February*: Village seal was chosen; it was designed by Lillian Dobbs and became the official seal of the village.  
2. At this point the Cook House (owned by Ralph and Ruth Medea or Madea) was deteriorating. The ground floor was being used for dog kennels,<sup>169</sup> and the upper level had been subdivided into apartments.

---

<sup>165</sup>Ruthhart, "Holy Apostles", 1977.

<sup>166</sup>Floyd Thoms, "The Gateway to the Lakes Region: Wauconda Growing Steadily", *Waukegan News-Sun*, 25 August 1966.

<sup>167</sup>"Fiery Cross Burns in Island Lake", *Waukegan News-Sun*, 4 October 1966.

<sup>168</sup>Doris Aimers-Voss, Wauconda Township Historical Society

<sup>169</sup>Kahover, "Lack of Funds May Shutter Cook House", 1985. The Madeas bred dogs (Dale Buttolph — descendant of the Granthams and longtime secretary of the Historical Society—thinks it was poodles but isn't sure).

3. Christian Science reading room moved to 113 S. Main Street.
- 1974:**
1. Population of Wauconda (as of 24 September): 5,662.
  2. Wauconda Historical Society formed.
  3. *24 June:* Christian Science Society in Wauconda recognized as a full branch of the Church of Christ, Scientist, and became the First Church of Christ, Scientist, Wauconda.
- 1976:**
1. Referendum held by the Village and the Fire Protection District to fund a paramedic ambulance service.<sup>170</sup> Originally, the paramedics had operated as an independent service. However, there were problems keeping the service properly staffed, and everyone called the fire department when they needed help anyway. “The fire department entered into advanced emergency medical care out of necessity and the urging of a supportive community.” The audience at a Historical Society presentation on the department’s history (September 2007) recalled that everyone embraced the fire department—if money was earned by any local group and there was a question about where it should go, it inevitably went to the fire department or the paramedics.
  2. At this time the business built by Robert Harrison to replace Luther Kimball’s store was known as Randy’s Snack Shop.<sup>171</sup>
  3. Hainesville mayor Robert Legge and the village board set about rewriting the town’s ordinances, which had been lost in a fire. Though the village remained rural and sleepy, residents foresaw inevitable growth as the Chicago suburbs slowly inched closer, and they began preparing for development.
  4. *September:* Second addition to the Evangelical Free Church dedicated.
- 1977:**
1. *26 April:* New village hall dedicated (the former village hall building now serves as a community centre). According to a local newspaper, “Wauconda’s local politics were front page news every week” at this time; board meetings “were battles, not debates”, and “personality clashes marred public service.”<sup>172</sup>
  2. The Cook House, by now badly in need of repair, was sold by the Madeas to the school district, which intended to demolish the house and put the land to some other use.<sup>173</sup> The Wauconda Historical Society worked to prevent this. A 25-year lease was agreed to (entirely on the school district’s terms, as the Historical Society for some reason did not have a proper lawyer), and with revenue-sharing funds provided by Wauconda Township, the building was re-stored to almost its original floor plan.
  3. *March 7:* Motion was made by Warren Powers to change the name of the Wauconda Historical Society to the Wauconda Township Historical Society; the motion was carried unanimously.
  4. *August:* Wauconda marked its centennial with a four-day celebration including numerous activities around town. At this time, recent growth was bringing problems, including a “major sewage treatment problem which must be solved as soon as possible”, and “political dissention” which had “divided the community”; however, the town was still a small, friendly town, with a “sleepy demeanor”.<sup>174</sup>

---

<sup>170</sup>**STOPPED HERE** According to Bill Glade, paramedic service programs were introduced in California in the late 1960s. The idea was then popularized by television show *Emergency: Rescue 51*, whose creator had created the show for this very purpose.

<sup>172</sup>“Peace to Peacemaker”, obituary of John Kuester. This appeared in one of the local papers, but the clipping does not say which.

<sup>173</sup>Kahover, “Lack of Funds. . . .”, 1985; the Cook House at this point was also known as the Madia house.

<sup>174</sup>“Happy Birthday!”, a *Herald* editorial, 1977

5. Church of the Holy Apostles paid off its mortgage and became debt free.<sup>175</sup>
- 1978:**
1. Wauconda Fire Department hired a full-time Fire Chief. After firemen were taken on for pay, a process developed for joining the department, which involved 1) submission of application with a sponsor already on the force; 2) reading of the application at the monthly fire dept. meeting; 3) after sitting for a month, the application would be voted on. (Bill Glade does not know what the reason was for this required wait.) Once accepted as a member of the fire department, the new fireman had a probation period of six months.
  2. Grand Hotel (originally Lake Side Inn) purchased by Dick Ullrich. He was the latest in a list of many owners, and he opened the bar and dining room.
- 1979:**
1. *January:* Fire Department hired its first three full-time 'Firemedics'. Gradually the full-time staff was increased to allow for 24/7 coverage at each station year-round. When the paramedics were brought on board the fire department, calls to the fire department increased sharply.
  2. Both Cook's Grove and Phil's Beach were still in operation in this year. Lincoln's Barber Shop remained in the Lincoln family. The *Wauconda Leader* had had six owners since Frank Carr. Ira Bliss, the son of Harry Kirwan, was operating Kirwan's Tavern. Boehmer's was operated by Kenneth Boehmer, his son Stephen, and his son-in-law, Fred Bailey.
  3. After standing idle for years, the old Wauconda Lumber Yard was in this year occupied by Wauconda Lumber.
- 1980:** Wauconda's beaches were memorialized in the movie *Blues Brothers*<sup>176</sup>, which was partially filmed here. (For the filming, a fence separating Phil's Beach and Sunny Hill Beach was removed.<sup>177</sup> Other scenes were filmed at Rtes. 176 & 12, and Cook's Picnic Grove.<sup>178</sup>) During the ensuing decade, however, most of the beaches gradually closed down to be replaced by houses, townhomes, and other development.
- 1984:** Transfiguration decided that it could no longer afford to subsidize the theater and it was torn down to be replaced by the current church building.<sup>179</sup>
- 1986:** 'The Bent Tree' located on the Andrew Cook property [see 1840] was destroyed by a summer wind storm.
- 1990:** Wauconda's population this year: 6,294
- early 1990s:** In this decade, Wauconda entered a new period of growth as people from the outlying Chicago suburbs sought cheaper land and a small-town environment.
- 1991:** Greg Elliott reopened Lake Side Inn as Elliott's Grand Hotel. He says that when he bought the hotel, the building was "slipping into the lake"; Highland Park architect Mark Knauer was hired to recreate the interior, which involved taking everything out except the bar and making the building structurally sound. [SOURCE NEEDED – article]
- 1992:**
1. *1 January:* historic marker erected at Cook House by the Wauconda Lions Club, the Wauconda Township Historical Society and the Illinois State Historical Society. Some of the Cook farm is now Cook Park on Main Street; the high school also occupies part of the old Cook farm.

---

<sup>175</sup> Ruthhart, "Holy Apostles", 1977.

<sup>176</sup>*Encyclopedia of Chicago*

<sup>177</sup>"The Blues Brothers – Chicago Filming Locations" (<http://kevinforsyth.net/film/blues.htm>, retrieved 30 March 2009); "On Location – Blues Brothers Filming Locations" ([http://www.fast-rewind.com/locations\\_bluesbros.htm](http://www.fast-rewind.com/locations_bluesbros.htm), retrieved 30 March 2009).

<sup>178</sup>"On Location . . ."

<sup>179</sup>Kahover, Gail, 'New Transfiguration Church at Halfway Point', *Daily Herald*, 24 Nov. 1984: 45.

- 2. 11 October:** Cook family home dedicated by the Illinois State Historical Society as an historical site; located at 711 N. Main Street, it is maintained as a museum and open for tours during the summer months.
- 1993:** Residents of Volo, not wanting the village to be absorbed into the villages that were being created or expanding around it, finally decided to incorporate as a village.
- 1995:** Wauconda population 8,992, according to interim census conducted in the village
- 2000:** This year's census put the population of Wauconda at 9,448; the population of Volo at 180; and the population of Island Lake at 8,153.
- early 2000s:**
- 1.** Several of the last remaining summer cottages on Main Street were torn down and new houses built. Another of the original summer cottages (which had long since been condemned) burned down on Kent Street in 2006 (it was owned at the time by the owner of the Campbell's factory next door).
  - 2.** This decade has seen the suburbs sweep over Wauconda and continue north. Several large new subdivisions are under construction north of town, and five or six little suburbs have been created in the surrounding area. However, Wauconda has managed to retain its small-town, community feeling.
- 2002:** The lease on the Cook House and property renewed; however, the school district remains committed to getting rid of the house, and it is feared that when the new lease ends, this important piece of Wauconda's history will be destroyed.<sup>180</sup>
- 2005:** *28 January:* More than 3,000 people participated in a snowball fight in Cook Park for ten minutes, setting a new world record for most participants in such an event.
- 2007:**
- 1. 1 May:** Wauconda Fire Department, Inc., and the Wauconda Fire Protection District merged after nearly two years of planning. The Fire Protection District now directly employs the department's personnel and owns the majority of its equipment and facilities, which were once owned by the corporation. According to the Fire Department's web site: "This merger does not change the service or quality of care provided to the residents and visitors to the district of the village of Wauconda but enhances it and the fiscal management and accountability to the people." At present, the fire department serves about 45,000 people in the Wauconda Fire Protection District, which includes unincorporated areas around Wauconda, all or part of the Villages of Island Lake, Tower Lakes, Port Barrington, Volo, Lake Barrington, North Barrington, Hawthorn Woods and Lakemoor, as well as the Village of Wauconda itself.
  - 2. June:** Fire Department purchased the farm of Ron and Doris Weidner, located on N. Gilmer Rd. in Volo, and began transforming it into Fire Station #3. According to the Fire Department's web site, "This property is earmarked for a training and response facility."
  - 3. 1 July:** Fire Department personnel began 24-hour staffing of the new fire station, "to provide decreased response time to better serve the north side of Wauconda and the south sides of Volo and Lakemoor." As of September 2007, the #3 fire station had responded to 100 calls in *that area* alone.
- 2009:** (*January*) The *Wauconda Journal* ceased publication on account of the economy. This paper had been in production (first as the *Star*, then as the *Leader*, before taking its current name) since 1888.

---

<sup>180</sup>In 2006 the school board suggested that the house be moved to Fremont Township. The Historical Society objected on two counts: First, the house simply would not survive being moved, and second, it has no historic meaning in Fremont Township—it was built where it currently stands by one of the earliest families to settle in *this* township.

First president of park district: Glenn Blackburn.  
 Robert Harrison: Mayor of Wauconda, 1877–1881; 1884-5; 1887–93  
 C. P. Thomas: Mayor of Wauconda, 1881-2  
 Hiram B. Burritt: Mayor of Wauconda, 1882-4; 1893-9  
 James Murray: Mayor of Wauconda, 1885-7  
 Arthur Cook: Mayor of Wauconda, 1899–1901; 1902-3  
 L. C. Price: Mayor of Wauconda, 1901-2  
 E. W. Brooks: Mayor of Wauconda, 1903-7  
 H. T. Fuller: Mayor of Wauconda, 1907-8  
 Robert C. Kent: Mayor of Wauconda, 1908–33  
 Clarence W. Jenks: Mayor of Wauconda, 1933-8  
 J. A. Ross: Mayor of Wauconda, 1938–49  
 Frank H. Dickson: Mayor of Wauconda, 1949–53  
 Charles E. Davlin: Mayor of Wauconda, 1953-7  
 Melvin Stone: Mayor of Wauconda, 1957–65  
 Gerald Beyer: Mayor of Wauconda, 1965-9  
 Kenneth Potter: Mayor of Wauconda, 1969–1973  
 John E. Dianis: Mayor of Wauconda, 1973-7  
 John Kuester: Mayor of Wauconda, 1977–81  
 Kenneth McGill: Mayor of Wauconda, 1981-9  
 James Keagle: Mayor of Wauconda, 1989–93  
 James Eschenbauch: Mayor of Wauconda, 1993–2006  
 Salvatore Saccomanno, Mayor of Wauconda, 2006–  
 Mark Knigge

#### SOURCES:

- Anderson, Edward, “Her Days in a One Room School,” *Wauconda Leader*, no date.  
 Berger, A., “Origin of ‘Wauconda’ ” *Daily Herald*, 29 April 1999, Section 1, p. 15.  
 “Chicago Fire Claims Many: 14 Deaths Due to Suffocation, the Result of Early Morning Blaze in Hotel. Majority of Victims Visitors to the Live Stock Show – Dense Smoke Prevented Escape – Building Condemned as a ‘Fire Trap’”, *Racine Journal*, 5 December 1902. (This article can now be found on-line: <http://www3.gendisasters.com/illinois/7368/chicago-il-fire-destroys-lincoln-hotel-dec-1902>.)  
 Chicago Historical Society, *The Electronic Encyclopedia of Chicago*, 2005 (<http://www.encyclopedia.chicagohistory.org/pages/1327.html>).  
*The Dial*, yearbook of Wauconda Township High School, 1928.  
*Electronic Encyclopedia of Chicago*, article “Wauconda” (<http://www.encyclopedia.chicagohistory.org/pages/1327.html>)  
 Elgin, Peggie, “Class of 1908 Reunited”, *Waukegan News-Sun*, 4 October 1966  
 “Elijah M. Haines,” *Portrait and Biographical Album of Lake County, Illinois* (Chicago: Lake City Publishing Co., 1891); quoted as a preface to reissue of *Haines’s Historical and Statistical Sketches*.  
 “Energetic Settlers Paved the Way”, 1979 newspaper clipping in possession of Wauconda Township Historical Society (name of paper not given).  
**Federal Writers Project, *Illinois: A Descriptive and Historical Guide* (Chicago: A. C. McClurg, 1939).**  
*Focus*, the Wauconda Area Library newsletter, Summer 1998.  
 “The Foster Bible”, web page concerning the Foster family of North Dakota ([www.biblerecords.com/foster1.html](http://www.biblerecords.com/foster1.html)).

Glade, Bill, "The History of Wauconda's Fire Department", speech given 10 September 2007 to the Wauconda Township Historical Society.

Haines, Elijah M., *Historical and Statistical Sketches, of Lake County, State of Illinois, in two parts. The first consisting of General Observations; The second gives a minute Review of each Township, in its order* (Waukegan, Ill.: E. G. Howe, 1852).

"Happy Birthday!", a Herald editorial, *the Daily Herald*, 17 August 1977.

Illinois.com website ([www.illinois.com/details/city.php?cityFips=1779267](http://www.illinois.com/details/city.php?cityFips=1779267))

Illinois Historic Markers website ([www.historyillinois.org/Markers/old\\_markers/9.htm](http://www.historyillinois.org/Markers/old_markers/9.htm))

"Incorporation ousts skinny dipping; but Wauconda's first hundred flows, grows in full raiment" (no author named), *Lakes Countryside*, 19 May 1977: 8.

Island Lake Area Chamber of Commerce web site ([http://www.ilcc.org/html/about\\_island\\_lake.html](http://www.ilcc.org/html/about_island_lake.html))

James, Edwin, comp., *Account of an expedition from Pittsburgh to the Rocky Mountains performed in the years 1819 and '20 by order of The Hon. J. C. Calhoun, Sec'y of War: under the command of Major Stephen H. Long*, 2 vols. (Philadelphia: H. C. Carey and I. Lea, Chestnut Street, 1823).

Kahover, Gail, "Lack of Funds May Shutter Cook House", *the Daily Herald*, Fri., 20 September 1985, section 2.

Kahover, Gail, 'New Transfiguration Church at Halfway Point', *Daily Herald*, 24 Nov. 1984: 45.

Lake County (Ill.) Genealogical Society publication, *Lake County, Illinois, 1861 Landowners Map & Index* (Libertyville, 1997).

---, *1870 Census of Lake County, Illinois, vol. III: Cuba, Ela, Fremont, and Wauconda Townships*, compiled by the Census Committee, 1985.

Lehman, Stephanie N., 'Sign Renews Interest in Old Wauconda Theater', *Lake County Journal*, March 17-March 23, 2011: 23.

Mangan, Jennifer, "A welcoming destination in the heart of Wauconda", *Chicago Tribune*, 23 June 1991.

Marriage certificate of John Brown and Annie Stilling (in possession of the Wauconda Township Historical Society); personal conversation with their daughter, Evelyn Fowles.

Museum Link Illinois: "Illinois Religious Beliefs" ([http://www.museum.state.il.us/muslink/nat\\_amer/post/htmls/be\\_manitou.html](http://www.museum.state.il.us/muslink/nat_amer/post/htmls/be_manitou.html)).

Musinsky, Gerald, "Manitou, the Great Spirit", *Encyclopedia Mythical* (<http://www.pantheon.org/articles/m/manitou.html>)

Nasenbeny, Sue, "Our Beaches Put Wauconda on the Map," *Wauconda Leader*, 4 August 1977.

Överland, Orm, *The Making and Meaning of an American Classic: James Fenimore Cooper's The Prairie* (Oslo: Universitetsforlaget, 1973; published in North America by Humanities Press).

Parro, David, "The Pioneer Families of Tower Lakes", Village of Tower Lakes web site ([www.villageoftowerlakes.com](http://www.villageoftowerlakes.com)), under 'history'.

Pathway to Discovery webpage: "The Journey: Information on the Omaha Indians Recorded by Members of the Lewis and Clark Expedition 1804" (<http://www.nps.gov/archive/jeff/LewisClark2/TheJourney/NativeAmericans/Omaha.htm>).

"Peace to peacemaker", obituary of John Kuester, 19 March 2001. This is a newspaper clipping from a local paper, but the paper's name is not marked. It can be found in the reference section of the Wauconda Area Public Library, Wauconda History, Vol.1 (R977.321 WAU).

Petzold, Jane E., "Justus Bangs, Prince of Pioneers", *Lake County Market-Journal*, 31 March 1982.

*Proclamation—Village of Wauconda Centennial Year*, booklet, researched and written by Rita Eaves for the centennial celebration of Wauconda, 1977.

Robinson, Carol Culp, "Schoolgirl's Lens Captured History," *Lakes Countryside*, Thursday, 9 December 1976.



- Ruthhart, Roger, ed., “Christian Scientists Are Growing Society”, *Wauconda Leader*, no date.
- , ed., “Early Businesses Thrive in Wauconda,” *Wauconda Leader*, 4 August 1977.
- , ed., “Evangelical Free Church Has History of Growth”, *Wauconda Leader*, 4 August 1977.
- , ed., “Everything Stopped When the Whistle Blew”, *Wauconda Leader*, 4 August 1977.
- , ed., “Farmers Helped Build Wauconda”, *Wauconda Leader*, 4 August 1977.
- , ed., “Federated Church”, *Wauconda Leader*, 4 August 1977.
- , ed., “Glory Days of Wauconda’s Grand Hotels”, *Wauconda Leader*, no date.
- , ed., “Haines’ Hainesville started it all”, Lakeland Publications, 1976.
- , ed., “Holy Apostles Celebrate Relief from Their Debt”, *Wauconda Leader*, May 1977.
- , ed., “It’s More Than Just a Creamery”, reprinted from *Wauconda Leader*, 1973.
- , ed., “Justus Bangs Started It All”, *Wauconda Leader*, no date.
- , ed., “Kirwan’s Tavern: Hangout Since 1900”, *Wauconda Leader*, no date.
- , ed., “Lewis H. Todd—Handyman Comes West”, *Wauconda Leader*, 4 August 1977.
- , ed., “Slocum Family—They Came Second”, *Wauconda Leader*, no date.
- , ed., “They Settled Next to Chief Wauconda’s Lake”, Lakeland Publications, 1976.
- Scott, Katherine. Correspondence from Robert L. Stephenson (27 April 1964), Jim Hamilton (undated), and Clifford C. Gregg (26 May 1964). These letters are in the possession of Wauconda Area Library, R977.321 WAU, vol. 1).
- Serritella, Nancy, “Grace Harris’ Early Photography Jobs Now Help Her Remember the Past”, *The Herald*, 17 August 1977.
- Spencer, Starr, “Historical Building Holds Wauconda’s Past”, *Wauconda Courier*, 23 March 1989.
- Sutton, Robert P., ed., *The Prairie State: Colonial Years to 1860*, part I of *A Documentary History of Illinois (Grand Rapids, W. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1976)*.
- Thoms, Floyd, “ ‘The Gateway to Lakes Region’: Wauconda Growing Steadily”, *Waukegan News-Sun*, 25 August 1966.
- Transfiguration Parish web site, “The Story of the Stained Glass” (<http://transfigurationwauconda.com/AboutUs/StoryoftheStainedGlassWindows/tabid/118/Default.aspx>)
- Urbanek, Dave, “A railroad’s trip through history with ‘Old Maud’,” *Daily Herald*, 8 December 1982.
- Village of Volo web site (<http://www.villageofvolo.com/history.html>)
- Village of Wauconda website ([www.wauconda-il.gov/history\\_about.aspx](http://www.wauconda-il.gov/history_about.aspx))
- Warfield, Richard, “The History of Lake County’s Schools”, speech given to the Wauconda Township Historical Society, 6 November 2006.
- Washington Ghost Towns website ([www.ghosttownsusa.com/wac.htm](http://www.ghosttownsusa.com/wac.htm))
- Wauconda Fire Department website ([www.waucondafire.org/Historypage.htm](http://www.waucondafire.org/Historypage.htm))
- “Wauconda Township Cemetery Inscriptions, Lake County, Ill.”, booklet compiled by the Lake County Genealogical Society Cemetery Committee.
- Wauconda Township Historical Society (information from members of the society and resources at the Cook House)
- Wauconda Township Historical Society, “Businesses Thrive Around Bangs Lake”, Historical Notes column, *Wauconda Leader*, 1979.
- , “Business Forms Wauconda Backbone”, Historical Notes column, *Wauconda Leader*, 1979.
- , “Cook House Dates to 1850s”, Historical Notes column, *Wauconda Leader*, 31 January 1980.
- , “Early Pioneers Fought to Live”, Historical Notes column, *Wauconda Leader*, 1979.
- , “Husking Bees Were Fun Times”, Historical Notes column, *Wauconda Leader*, 1979.
- , “Library the Result of Women’s Club Foresight [sic]”, Historical Notes column, *Wauconda Leader*, 1979.

- , “Old-Timers Remember All-Night Dances”, Historical Notes Column, *Wauconda Leader*, 9 October 1979.
- , “Wauconda Did Its Part in World War I”, Historical Notes column, *Wauconda Leader*, 1979.
- Wishik, Tony, “1877 Election Favors Village”, *The Herald*, 17 August 1977.
- , “Life and Doings of Justus Bangs: The ‘Grand Old Man’ of 1891 Recalls”, *The Herald*, 17 August 1977.
- , “Railroad Days Were Great Days”, *Wauconda Leader*, 17 August 1977. [*Is this really the Herald?*]
- , “Sun Rises on Village’s Second Century”, *The Wauconda Herald*, 17 August 1977.
- [www.myprivateoasis.com/wauconda/Wauconda%20History/early\\_history.htm](http://www.myprivateoasis.com/wauconda/Wauconda%20History/early_history.htm)