

# HOMEWOOD HISTORICAL SOCIETY

## NEWSLETTER

Summer 2001

Homewood, Illinois 60430

## German POWs Held in Thornton

### Things to Remember

- ON SALE NOW: Richard Haas Homewood Theatre prints, \$5.00 each! Get them while they last at the D-H House.
- Other D-H items for sale at the museum. Stop by Tuesdays or Saturdays from 1-3 p.m.
- Coverlets, D-H pillows, totes, and tapestries still available. Call Elaine Egdorf, 798-9535, for more info.
- IS THIS YOUR LAST NEWSLETTER? See Page 11. Respond before July 15, 2001!

Kris Condon and Richard Condon, Editors

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### Don Tornow Reminisces

by Don Tornow, as told to Kris Condon and Jim Wright

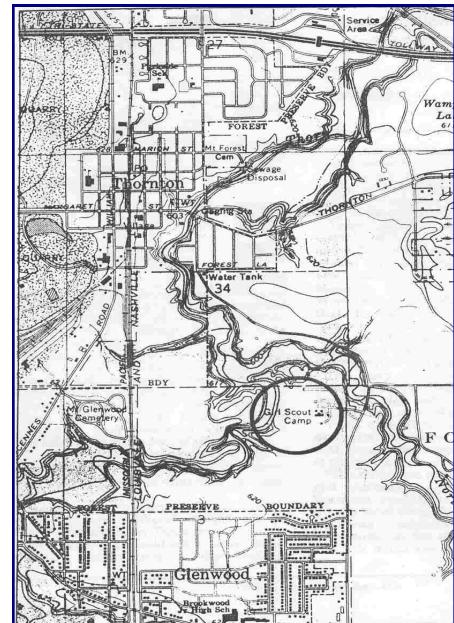
*Editors' Note: This year marks the 60th anniversary of the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor and the United States' entry into World War II. But the battles on another front—the European front—also affected Homewood residents during that period. Former Homewood resident and HHS member Don Tornow reminisced with us recently.*

When Johnny comes marching home again  
Hurrah! Hurrah!  
We'll give him a hearty welcome then  
Hurrah! Hurrah!  
The men will cheer and the boys will shout  
The ladies they will all turn out  
And we'll all feel gay,  
When Johnny comes marching home.  
Gilmore, Patrick Sarsfield, and Louis Lambert (1863).  
When Johnny Comes Marching Home. Included in The Soldier's Return March. Boston: Henry Tolman & Co.

This song, written by a Union Army bandmaster in the Civil War, continues to have special meaning to the family of Chicago Heights resident and HHS member **Donald Tornow**. Don, who was born and raised in Homewood at 1861 Evergreen Road, recently shared his reminiscences about World War II and growing up during that era. He is dedicating his reminiscences to all those Homewood servicemen and women who served and who lost their lives.

### “Home Alive in ‘45”

Don was in the 1950 graduating class of Standard School and graduated in 1954 from Bloom Township High School. His grade school years were marked by World War II, which he recalls as a time of happiness and sorrow. He remembers that residential blocks in Homewood had air raid



A map showing the German POW Camp at Sweet Woods (taken from 1980 U.S. Geological Survey; original in HHS archives). Reprinted in The Star, October 31, 1993.

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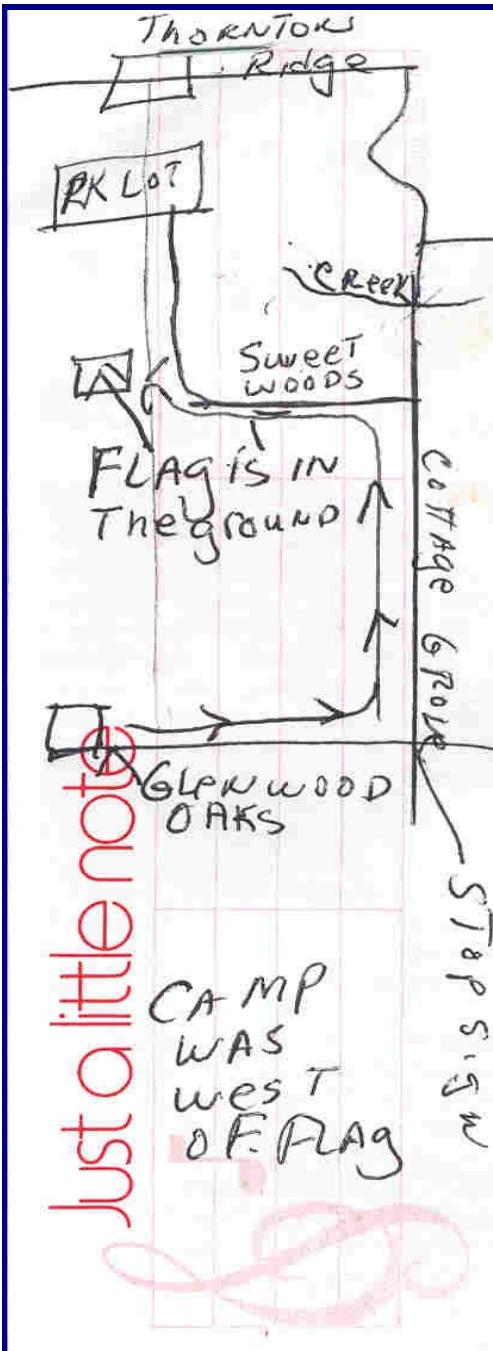
## Don Tornow Reminisces . . .

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wardens at the start of the war, and that it was routine to shut down the streetlights during raids. The family also supported those Evergreen Road boys who were serving in the military, including brothers Al and HHS member **Bill Steiner**; Don remembers sending shaving kits to the Steiner brothers during the war.

Don's father, Carl Tornow, came from Germany and was sponsored by a resident of Waukegan, Illinois. Don's mother, Alvina Fiebig, was born in 1884 in the Martin Avenue home directly south of the Dorband-Howe House Museum. Carl Tornow dug the foundation for and constructed the family home at 1861 Evergreen where Don was raised, and Don recalls his father writing letters in German to their relatives in Europe. In addition, the family would send care packages to their relatives. Don recalls thinking that it was difficult under those circumstances to determine who the enemy was. He remembers that the house at 1861 was painted yellow, and that one day, they went outside to find a swastika painted on the house.

Don's sister, Lorayne, was married to John Piani. Piani was drafted at age 21 in September of 1944 even



A diagram, hand-drawn by Don Tornow, showing the location of the POW camp at Sweet Woods and the location of the concrete flag poured by the German prisoners of war. (Original on file at the Dorband-Howe House Museum.)

though he had two small children. For this reason, "When Johnny Comes Marching Home" was a song of special importance to the family. Piani came home on leave for Christmas of 1944 and was killed in action in March 1945. He is buried in Margraaten, Holland.

### Homewood Activities

Don remembers trains coming in from the Markham Yards with planes, tanks, and guns. He and the Kruse children, also residents of Evergreen Road, sat at Homewood Coal and pretended they were in the Army. He recalls that he and his friends would jump on a neighbor's tractor south of Evergreen Road and hitch a ride to Washington Park Airport, where the Army Air Corps cadets would drop crepe paper streamers representing different types of bombs (see "Flying Into Homewood," Homewood Historical Society Newsletter, Spring 2001). Don and his friends would lie in the street and try to catch the streamers. He also recalls that planes advertised over Washington Park Racetrack. Don and his friends would put stakes in the streamers before takeoff to keep the pilot from lifting off—and

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# German POW Camps in U.S. Common

*Excerpted from Finscher, Jack (June 1995). "By Convention, the Enemy Within Never Did Without." Smithsonian Magazine, 126-143. Reprinted with permission of publisher.*

"The POW problem first surfaced here in 1942 after Britain, its tight little isles bulging with prisoners of war taken after Rommel had been beaten back from Cairo, asked if the United States could house 150,000 soldiers of the famous Afrika Korps. Initially, the U.S. Government was profoundly fearful. Our largest influx of foreign POWs to date had been 1,346 German sailors seized off ships in port at the onset of World War I. Despite their small numbers, a few hostile escapees were widely credited with blowing up New Jersey's Black-Tom munitions plant in 1916. . . .

". . . [I]n September 1942, \$50 million was approved for construction of POW camps. . . . From the outset, American civilians oscillated between delight at the economic windfall of a new \$500,000 camp near their town and outrage at what, with some justice, they saw as the coddling of an enemy who might otherwise be killing their sons in battle. . . . Wherever the POWs found themselves, they were initially held in secrecy under a cloak of voluntary press censorship. . . .

"They came in two great waves, one in 1942 and '43, the other after D-Day in June of the following year. Their sheer numbers swamped the first of 155 base camps scattered around the country but mostly in the Sunbelt (to keep POWs away from militarily sensitive coastal areas and to minimize the cost of keeping them warm in winter). . . . POWs were issued dark

blue fatigue uniforms with 'PW' stenciled on the back in all white letters (a good target, the cynical among them said). . . .

"At first, typical duty hours for POWs were divided between routine military housekeeping chores and on-base technical, maintenance or administrative jobs (for 80 cents a day in wages and 10 cents a day military pay, all in scrip that could be spent at the PX or credited to their individual accounts). . . .

"After POWs at Fort Sam Houston in San Antonio, Texas, were issued rubber-heeled boots that could not be smartly clicked, Prussian-

style, they got official permission to machine-cobble their own highly clickable wooden heels. Beginning in July 1944, all camps were encouraged to cook the prisoners' national dishes, such as pig's knuckles, *wurst* and black bread, after blander American-style beef and white bread went uneaten. Some critics later accused the government of catering to the

whims of its prisoners, but food waste fell off so dramatically as a result that one garbage collector in McAlester, Oklahoma, had to cancel his contract. . . .

"The ambitious [POWs] also organized classes in every subject from bookbinding and Chinese culture to American Indian History and Hebrew. Or, with approval from the Nazi government, took correspondence courses from any of 103 U.S. trade schools and universities for full college credit back in Germany. . . . Under the Geneva Convention POWs could be compelled to work for the host country with certain restrictions. . . . They were used on railroads, but



A photograph of the German POW camp at Camp Ruston, Louisiana (<http://www.latech.edu>, visited 4/25/2001).

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# Our Volunteers—They're the Best!

As always, when HHS asks for volunteers, many join us—and we're full. Thanks to those members who have offered to serve as tour guides during the summer months: **Skip Allison;**



**Marvin and Marilyn Austin; Virginia Bixby; Joan Brazzale; Audrey Fischer; Betty Hedrick; Magda Hepokoski; Elfrieda Heuer; Patricia Hogensen; Minnie Iwema; Dick Knuth; Arlene Koehn; Alice Lyzak; Mary McDermed; Joan Overgaard; Dorothy Rowley; Grace Schultz; Lida Sigg; Karen Smith; Verna Smith; Mary Steiner; and Jim Wright.**

Thanks, too, to our ongoing gardening team of **Bart Jerner and Tom Kelly**, who always make our landscaping and gardening the best—and thanks to **Paul Hart** for maintaining our lawn during the summer months and to **Jim Wright** for his hedge and ground cover trimming.

If you're interested in helping as a D-H tour guide, we have training sessions and information to help you become more comfortable. Museum Curator **Elaine Egeldorf** will be conducting the sessions in the near future, and we'd like to include you among our trainees.

If you're interested in working as a tour guide, please contact **Mary McDermed** at 708-799-5071. And a special thanks to Mary for her efforts in recruiting these terrific tour guides!

## And Speaking of Volunteers . . .

**Mary McDermed** also coordinates our phone calling tree. This committee's purpose is to remind all members within 15 miles of the meeting location of upcoming programs.

Our thanks to **Peg Boivin, James Garnes, Fred Gold, Elfrieda Heuer, Tom Kelly, Dick Knuth, Sally Kruger, Alice Lyzak, Mary McCarthy, Steven Sindelar, Truex**

**Upchurch, and Chloe White** for contacting our members each month.

To make sure that **YOU** are on a calling committee member's list, please complete the membership form on the last page. (If the expiration date on your mailing label reads "5/31/02," then you have already renewed.) Only memberships received by **July 15, 2001**, can be guaranteed for inclusion in the upcoming directory.

## Fall Meeting Preview

With your 2001-02 membership comes the complete list of programs for the year—but, as a sneak peek, mark your calendars now for the following meetings:



**September 12:** A Patch in History—Quilts by Carole Sutton

**October 10:** Recollections of Homewood—A Panel Discussion (Marjorie Baker, Fred Gold, David Gravelle, Sylvia MacMaster, and Ray Taylor)

**November 14:** Old Richton Park—Diamond Jubilee by Mary Pierce

**December 12:** Holiday Party and HHS 21st Birthday Party, with the Calumet Corner Chorus

# Annual Meeting Wrap-up

At the May 9 Annual Meeting, HHS members installed the following slate: **President, Jim Wright; Vice-President, Dick Knuth; Secretary, Karen Smith; and Treasurer, Barbara Jenkins.** The membership thanks outgoing Secretary **Lucy Sholeen** for her service. Lucy has served for many years as a director and as secretary, and we appreciate her commitment (as well as her detailed minutes).

The membership also voted incumbent **Pat Bannon** and member **Dick Condon** to three-year terms on the Board of Directors. Dick will replace **Barbara Van Antwerp**, whose term expired in 2001. We thank her for her service as a member of the Board.

After the installation, Jim Wright read a letter from **Connie Egeldorf** announcing her resignation as a director.

**Shirley Smiddy** has been appointed to fill the remainder of Connie's term, scheduled to expire in 2002.

Connie has served HHS in a variety of capacities over many years, including her most recent responsibilities as a director and as Chair of Fundraising and Special Events. She has presided over several successful HHS fundraisers and activities, including the coverlet promotion, HHS Day at Balmoral Racetrack, and the "No-Show Ball." Thanks, Connie, for your service to HHS, and best of luck to you with the exciting possibilities your job transfer brings you!

Shirley moved to Homewood in 1937 and lives today on the same block where she grew up. She attended Central and Standard Schools and is an alumna of Thornton Township High School. She spent 32 years as a primary school teacher, the last 21 of which were in Flossmoor District 161. As a child, Shirley was an active member of the Homewood Girl Scout Troup and recalls that

the scouts' fathers built a meeting house for them on the Izaak Walton property.

Our new or re-elected officers or directors, all of whom were profiled in the last newsletter, join these returning directors:

**John ("Skip") Allison** has resided in Homewood since 1940 and is a Thornton Township High School alumnus. Skip attended Central and Standard Schools and is retired after 40 years from Quaker Oats with time spent in Ohio, Indiana, and Iowa. He has been active in Senior Little League Baseball and has lived in seven different Homewood locations.

*The membership also voted Kris Condon HHS's "Volunteer of the Year Award" at its May 9 Annual Meeting. Kris previously won this award in 1999.*

**Marv Austin** started Homewood's Little League in 1951 and founded the youth basketball program for boys and girls through the H-F Park District. He retired as Assistant Manager of the Insurance Services Office and served as a volunteer firefighter from 1954-1971, retiring as Assistant Chief. He is also a former Homewood Village Trustee.

**Elaine Egeldorf**, a founding member of HHS, has served ten terms as its president. She has been named both an Honorary Life Member and, for having won the Volunteer of the Year Award three times, a Life Volunteer by the membership. Among other activities, Elaine is currently serving as the Dorband-Howe House Museum Curator and is coordinating special events and fundraising with daughter Connie.

**Mary McDermed** is currently Chair of the Program Committee and chaired this year's Nominating Committee. She has worked for 20 years as an advocate for disabled children and adults, including serving on the Illinois State Human Rights Authority and the Illinois State Advisory Council on Children with Disabilities. Mary has traced her Homewood family tree back to Johann Christian Buggert, who emigrated from Germany to Homewood in 1852.

# Don Tornow Reminisces....

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the pilot eventually took the boys for a ride to secure their cooperation.

The war effort touched Homewood, too. Don remembers George Beckhlm, the Homewood Postmaster, coming to Central School for an assembly. Beckhlm had been injured in battle, and the government sent him home to promote the sale of war bonds. Don recalls that the July 4 parades ran through town and finished near the present location of Bogart's Steakhouse. The American Legion, an important part of the war effort, was housed across from Irwin Center on the northwest corner of Ridge and Highland. And one of the most profound images that has stayed with Don were the service stars in residents' living room windows. A gold star meant a deceased soldier in the family; a blue star meant a soldier in active service.

Don remembers that the Homewood Theatre sponsored aluminum drives for free tickets. He ushered at the theater with HHS director **Skip Allison** for 25 cents per hour. Don and his mother also saw newsreels at the Homewood Theatre. Don also recalls much of the layout of the Evergreen and Southgate areas. Green apple hedgerows and Osage orange trees divided the farms. The fields started south of his house and went from Dixie Highway to Halsted Street. There was a barn on Birch Road with the Homewood Athletic Club field south of Birch. The Club field went all the way to Southgate on 186<sup>th</sup> Place. Halloween was also special during that era, complete with parades that ended with a bonfire at Highland Avenue

and Evergreen Road.

## Sweet Woods POW Camp

During our conversation, Don also recalled a German prisoner of war camp in Thornton during the mid 1940s. He estimates that 750 German prisoners, many of whom were suspected of collaboration, were housed at the Sweet Woods Forest Preserve. The government ran out of crop pickers during World War II and needed interns to help with crops like sugar beets. This facility, located off of Cottage Grove between Glenwood's Main Street and Ridge Road, was operated as a Girl Scout camp after the war and is currently maintained by the

Cook County Forest Preserve. (See Don's hand-drawn map of the Sweet Woods POW Camp on Page 2.)

Don recalls that John Jansma's father would pick up John and Don and they would go to Sweet Woods. Since Don spoke German at home, he could understand the prisoners' conversations and recalls that the prisoners were talking

about women. He also recalls that the camp guard told them to keep their distance from the prisoners. His most vivid recollection of Sweet Woods was the day the prisoners were pouring concrete into a form; he remembers that the form looked lumpy and misshapen. That form, which still exists at the entrance to Sweet Woods and is maintained by Thornton American Legion Post 1070, was a concrete American flag (see the picture on this page). The lumpy form is, in fact, an American flag waving in the breeze. This was done to demoralize the Germans at the camp.

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The concrete American flag poured by the German POWs at the Sweet Woods camp in the 1940s. (Photo by Kris Condon. Originals on file at the Dorband-Howe House Museum.)

# On the Street Where You Live: Burr Oak

At the April 11 HHS meeting, member and Director **Pat Bannon** shared her recollections of Burr Oak Road west from Ashland Avenue in our popular “On the Street Where You Live” series. The meeting was well attended—not just by HHS members, but by residents of Burr Oak who we hope will join us.

Space limitations prevent us from profiling all of the homes on Pat’s walk down “Memory Lane,” but the original photographs and Pat’s notes are part of the permanent archives at the Dorband-Howe House Museum.

## 1620 Burr Oak

This residence is the home of **Dorothy Klauk**, an HHS life member and former president of the Homewood Fire Department Auxiliary. Dorothy’s daughter Debbie and granddaughter live with her. Dorothy’s husband, HHS life

member and former Fire Chief **Joseph A. Klauk**, died in February of 2000. Dorothy’s father, Arthur Senior, was a founder



1620 Burr Oak—the Klauk family home. (Photo by Pat Bannon.)

of Izaak Walton, and her sister, Barbara Senior, was the secretary and church historian at Homewood’s First Presbyterian Church.

Dorothy’s family moved into 1620 in 1926 when she was nine years old. She remembers Burr Oak as a mud road and losing her shoes in the mud. Fortunately, however, the Seniors had a Doberman who retrieved shoes! Dorothy remembers roller skating on the cinder sidewalks along Burr Oak. She attended Standard and Central Schools and recalls her mother driving her to school. In honor of the Klauks’ oldest daughter, Judy, Arthur Senior

planted a tree in front of the house. The Seniors and Klauks have been the only owners of the property.

## 1640 Burr Oak

This house was 30 years old when the Hobsons moved in. Mr. Cunningham was the contractor for the subdivision and built the house. Pat received the following letter from Robert Hobson, the son of Dorothy Hobson, when he heard about Pat’s “On the Street



1640 Burr Oak—the Hobson family home. (Photo by Pat Bannon.)

Where You Live” presentation in April 2001:

“First of all, since virtually every house had at least one occupant between five and eighteen, there was practically a carnival-like atmosphere with just about every kid off of school. The downside of this was an unspoken law: ‘any adult had not only the authority, but the obligation to punish any kid for minor infractions of proper juvenile behavior. . .’ So—in short—you could get away with some stuff because you were off of school but not a lot because there was a limitless supply of moms who could and would bust you at any given moment if you were trying to pull a fast one.

“One of the most fun things to do when you were off school was to ride your bike in the paved lot north of Central School, down the concrete ‘bike lane’ in between Central and Ridge School and—the very best: down the hill that started along Gottschalk Avenue across the playground and then into the sandlot and see how far you’d coast in the sand before falling over. After an energetic morning of biking there were several other options. One

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# Condolences

HHS offers its condolences to members **Elaine and Connie Egdorf, Jeri and Megan Whelan, and Joan Melling** on the passing of Elaine and Joan's sister, Elva Atherton, on May 27, 2001. Mrs. Atherton was employed with Illinois Bell and Ingalls Memorial Hospital and was a substance abuse counselor with a private practice in Olympia Fields.



HHS also expresses its sympathies to the family of member **Mary Elizabeth O'Brien**.



Miss O'Brien, a Glenwood resident, died in April of 2001. She is survived by a brother and many nieces and nephews.

HHS has also received word of the passing of life member **Dorothy Mitchell** in 1996. At the time of her passing, Mrs. Mitchell was a resident of Portage, Wisconsin. HHS expresses its sympathies to her surviving husband and family and thanks member **Miriam Bramschreiber** for alerting us to Mrs. Mitchell's passing.

# Gifts, Donations, & Editors' Notes

The Dorband-Howe House Museum is a wonderful research tool for historians and genealogists alike because of the gifts and donations we receive from our members. HHS would like to thank the following people for their generous contributions to the museum:

New member **John Sailor** for a 1957 Illinois Bell telephone directory and a 1925 advertisement for a Blue Island car dealership;

An anonymous gift of a Homewood Little League Scrapbook; and

**St. Paul Community Church**, for their gift of their 135th Anniversary booklet.

We are always grateful for your "Homewoodabilia." To make a gift, please contact President **Jim Wright** at 708-957-0640 or Museum Curator **Elaine Egdorf** at 708-798-9535.



In addition to notification of gifts and donations, we are receiving an increasing number of "letters to the editors." We thought we'd like to share them with you here.

From member **Pete Erickson**: "A terrific newsletter! My compliments to the editors." (Editors' Note: Thanks to Petey for the feedback. We're glad to know that members are responding to the newsletter, by notes such as yours and by their interest in submitting their reminiscences! We hope that's a trend that will continue.)

Speaking of reminiscences, member **Tonetta Cowing Wehmhoefer** had this recollection to share: "I did find out a little about the Parsons Ammonia Plant which used to be at the south end of Walt's Grocery Store! Jim Moore, who has his mom's house on Klimm Avenue, but lives in Belleville, Michigan, said it moved from Chicago to Homewood in 1940. This was always the best ammonia in the area. It did burn down—I'm not sure if all of it burned down—in 1960. . . . His father, Charles J. Moore, was its manager and ran the plant. His dad was very active in the Lions' Club and helped to get our swimming pool." Thanks, Tonetta, for your memories.

And from member **Joyce Multog Carroll**, we

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# Gifts, Donations....

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heard this: "I so enjoyed the article on my aunt's, [member] **Dorothy Walker's**, account of her early days in Homewood. I also enjoyed the article in the recent newsletter about Washington Park Airport. The first time I ever 'flew' was when my dad, Earl Multog, took me for a ride in a small plane at Washington. I was a teenager and was 'thrilled' to see Homewood from the air." (Editors' Note: Sounds like the makings of a reminiscing article, Joyce!)



We also wanted to clarify a question from some of our members regarding the 2000-2001 membership directory—specifically, why some members' names did not appear in the directory despite paying dues. The reason is that those dues reached HHS after the directory went to print in August of

2000. Our membership year ends on May 31, and all memberships expire at that time. There is a membership form in each newsletter, which we encourage you to use for renewals or for membership gifts. Generally speaking, we make one final reminder after May 31 (as we've done with the **July 15, 2001, deadline on Page 11**). We're always grateful for memberships during the course of the year—but to insure that we have directories prepared in time for our September meeting, we cannot guarantee that membership renewals received after the cutoff date will appear in the directory. These members, however, will automatically receive a directory and newsletters once their renewals have been received.

So—we hope that explanation helps. For your own membership expiration date, please check your mailing label. (Life members' expiration dates read "**11/11/11**.") If you have a question about your membership, call Membership Chair **Kris Condon** at 708-957-9364.

## A Message from the President

Another year has passed and so much has been accomplished through the hard work and dedication of our many volunteers.

During the year:

- Our meetings were moved to St. Paul Community Church. This move has been well received and attendance has increased, with 40-50 people attending each month.
- Our newsletters have been regularly published, and five issues were produced.
- Our museum is staffed by many new volunteers, and much effort has gone into scheduling and training these volunteers.
- Plans are being formulated to begin the process of inventorying and cataloging our collections, which will make our museum an even greater resource.

- Our state grant committee has completed the work needed to finalize our application for the \$25,000 in state funds to be used to renovate the Dorband-Howe House exterior. With any luck, the governor will approve our application and the work will get underway yet this summer.
- Finally, our board of directors spent four months updating our strategic plan, initially prepared in 1983. This document and further planning will serve as the society's blueprint for many years to come.
- Much work has been done and, as always, much work needs to be done. Thanks to all who worked so hard to make the last year a success; let's continue this spirit and make 2001-2002 even better!

*Jim Wright, 2001-2002 President*

## German POW Camps in U.S. Common

*(Continued from page 3)*

the labor unions officially deplored ‘turning loose Nazi soldiers, skilled in demolition practices, to run amuck on the railroads.’

“The need for help on farms and in factories grew so grave that it was decided prisoners could be employed without tight security outside the camps. Eventually, tens of thousands of German prisoners at 511 branch camps in 44 states were working in canneries, foundries, quarries, lumber mills and coal mines.

“Ninety-five out of 100 eligible POWs went to work in 1945, saving U.S. taxpayers \$100 million that year in prisoner upkeep alone. . . . [Interviewee] Gerster remembers that POWs in Atlanta, Nebraska, called their camp der goldener Käfig, ‘the golden cage.’

“As time went on, some camps became a virtual extension of the highly politicized German Army, and a few were virtually run by fanatics. With impunity, the more politically zealous

flashed the stiff-armed Nazi salute (an act not required by the German government until after the mid-1944 attempt to assassinate Hitler). They organized readings from Mein Kampf and generally made their camps, as one historian put it, ‘hell for the anti-Nazis and the political moderates.’

“In one camp, guards of Jewish descent were so harassed that they had to be quietly withdrawn. It was feared that if such incidents were publicized, the fact that Germans were being guarded by Jews might be seized upon by the Nazis as a pretext for retaliation against American POWs in Germany. . . .

“Following Germany’s surrender, POWs were required to watch films of Nazi concentration camp atrocities. Some prisoners watched unmoved or dismissed the emaciated bodies as German victims of Russian depredations. When surveyed, only one-third of 2,000 POWs would concede under questioning that the scenes were real, but the

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## On the Street Where You Live: Burr Oak

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was to go to Johnson’s Drug Store and—after an excruciatingly long time (to the sales personnel) finally purchase some comics and candy and then go out on the east side of the building, park our collective behinds on the sidewalk, read our wondrous stories and see how much Bazooka Bubble Gum we could cram into our collective mouths.

“I have, of course, once again, strayed from the subject. Let me just put it this way. I am over fifty years old and I meet a lot of people and I know a lot of people. I see society sort of slipping into a patchwork of individuals where each has their own neuroses and each is sort of not responsible for their own acts. . . . They just root around for a while until they can find

something in their childhoods that they can hand it onto. . . . I’ll tell you one thing, that the kids I knew—growing up on Burr Oak Road—just don’t come up with anything like that. Why? Because—as far as I can remember, to the best of my knowledge, each and every one of us had perfect childhoods. End of story.”

### 1750 Burr Oak

The Otto family currently resides here. This house was built by Pete Preckel of Homewood Construction in the early 1950s. The white Cape Cod’s upstairs was unfinished when Wally and Goldie Kern bought the house for their six children, including Patricia Kern (now Patricia Bannon). Pat remembers her mother

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## On the Street Where You Live: Burr Oak

*(Continued from page 10)*

drywalling the upstairs and fixing up Pat's bedroom. She also recalls that the property has a large backyard. The Kerns moved in in 1956, and Pat lived there until her marriage to Jim Bannon in 1959. Pat's parents lived in 1750 until the early 1960s.



*Editors' Note: In sharing her photographs for "On the Street Where You Live" for the newsletter, Pat recalled that she moved into 1750 Burr Oak when she was 16 and lived there for three years. Her family moved to Burr Oak from 2028 Chestnut (the site of the Village Hall addition) in order to stay within Thornton's High School District. Her family had also resided on Gottschalk and on Ridge Road. When asked why a home she had lived in for three years was the home she chose to profile for "On the Street Where You Live" instead of one of the other family residences, her answer was simple: "The house had special meaning to me. I moved in there as a teenager and left there in my wedding gown. It was a special block and a wonderful place to grow up." End of story.*

## No More Newsletters. . . . That's It!

. . . if your newsletter label says "**5/31/01**." This is your **last reminder**; only renewals received before **July 15, 2001**, will be included in next year's membership directory. (If the label says "**5/31/02**," then your membership has been renewed. Thank you!)

Please **CIRCLE** the appropriate membership category.

Family \$15

Individual \$10

Senior Individual or Student \$7.50

Senior Family \$12.50

Life Member \$150 per member

Today's Date\_\_\_\_\_

Optional Contribution\_\_\_\_\_

Name\_\_\_\_\_ Phone ( )\_\_\_\_\_

Street\_\_\_\_\_

Town\_\_\_\_\_ State\_\_\_\_\_ Zip\_\_\_\_\_

E-mail address (if applicable)\_\_\_\_\_

**Mail check payable to Homewood Historical Society at Post Office Box 1144,  
Homewood, IL 60430.**

# German POW Camps in U.S. Common

*(Continued from page 10)*

films had a greater impact than many would admit. A thousand POWs at Camp Butner, North Carolina, burned their uniforms. Prisoners at several camps collected money for the victims. . . .

"The last U.S.-held German prisoner of war was released on June 30, 1946. Surviving relics of the largest-ever foreign invasion of America are now few and far between. Most of the camps have long since crumbled into dust. Still, the memory lingers. . . ."

## Don Tornow Reminisces. . . .

*(Continued from page 6)*

After the war, many prisoners stayed in the area, married, and raised families here. Several historical sources also state that one of the barracks was dismantled and relocated to Izaak Walton Park, where it now serves as the main building.

### Today

Today, Don is the father of two and grandfather of three. An active member of HHS, he serves as a tour guide at the Dorband-Howe house—the home that is within viewing distance of his mother's family homestead on Martin Avenue and a few blocks from his family residence on Evergreen Road.

### HOMEWOOD HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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Tuesdays and Saturdays, 1:00-3:00 p.m.



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