



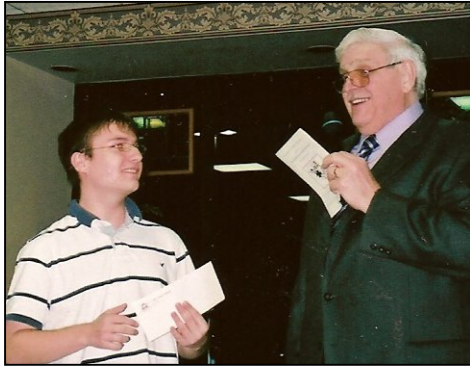
Roselle History Museum Newsletter

Official Publication of the Roselle Historical Foundation

39 East Elm Street, Roselle, Illinois 60172-2026 (630-351-5300)

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Job Well Done



\$2,000 Scholarship for Volunteer Robert Gilbert

Lake Park High School senior Robert Gilbert has been volunteering at the Roselle History Museum for two years. His primary work has been at the computer where he manages the membership records, processes correspondence, and tackles other computer-related tasks. He has been a huge help in other areas as well, according to historian Joan Beauprez and administrator Joe Devlin.

An anonymous donor asked that Robert be recognized for this unselfish volunteerism by offering a \$2,000 scholarship to be awarded him in the name of the Roselle History Museum. President Ray Hitzemann (pictured above) presented the award during the Historical Evening on April 19 at the Trinity Lutheran Family Life Center. Although his family had been “clued in,” the scholarship was a total surprise to Robert, and turned out to be an emotional moment. He received an enthusiastic round of applause from the audience. Robert plans to study engineering at Bradley University, Peoria.

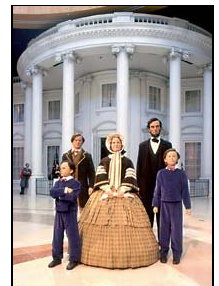


Robert's parents, Darlene and Robert Gilbert, and his brother, Jeff King, were present to share his moment

Trip Planned to Celebrate Lincoln's 200th Birthday

October 7 and 8, 2008, have been set for a trip to Springfield, where Lincoln's presence is felt wherever you go. Travelers will honor our 16th President and celebrate his 200th birthday by visiting many points of interest in the Springfield area. Marge Engel has arranged with World Class Tours of Dundee to visit the following sites: the Lincoln Library and Museum, Lincoln's Tomb, home, and law office, the Governor's Mansion, and New Salem. Interested? For more information and an itinerary, call the museum office (630-351-5300) today! The cost of \$295 per person (double occupancy) includes hotel, guided tours, and four meals.

Travelers will stay at the Abraham Lincoln Hotel for one night and visit the Lincoln sites over a two-day period. Travel will be by bus. Departure is set for 6 a.m. on Tuesday, October 7, from the northwest section of the American Legion parking lot, Maple & Spring. Overnight parking will be arranged for \$2.50. The group will return Wednesday, October 8, between 7 and 8 p.m. The bus will fill up quickly, so make that call today. More information will be sent during the summer.



Cookbook Committee Celebrates at High Tea

Cherished Recipes will be delivered on or about July 2. After 14 months of poring over 600+ recipes, organizing them, writing text, taking photos, typing, proofing, and more proofing, Kay Cahill thought it was time for tea and scones



Marge Engel enjoys tea

to congratulate the ten committee members for sharing their time, talents, and enthusiasm.

Chairman Marie Piraino complimented the committee on the quality of the book they have produced: Ruth Bagel, Joan Beauprez, Kay Cahill, Marge Engel, Sharon Hitzemann, Susan Jankowski, Bob Kling, Joyce Kuhlmann, and Sue Spachman.

Cherished Recipes is \$20 per copy if picked up at the coach house. Shipping charge is an additional \$5. To order a cookbook, call 630-529-6228, or send an e-mail to rosellehistory@sbcglobal.net, or write to the Roselle History Museum 39 East Elm Street, Roselle, IL 60172, and mark the envelope "Cookbook." Purchasers will be notified as soon as the books arrive. Only 600 have been ordered and it is expected they will be sold quickly, so place your order today.

FREE! Everyone loves a Freebie! A **FREE** cookbook will be given away on July 15. RHM walkers in the Rose Parade will be handing out entry forms. Simply complete the form and drop it in the mail slot at the RHM office, or mail it to the Roselle History Museum, 39 E. Elm St., Roselle, IL 60172.

Think Green

by Joe Devlin

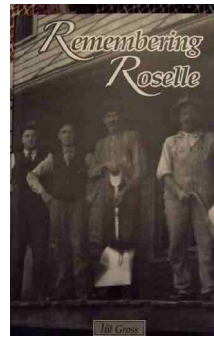


Jeff Sutter installs rain barrels at Museum Campus

Friendly storm water management methods promote a natural ecosystem, assimilate pollutants, recycle storm water, and protect water quality in our streams.

Developing "rain gardens" and use of rain barrels can capture a high percentage of precipitation (20-40 percent) that falls on the roof of a house. Rain barrels help to collect and recycle water for the rain gardens. These modern barrels are sealed, safe around children, and insect resistant. A spigot on the bottom makes the captured water available.

An example of rain barrel installation can be seen at the Roselle History Museum property at the southwest corner of Prospect and Elm Streets. One of the barrels is shown in the picture with Jeff Sutter, public works employee, who installed the rain barrels. For more information on rain barrels, call Joe Devlin at 630-351-5300, or go to <http://clean-water.uwex.edu/pubs>.



Remembering Roselle

by Milan Bagel

The Roselle History Museum is proud to announce that its new history book, *Remembering Roselle*, is here. After more than a year of photo selection from the museum's archives, many hours of

research, writing and organizing, the project is finally complete. A small cadre of dedicated museum volunteers put in countless hours of work. Special thanks go to the author Jill Gross and museum historian Joan Albin Beauprez who led the charge.

The book's 129 pages and more than 200 pictures will take you on a trip through old Roselle, a hometown rich with fascinating history. The village grew from its early beginnings as a farming community. The arrival of the railroad brought mills, dairies, wagon makers, blacksmiths, and more. Ultimately it was the strong-willed people of Roselle who made the village. Through this photo journey you can visit their homes, businesses, schools, and churches. See life in Roselle before condominiums, strip malls, and freeways.

This book is ideal for browsing. Its 9 x 6-inch format is easy to handle. *Remembering Roselle* was commercially printed and bound. It's a book you can be proud to own and share with friends and family.

Copies are available for purchase at the Roselle History Museum and the Village Hall. The History Museum is located across the street from the Village complex. The office address and phone number are shown below.

Another option is to visit the RHM website at www.rosellehistory.com. You can download an order blank for ordering by mail. Books will also be available at various village events. Price of the book is \$20. Shipping is \$4 for the first copy and \$3 for each additional copy. To place an order, call 630-351-5300.



Time to Reinvent Ourselves? Create a Vision?



“Building on History, Community, and Change” was the program presented by Robert W. Starinsky, (left) lecturer in the Business Management program at Robert Morris College in Bensenville. On April 12, following the general meeting, Starinsky stressed the importance of connecting with the

community, strategic planning, The Museum of the Future, and governance. He provided each participant with a multi-page binder full of ideas on how best to enhance the image of the Roselle History Museum. The presentation is part of the inservice program for museum volunteers.

Starinsky suggested that “perhaps it’s necessary to *reinvent*—to develop a new grassroots-based vision.” He suggested promoting a “full suite” of special events to draw attention to the museum, to create educational and multimedia materials to enrich the museum experience for younger audiences. Starinsky urged the group to utilize the latest technology. He shared ideas for special events in the community. In his discussion about strategic planning, Starinsky quoted from Peter F. Drucker’s writings that non-profit organizations should conduct a “self-assessment” in order to “shape their futures,” given our “rapidly changing and turbulent world.” Drucker also says, “self-assessment should convert good intentions into effective action, not next year, but tomorrow morning.”

During Starinsky’s discussion of the Museum of the Future, he brought up a number of possibilities for the Roselle History Museum.

One of the participants commented that “His notebook has a wealth of information in it! It would be a good idea for (the participants) to go through the book together and highlight ideas of interest to members that could be worked on in the coming months.”

Robert W. Starinsky is a published author, business management consultant, educator, and occasional public speaker. Bob is the Principal and Owner of Tradewinds Group, Inc., providing consulting services to businesses and organizations in the western and northwestern suburbs of the Chicago metropolitan area. Bob holds an associates degree in market and merchandising from Wilbur Wright College, a bachelors degree in

organizational behavior and personnel from Northwestern University, a masters degree in business administration from Dominican University, and a masters degree in accounting from DePaul University. Bob is also a certified computing professional (CCP) and holds a professional certificate in lending administration from the American Institute of Banking. ☞



Parade Walkers Needed

The 48th Annual Rose Parade steps off at 2 p.m. on Sunday, June 1, and

the History Museum will participate by entering a float. There is a need for walkers to hand out candy to the children along the parade route. You may walk the entire route, or, if you prefer, you may walk part of the route. If you’re interested, call the museum office at 630-351-5300. If you need to leave a message, we’ll call you right back.

Kemmerling Park & Pool Open Summer 2008

Kathy Herrmann
Director of Marketing

Expect Excellence is this summer’s motto at

Kemmerling Pool. We aim to provide a safe, high-quality aquatic facility that will be fun for you and your family.



Indoor work at the Kemmerling bath house is complete and looks great. Outdoor work, including the concrete pool decks, pool painting, landscaping, path grading, and path and parking lot paving is underway.

Due to inclement weather in April, Kemmerling Grand Opening festivities have been rescheduled from May 24 to Saturday, June 7. This was the preferred action, instead of compromising all of the hard work that has gone into the project thus far. By no means do we wish to rush the end of the project or cut corners because of the weather. When all is said and done, we intend to deliver an excellent aquatic facility to the community.

Check our website at www.RoselleParkDistrict.com, and mark your calendar so you and your family can participate in this historic event—that’s Saturday, June 7. ☞

Our Museum Neighbors

“All of us are smarter than each of us.” I’m not sure who said that, but it serves us well as a philosophy for teamwork. We have developed a line of communication with our neighboring museums to share newsletters, ideas, and helpful hints. We hope you’ll have an opportunity to visit our neighbors.

Bartlett History Museum

“Oops, pardon me! I hope I didn’t step on your flowers,” said I. On a recent trip to the Bartlett History Museum, RHM volunteers were treated to a presentation by museum director Pam Rohleder, coffee and rolls, and an enlightening tour of the exhibits. Among the artistic artifacts are life-size photographs of the Women of Bartlett, the current exhibit. Dorothea Bock Krumfuss is shown here on her “porch” amid pictures that tell the story of her immigration to this area in the 1800s and her search for a “neue Heimat,” a new homeland. The Bartlett History Museum, located in the huge entry to the new village hall at 228 S. Main Street, opened its doors in 2005. The exhibits are state-of-the-art. Visitors are always welcome, but it’s best to call first to be sure the museum is open. Rohleder can be reached at 630-837-0800, or prohleder@vbartlett.org.



Bloomington Historical Society—Congratulations to Bonnie Homola who has been named president of the Society. The next BHS event is the Memorial Day Remembrance at the St. Paul Cemetery on Lake Street at 9:30 a.m. on May 26. The ceremony lasts about 45 minutes, and refreshments will be served afterward.

Schaumburg Township Historical Society—Save Sunday, June 22, for the STHS Ice Cream Social to be held at the Sunderlage Farm House from 1 – 3 p.m. Come and see what home made ice cream was like before Oberweis and Dairy Queen. No reservations are required and admission is free.

Addison Historical Society—Jeanette Paradiso and Rick Nielsen brought the AHS Traveling Museum to Lake Park High School March 31. Jeanette ran into our own historian, Joan Beauprez, at “The Basics of Archives”

workshop conducted by the Illinois Association of Museums (IAM) at the Geneva History Center. ~



Some Favorite Memories of David Siems

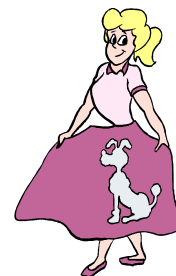
My favorite memories were of the Siems family reunions twice a year. They were held in the big blue house on the corner of Walnut Street and Siems Circle. The one held in the summer was great because we could run around more. The men played horse shoes and softball; the women cooked and gossiped. There was a lot of cold beer and the best part was all the pop (cream soda, grape, orange). We drank all day. At the winter reunion the men played pinochle and the women cooked and gossiped. The kids ran around in the basement and of course drank pop. I looked forward to those times so much. What a wonderful family of eleven brothers and sisters. I loved all my cousins. It was a great innocent time.

One of my favorite memories was getting to ride with my father, Willard “Zip” Siems, for his job. He worked at Warnimont’s Feed Store on Lake Street in Roselle. He would come home for lunch sometimes in the summer. Just before he left to go back to work, I would hide in the back of the truck. He would then drive out to some farm way out somewhere and then I would jump out and say, “Hi.” At first he would be mad, but then he realized we were too far out to take me back right away. Then I would get to ride shotgun in the truck the rest of the way. He was such a hard worker. Warnimont’s eventually went out of business. Jack and Marilyn Warnimont stood up for my dad and mother’s wedding. Jack and Marilyn lived on the corner of Walnut and Roselle Road.



Next Exhibit at Museum

The Fifties Room is approaching completion in early June. Plan to drift back 50-or-so years and be reminded of a simpler time. The exhibit committee has been dusting off artifacts for the past few months and making them look like new (well, almost).



75

Years Ago . . .

by Al Engel

Photos taken July 3, 1933

Donated by Al Engel

Roselle History Museum



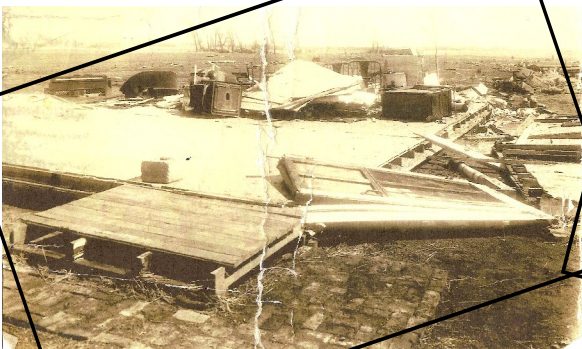
Joe and Katherine Hortik

Did you know about the tornado that ripped down Nerge Road in 1933? It was the night of July 3 when Joe and Katherine Hortik's house exploded. A tornado touched down just west of Plum Grove Road and moved east on Nerge with the Hortiks' house in its path. They and their daughter were in the house when all the walls and furnishings disappeared except for a dresser that had its drawers pulled out. In the morning they found their piano and their horse lying in an open field. Neither the Hortiks nor the horse were seriously injured.

Elinor Hortik Mueller tells us theirs was the only house completely destroyed, but many barns along Nerge were collapsed or gone. Elinor's father grabbed her and ran to the home of neighbor Bill Schmidt during a violent hail storm that followed the tornado and then wrapped Elinor in Schmidt's sister's nightgown. She tells us her father's back was full of welts from the force of the hail.

The storm continued east through Itasca and took down several trees as well as turning a house around on its foundation on Mill Road. This was the only known tornado in the state of Illinois that year.

The



*Ed Piske Farm
East side of Roselle Road
North of Nerge Road*



*Panzer Farm on Meacham Rd
Mrs. Gerschevske, Ruth, Hildegard*



*Panzer Farm
Mrs. Gerschevske,
Ruth, Hildegard*

*Pfingsten Farm
Meacham Road*



*Louie Nerge's Cow
Caught in Debris
Nerge Road*



Nerge Farm

Remembrances of My Years at Trinity Lutheran School

Leroy O. Gieseke, Class of 1937

1929-1937

I must have been in the 5th or 6th grade before I knew that “parochial” meant something besides just “Lutheran,” and that there were other Lutheran church bodies beside the “Lutheran Church Missouri Synod” (LCMS). This was a result of having almost all of my early thinking influenced by our church and school, Trinity Lutheran in Roselle, Illinois (pop. 800). There was no TV at that time, of course, and radio was in its infancy. The religious education was at the “mercy” of the congregation’s minister and parochial school teachers who interpreted the Scriptures “according to the book”; although in those days they didn’t claim to interpret “anything.” They taught it as it was written—verbatim—King James lingo and all.

I entered the school in 1929, just before the stock market crashed (I didn’t do it!).

Neighboring villages of Itasca, Rodenburg, and Schaumburg, each had Lutheran schools and Lutheran churches. So we were surrounded with Lutheranism.

Trinity Lutheran Church had a parochial school which almost all the members’ kids attended. I believe it was built in 1926. I entered the school in 1929, just before the stock market crashed (I didn’t do it!). That school is one of my earliest remembrances. There were two classrooms: the “little room” (grades 1-4), and the “big room” (grades 5-8). It had a full basement with toilets, the coal furnace, two areas for recess play when the weather was inclement, the “back room,” where the teachers spent recess and where the 7th and 8th graders “took confirmation,” and the “upstairs room,” a mysterious room (to us young kids). It was the “upstairs room” where the Young Peoples Society sometimes performed plays, and where the Ladies’ Aid sometimes gave suppers. It was mysterious to us because the door to it was always closed. I know now that they were trying to save coal.

Actually there was an unofficial 9th grade that a few of the children attended if their parents wanted them to have another year of school, and they were not going on to high school. Also a few farm children attended if they belonged to other Lutheran churches that had one-room schools and only went to 6th grade.

There was a playground in the back with a manual merry-go-round and a ball diamond, with pop fous going into Richters’ garden and long flies going into Kruse’s potato patch. The minister’s house was beyond the ball diamond, but a foul fly down the 3rd base side might catch his garden.

As to the merry-go-round, the children on it started a chant which embarrassed me: “Gieseke service don’t get nervous.” We had a hardware store, and I don’t think our service was all that bad! But it might have been good advertising at that.

My first grade teacher was Ruth Koch. It wasn’t long before she married the manager of the local A & P, Martin Kruse. Later on, when Martin quit the A & P, they took over Sunderlage’s general store. I remember they sold Lutheran school texts and supplies. So if you didn’t inherit books from an older brother or sister, you had to buy it from them. I don’t know if there was an official used book market or not. I’m sure there was a “black” used book market. If you were an older brother or sister, you had better not damage the books, this being in the Great Depression. My next older brother was eight years older than me, and I was about eight years older than my younger sister.

They didn’t change texts much in those days. The dog in the first grade “reader” was “Spot,” “See Spot run.”

On Sunday we were expected to be in church. There were two services—the early one was in German, and the other in English, of course. Over the years the attendance at the German service decreased and the English increased. Some of the people went to German whether they understood it or not because it resulted in a longer Sunday!

***They didn’t change texts much in those days.
The dog in the first grade “reader” was
“Spot,” “See Spot run.”***

In the English service, the boy grade-schoolers sat in the second row, with the first row being utilized by the boys when the second row was full. How embarrassing it was to be late and have to sit alone in the front row.

There was no Sunday School, of course. If you didn't get it in five days, you weren't going to get it in six!

The girls got the third row. I don't know if they ever filled their row, as we were not allowed to turn around. I did once—they did.

As for the little room where the minister went during the hymns, we didn't find out what was back there until we were confirmed, and the whole class assembled there before marching into church. Actually, we found out there was nothing there except a chair and a coat hook where the minister hung his robe when he was not "ministering."

There was no Sunday School, of course. If you didn't get it in five days, you weren't going to get it in six!

We started each school day with a hymn and a prayer, although I don't remember what the prayer was. Maybe it was the Apostles' Creed. The Nicene Creed was to come (for us) some years later. At lunch time we stood at our desks and prayed, "Come, Lord Jesus, be our guest, and let thy gifts to us be blest. Amen." Most of us walked home for lunch; we had an hour. We walked through sunshine, rain, heat, or snow. Not ten miles; in a little town of 800 most kids lived only a few blocks from school. The rural pupils brought their lunches. It was a treat when my mother would let me take my lunch, even though we had a ridiculously old lunch pail. I was almost ashamed of it, although it's probably worth a hundred dollars as an antique now.

The lunch hour left us with about 20 minutes for play before "the bell" rang again at 1 o'clock. It was just enough for two innings of our week-long softball game. We started the afternoon session standing at our desks and reciting "O give thanks unto the Lord for He is good, and His mercy endureth forever. Amen." At 4 o'clock we sang another hymn and stood to recite the Lord's Prayer. The most popular hymn was #40 in the old book, "Now the Day is Over."

Every Lutheran school teacher had to learn how to play the piano and organ in teachers' college. Some were better than others. Teacher Binneboese was better than anyone

who taught in the "little room." He also played the church organ. For funerals he had to play also, and so when someone in the congregation died, the kids in that room knew they would get a half day off.

The first lesson of the day was Bible history. I can still picture our text book, as it had many beautiful pictures in it. From that book I saw what Jesus, Mary, Joseph, Joshua, and all the other Biblical personalities looked like. Jesus was a man, but the Holy Ghost was a white pigeon, and God Himself was pictured as usually coming out of a cloud.

After Bible history we had the usual secular lessons—the Three R's. I recall we learned to read by the phonic system. Teacher Kruse had 4 x 6 cards with the various letters and combinations of letters on them.

Al Hoffman was our teacher in grades 2, 3, and 4. He was a bachelor at that time, and all I can remember specifically about him is that he gave the hair on the back of my neck a pull once for an infraction of one sort or another. (Miss Koch would give us a slap on the open hand with a ruler.) We had to obey, or else it was the "back room" to meet Teacher Binneboese (Binny), the principal and teacher of grades 5-8. He meted out the punishments, which included spankings—one at home from your parents if you got one in school.

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C*hristmas Eve Program.* I can't remember many specifics of those early grades, except that Christmas and the end of the school year in June meant school programs for which we had to prepare.

For the Christmas program we practiced carols for many weeks, at least one of which was in German. "Wohin Ihr Kinderlein, Wohin?" Many of the people in the congregation still spoke German, at least "pigeon German," so they had to be placated, or it might show up in their church contributions. There were one or two rehearsals held in the church. The church was not heated during the week, so we froze our little Lutheran buns. Part of the rehearsal's purpose was to get the seating arrangement set so that on Christmas Eve we knew exactly

where to sit. However, being winter, a few always got sick and couldn't attend the program. That caused monumental confusion, especially in the lower grades, as a child didn't know whether to leave a space for the absentee or to "close up the ranks." If a child was merely late instead of sick, and the ranks had been closed up, another wave of confusion would occur. Remember, some of the kids came from farms, and the cows had to be milked twice a day, weekdays or Christmas Eve.

We also had a "piece" to recite. Each pupil, in turn, and interspersed with carols, would march up to the altar and recite his "piece." My first one ended with "... who in a manger lay." I can't remember any more of it, or any subsequent year's "piece."

We had a huge Christmas tree next to the altar. At the end of the program the trustees (vorstehrs?) would pass out big paper bags filled with nuts, hard candy, an apple, and an orange (navel, I think, because it was easy to peel). The teachers would pass out tablets and pencils, and maybe a storybook, depending on Trinity's finances at the time.

End of the School Year Program. For the "end of the school year" program we learned patriotic songs like "My Country 'Tis of Thee." I don't ever remember singing "The Star Spangled Banner" in any of those programs. Maybe neither of the teachers could hit the high note in the second-to-last line of the song.

The program was held in the grove of trees on the south side of the church, on a platform made of 18-inch high A-frame supports with planks laid on them. They were stored in the church basement and only used for that purpose. For seats they made benches out of similar supports and 2 x 12 or 2 x 14 planks—probably 2 x 14, as most of the German fraus would be more comfortable on the wider planks.

When I was ten, my classmates and I were promoted to the "big room" where Teacher Binneboese presided.

There was one other function that utilized the supports and planks. It was the Mission Festival (Missionsfest), held in summer, which meant the school kids didn't have to prepare a program. However, there was pop and candy, and usually some missionary back from somewhere to give a sermon and plead for mission money. My wife tells me that in St. Peter's in Schaumburg, they also had BEER. However, beer and church could not be used in the same

sentence in Roselle. You only drank beer at home or in a tavern where the minister wasn't.

The "Big Room." Incidentally, we didn't use the terms "parish" and "pastor"; we used "congregation" and "minister" and "teacher." We called them Reverend Mehlberg and Teacher Binneboese. The catechism refers to "called ministers." I can remember in years later when the minister made it known that he wanted to be referred to as the "pastor." That was after World War II.

When I was ten, my classmates and I were promoted to the "big room" where Teacher Binneboese presided. Among the little kids, he was someone to be feared. There were eight of us that were together all eight years (I think). There were additions and deletions through the years, but the eight of us were the core of the Class of 1937. There was Juliet Hansing, Irene Lichthardt, "Nettie" Nerge, Ray Rosenwinkle, Harold Binneboese, Harvey Haberkamp, Howard Gronemeier, and me. Juliet got the highest grades because she memorized EVERYTHING.

For the three R's, teacher would call each grade, in turn, to gather around his desk for the lesson. Actually, we had German reading until the 6th grade, and the next year it was mysteriously gone. I could read German well, but Teacher B. never explained what the words meant. I think it was part of his campaign to get rid of teaching German, and he won out!

For reading lessons we had to pay special attention, because when one pupil was finished reading you were supposed to enumerate any mistakes the reader made.

It was in grades 5 to 8 that most of my remembrances are from. We had the same routine of hymns and prayers that we had in the "little room." In addition, we had Bible history on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday, with catechism on Tuesday and Thursday. The 7th and 8th graders had "confirmation" instruction from Reverend Mehlberg in the "back room."

As we neared Palm Sunday, which was the day for confirmation, the 8th graders continued for the final instructions, and the 7th graders rejoined the 5th and 6th graders.

Those were tough times, and our parents were doing the best they could for us. Tuition for the school was voluntary. One year my father was on the committee to go out and collect school money. He was lucky to get a dollar a month from the parents of the children. I believe Teacher Binneboese's salary was \$90 a month at that time. The "little room" teacher got about \$60.

It was in this environment that I received my religious and secular education. It was a very thorough Lutheran education, and we went through the whole procedure several times in eight years. We only had the King James Version at that time, and our instruction followed it word for word. We did a LOT of memorization of Bible verses and hymns. We learned that the entire Lutheran teachings were wrapped up in Luther's catechism. It gave all the answers; in fact, it listed all the questions you dared to ask!

Our catechism was printed in English on one page and German on the facing page. Later editions eliminated the German.

About Creation. That was a big subject in Lutheran schools of that day. We were taught that the earth was a little less than 6,000 years old. Teacher Binneboese said that any Jewish person knew the exact number of years. Well, there were no Jewish people living in Roselle in those days. Teacher used to ridicule stories and reports of dinosaurs. The Old Testament was stressed at least as much as the New Testament. I don't know how Lutheran and Catholic schools handle the subject today, but they would have difficulty denying the previous existence of the brontosaurus and the stegosaurus. Also, how Noah got to the North Pole to pick up a pair of polar bears, and to the South Pole to capture two penguins would be hard to explain to kids these days.

The words "heck," "darn," "gosh," and "gee whiz" were explained as a way of not saying "hell," "damn," "God," and "Jesus Christ," but you still incurred the wrath of God if you used them. . . . we got heck if we said "heck."

P*alm Sunday* was the culmination of eight years of Lutheran school education. All 8th graders were confirmed on that day. On the Friday before, Reverend Mehlberg reviewed all the questions that he would ask the confirmation candidates on Sunday. Meanwhile, in the weeks before Palm Sunday, the parents were busy buying suits with long pants (our first) for the boys and white dresses for the girls. My mother bought me a suit with two pair of pants, one was knickers, and the other was long. Invitations were sent to sponsors, from whom the

confirmands expected great gifts (cash preferred). Also, the menu had to be planned and prepared. I had forgotten who my sponsors were, but my parents reminded me. In later years I recall that they had not checked to see if I had been taught the Ten Commandments, the Lord's Prayer, Creed, etc. Apparently they made an empty promise when I was baptized, or else they had great confidence in my parents and Trinity Lutheran School.


The thing I remember most about the Palm Sunday service was that the grilling in front of the congregation lasted about an hour. I missed one question, but he confirmed me anyway. Some of the dumber kids missed more questions than that.

I don't think my sponsors gave me any cash at all. My parents gave me the customary hymn book with a real imitation leather cover and my name imprinted in real imitation gold letters. I still have mine. In those days the hymnals were printed with the words only—no music.

Also, in connection with confirmation, it was customary to go to Elgin to have our pictures taken. In fact, the whole class went on Monday for the group picture, which meant we didn't have school that day. The proofs came in the mail a week or two later; they were printed in sepia.

T*he rest of the school year* was anti-climactic for the 8th grade. I had already become acquainted with, and made friends with, people my age that went to the public school. I was surprised to find that a few of them were Lutheran who didn't go to our school, and so didn't sit in the second and third pews in church on Sunday, if they came at all. In fact, I was surprised to learn that Mr. Followell, the principal of the public school, taught his 8th graders "algebra." I didn't even know what that was then, but I got a straight "A" in algebra at Glenbard High.

Final exams at Trinity determined who would give the speeches at our graduation. Juliet Hansing, of course, became the valedictorian. I became the salutatorian. Teacher B. wrote all the speeches, but due to stage fright, I forgot the start of mine. I started somewhere in the middle—who knew the difference, except Teacher B.

We didn't get new suits for graduation. After all, this was the Great Depression. 

(Ed. Note: You can read more of Leroy Gieseke's remembrances in *Etched in Time*.)

Historical Evening Reaches Record Attendance

by Susan Spachman

Terry Lynch's informative, interactive presentation on the Underground Railroad was a big hit with the audience at this year's Historical Evening. About 140 people attended the program on April 19 at the Trinity Lutheran Family Life Center. Guests enjoyed the wine and cheese reception before the program and, following the program and Q & A session, happily munched through 14 batches of cookies made from recipes found in *Cherished Recipes*, the heirloom cookbook which will be available around July 2.

Mark your calendar for next year's Historical Evening: Saturday, April 18, 2009, 7:30 p.m., Trinity Lutheran Family Life Center.

Grandma! What a big newsletter you have!

Newsletter after newsletter, we've tried to confine this publication to four pages—with inserts occasionally—because we know your reading time is limited. This issue of the RHM Newsletter is the exception. Although the first few pages are news, the balance of the newsletter is designed for reminiscing and reliving history—when you have some time. Since this year is the 75th anniversary of the tornado that tore through Roselle, we pulled out Al Engel's article and pictures from the "hold" file to commemorate that memorable day. The late Leroy Gieseke's (he passed away a few years ago) remembrances take us back to a time when we were anticipating the end of our own school year. Anyone "into" history will tell you reminiscing is what it's all about. And so, we trust you will include this newsletter with your summer reading and enjoy the trip back in time. Thank you for your positive comments about past newsletters. Your editor.

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Museum Hours

Sundays 2-4 p.m.

Other times by appointment

Meetings are held on the second Saturday at 9 am; everyone is welcome.

Mission Statement

To maintain and enhance a historically accurate museum with primary focus on Roselle and surrounding areas ♦ To collect local facts and artifacts of today that will be our village history and pride tomorrow ♦ To provide a dynamic historical and educational resource for our residents and visitors.

Contact Us

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Yes, I'd like to help the Museum!

Here's my membership contribution to the Roselle Historical Foundation for 2008

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