

Village of Carol Stream

Our Roots:

The first settlers to the Gretna area (now Carol Stream) arrived around 1837 from the west along an old Indian Trail converted to a wagon road later named St. Charles Road that gave them a direct route to Chicago. Among the early settlers were Anning and Melissa Bingham Ransom who traveled east along St. Charles Rd. until they came to a small tract of land located near St. Charles & Pleasant Hill Roads where they built a farmstead. In the fall after harvesting their crops, the Ransoms would travel east by horse drawn wagon to sell their goods along a trade route that had them unloading their wagons on the west bank of the Des Plaines River and manually transferring their horses, staples and wagon across the watery divide so they could continue their perilous trip to market.

One of the larger landowners in the Gretna territory was Daniel Kelly who arrived in 1843 from Danby Vermont to acquire a large tract of land for a homestead and sheep farm. Mr. Kelly built a 286-acre farm at the intersection of St. Charles Rd. and Main Street on which he built his homestead for his new bride Mary Elizabeth. Mr. Kelly had plans to bring his prized Spanish Merino sheep from Vermont to his farmstead to begin a woolen operation. After reducing the wolf population around his homestead, he built fencing to shield his sheep herd from other predator animals. In 1852, Mr. Kelly's successfully brought his sheep herd to his Gretna homestead. Mr. Kelly was the founding member of both the Northern Illinois and Greater Illinois Wool Growers Association.

While many 19th century immigrants arrived in America for more land and a better life, the Germans who settled much of the area fled their homeland due to famine, political upheaval and mandatory military conscription. Many of the Germans who settled the area arrived from New York by way of the Erie Canal and the lake route to Chicago. Among the larger German clans to arrive in the area included the Kuhns, Franzens, Starks, Landmeiers, Fischers, Dieters, Hahns, Kammes and the Schmales.

In 1886 when the Minnesota and North Western Railway sought to develop a quick route from Dubuque to Chicago, it sought railroad right-of-way that would allow the rail line to travel through the Gretna

territories. The rail road acquired right-of-way from the defunct Chicago, St. Charles & Mississippi Air Line and in combination with a tract donated by Daniel Kelly that helped realign St. Charles Road south making room for the rail tracks. In 1887, the first train with its magnificent locomotive began rolling through the area drawing curious onlookers all along the route.

The Founder: Jay Stream was the original developer of Carol Stream and after leaving the John Hancock Insurance agency in the late 1940's he started a concrete company called Durable Construction in 1949 to meet the growing demand for new home construction in central DuPage County. As his company began to prosper, he established other business ventures that included a land development company, a private water and sewer utility company as well as a hydro-structure company that specialized in the installation of sanitary treatment plants, in-ground pools and related concrete structures. Stream later consolidated all these business units into a single company he named





Mr. and Mrs. Joseph Kuhn

development. After an unsuccessful attempt to purchase the Danada Farmstead from Dan Rice in south Wheaton, he settled on the purchase of the 120-acre Landmeier Farm located north of Illinois Route 64 and west of Gary Ave. from a Mr. Harold Nagel for \$1,000 an acre. In planning his mixed-use development he aptly named Carol Stream Estates, he had hoped to break the Chicago commuter syndrome and create business and employment opportunities for residents that would allow them to work in the community rather than making that long daily trip into the Chicago loop.

While planning his development, Jay Stream's daughter Carol was seriously injured in an Aug. 27, 1957 automobile accident at the family's summer home in Twin Lakes, Wisconsin leaving her in a coma. Carol remained in coma for consecutive months and then on December 14th of that same year, Jay Stream visited her in her hospital room to tell her he decided to name the new development after her.

Within minutes of his announcement, Carol awoke from her 3½ month coma. The marketing and construction of Carol Stream Estates accelerated all through 1958 and on Nov. 1, 1958, Carol Stream's first resident Mr. Roy Blum moved into his completed home along Mohawk Drive. In December of that same year, the Village under the leadership of Jay Stream petitioned the State of Illinois to incorporate as an Illinois municipality. The election was held on Dec. 27th with the vote canvassed on January 5, 1959 with a 46-1 vote in favor of incorporation.

50 Years of Success:

In 2009, the Village celebrated its 50th anniversary as a progressive Illinois municipality with a themed July 4th Parade, a Summer Festival and a Historical Recollection Series that collected oral history of members and relatives of some of the founding families. The Historical Recollection Series culminated on Monday, December 21st with a live call from Ms. Carol Stream who currently resides in a suburb of Phoenix, Arizona. Looking back over our 1st 50 years, Carol Stream has diligently followed the early vision of Jay Stream which called for a residential community with a diverse housing stocking stretching westward from Gary Ave. to its western boundary at Fair Oaks Rd. complemented by an industrial sector east of Gary Ave. populated with light industry, warehousing and commercial and retail areas.

The Building Boom:

The Village experienced its first major building boom in the mid to late 70's when large numbers of Chicagoans relocated to the collar counties including DuPage County. Home builders flocked to the area purchasing large tracts of agricultural land for home construction. During the 70's, over 2,600 new homes and rental units were constructed that increased the Village's population from 4,434 residents to approximately 14,475 at the close of the decade. The 2nd residential building-boom occurred throughout the 1980's during which the community added more than 6,800 additional homes that served to more than double the community's population to 31,716 by 1990.

Beginning in the early 1990's, significant industrial and commercial development occurred in the community bringing with it financial investment and a substantial number of quality jobs. At the close of the 1990s, the Village had an inventory of developed retail space totaling 1.34 million and approximately 15.62 million square feet of indus-

trial building area. The State of Illinois Department of Employment Security listed the Village as first in annual job growth from 1994 to 1995 and then again from 1996-1997. By the end of the decade, the size of the Village's business sector totaled 840 businesses employing a total labor force of 21,546 workers. Some of the notable businesses that have chosen to construct a facility in Carol Stream include Futaba International Corporation (FIC America), Office Depot, Mercedes-Benz of North America, Peacock Engineering, FedEx Ground, UPS- Supply Chain Solutions, Wagner International, Frito-Lay, Inland-Detroit Diesel, Metals Technology, Schmolz-Bickenbach, ITW-Trans-Tech, Tyndale House Publishing, Ingram-Micro, Prince Castle and Vanguard Logistics to name a few.

The Village's proximity to I-355, I-88, O'Hare International Airport and the DuPage County Airport make it a viable site for businesses looking to relocate or expand their business. The Carol Stream Chamber of Commerce is one of the more progressive Chambers in the DuPage County region with an engaged member-

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ship base of 350 active businesses. The Chamber meets on the 2nd Wednesday of every month in the Carol Stream Holiday Inn Hotel & Suites and sponsors regular after-hours business networking events. In addition, the Village is one of only a handful of Illinois communities that does not levy a local property tax to fund its operations which serves as an attractive development incentive for prospective business investment.

As residential development cooled down in the mid-90's, the Village established a citizen task force to provide input to a corridor development plan along both Gary and North Avenues that would include a 22-acre Town Center passive recreation development at the southeast corner of Gary Ave. & Lies Rd. In 1994, the Village closed on a 24.8 acre tract of land for the construction of the Town Center. Construction of the Town Center development began in 1996 and was completed on June 20, 1998 when it was officially dedicated. This award-winning public development included a fantastic water fall, decorative lanon stone entranceway signage, a brick paved pedestrian pathway, landscaped reflecting ponds with a cascading colorful fountain display, a commemorative Welcome Plaza and Archway, over 9,000 landscape plantings, a 22,000 square foot grass amphitheater and a 30 foot diameter Octagon Pavilion as a future performing arts venue for the community.

In 1998, the Village began hosting the performing arts at its new Town Center venue which included a weekend summer festival, a Saturday Farmers Market and an 10-date Thursday evening summer concert series. Over our 12 years as an arts programmer, the Illinois Arts Council has recently provided needed financial support to assist us in establishing the performing arts in the Carol Stream community. The Illinois Arts Alliance has designated Carol Stream as an Arts Friendly community for the past 3 consecutive years validating the community's effort to champion the arts.

Looking Ahead:

Carol Stream's current population is approximately 41,000 and its residents are blessed with a Gold-Medal award-winning Park District that offers a modern outdoor water park, 38 outdoor neighborhood parks that includes over 400 acres of recreational programming space, a growing bike/pedestrian pathway system, a 40,000 square foot indoor recreation center and fitness programs for all ages. In February 2010, the residents approved a \$37 million facilities expansion to be paid for with a zero-tax rate increase that will include a new recreation center with larger exercise areas and an indoor running track, an Olympic-size indoor pool, an off-leash dog park, sports fields improvements and an expansion of the outdoor pedestrian/bike trail system to eventually connect to the larger DuPage County Great Western Trail system.

The Village has been given recognition for its sustainability efforts by DuPage County, Commonwealth Edison, the DuPage Conservation Foundation and the Illinois Recycling Association for its focused efforts to green its operations. Within the last several years, the Village relamped

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Entertainment



Augustinos Rock n' Roll Deli

all if its facilities with energy efficient lighting, expanded its residential curbside recycling operation, instituted an apartment recycling program, installed LED parking lot lighting, redesigned its snow plowing program to reduce the application of roadway salt by transitioning to the innovative use of a brine solution and a beet juice solution (geo-melt) during sub zero temperatures.

Despite the struggling economy, the Village continues full speed ahead serving the residents and our various customer groups with innovative yet streamlined array of services. Despite the drastic dip in operational revenues for the coming budget year, the Village embarked on an effort to fully fund the annual summer concert series by partnering with corporate sponsors. The funding-raising effort was successful



Town Center at Night

thanks to the many loyal businesses and civic groups who have stepped up in a big way to salvage this very popular community tradition. The successful sponsorship effort will allow the Village to host 10 bands at its Town Center Gazebo Stage beginning Thursday, June 9th when the popular Neverly Brothers kick off the summer event season. Every Thursday night thereafter (sans Thu., July 7th), the Village will host a nice mix of local bands that will include musical tributes to Neil Diamond (Denny Diamond) and Chicago (25 or 6 to 4) and feature other renowned local bands like The Legends (Surf Rock), 7th Heaven (Classic Rock), Underwater People (Roots Rock), R-Gang (Motown), 7DEEZ (Funk/Disco), the New Invaders (British Invasion) and Haymarket Riot (Country Rock).

For more information on upcoming Carol Stream community events, visit us at www.carolstream.org. ●

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FESTIVALS

Thousands of visitors come to Geneva for the four annual festivals sponsored by Geneva Chamber of Commerce. Each festival, while unique, offers two to six days of fun and exciting activities.

Swedish Days – A Midsommar Festival

June 21 – 26, 2011

Known as the Granddaddy of Illinois Festivals, Geneva celebrates its Swedish heritage with this six-day June midsummer festival. Over 60 years old, this Geneva tradition features a craft show, the states largest Music Competition, a carnival, Kids' Day, top-notch musical entertainment, delicious Swedish and American fare and a renowned Grand Parade. Don't forget to shop the sales at over 100 one-of-a-kind stores in Geneva's historic business district.

Geneva Arts Fair

July 23 – 24, 2011

In late July, Geneva is transformed into a venue for over 140 esteemed artists. For two days, visitors can leisurely stroll through historic downtown and marvel at the unique works of these fine artisans in this award winning juried art show. Admission is free and includes a children's art area with special activities.

Festival of the Vine

September 9 – 11, 2011

Autumn harvest is celebrated in September with flower markets, food and wine tastings, craft show, kids' activities, Fall Harvest Market, carriage rides, musical entertainment and more. Geneva has a great number of fine restaurants showcased at the "Flavor Fare" along with a variety of wine for purchase. Special ticketed tasting events are offered, during the three days, by merchants.

Christmas Walk and House Tour

December 2 – 3, 2011

Yuletide cheer fills the winter air as Santa Claus and Santa Lucia arrive for the great tree lighting. Amongst the twinkling lights and fresh greenery lined streets, chestnuts are roasting, carolers are singing and holiday shopping has begun. Five charming homes, aglow with holiday decorations, will open their doors to visitors for our popular house tour. With help from the area's most talented designers, the splendor of Geneva's homes bring cheer and merriment to all.



*Grand Parade of Swedish Days;
The upscale Geneva Arts Fair*

Getaway to Geneva

Whether you're looking for a romantic dinner, the perfect gift or a place to relax with the family, you'll find it in Geneva. Come and visit us for a day or a weekend and discover what makes Geneva special, unique and unforgettable.

Click www.genevachamber.com to discover a complete list of local businesses, restaurants, accommodations, events and attractions or call 630-232-6060. ●