



Neighborhood News

The Newsletter of The Old Third Ward Association, Inc.
Summer - 2006

www.focal.org/oldthirdward

Linda Muldoon - Editor

The Riverfront—A Progress Report

On July 26, consultants with R. A. Smith & Associates made recommendations for Jones Park, the WE Energies land, and the water plant land. Their recommendations were based on comments from many in all parts of the city, from the Historic Preservation Commission, and, of course, from the OTW neighborhood. Overwhelmingly, the suggestions asked that the river front land be kept in public hands and that it become an "active" park. The consultants recommended just this (their Plan B), and in so doing they eliminated the plan to create private commercial and residential development.

As a neighborhood organization, the OTW has been suggesting an active park and public ownership of this land. Last November, our Board of Directors met with Aldermen, the Administrator of the Locks, representatives of the Trails Committee, and a representative of East Central Planning to work with them to create a picture of what this space could be. Before we could

take action, the City hired RA Smith as consultants. We contacted the consultants in March to be sure that the neighborhood would have a voice.

The consultants have seemed interested in our comments and have themselves been leaning toward natural plantings, history, wildlife, and accessibility. One suggestion in particular seems to

have caught their attention. A number of years ago, some neighbors came to the OTW and wanted to plant a flowering tree in memory of someone who had lived all her life in the neighborhood. At that time we asked Bill Lecker, head of the Park Department about the idea but nothing happened in response, perhaps in

Cont. on page 4



P. T. Barnum on State Street

The Germans and the Irish

One of the first questions newcomers ask about the OTW concerns the close proximity of two Catholic churches. One early resident of the neighborhood, Tom Mullen, said the reason for the two churches is that "The Germans thought the Irish had too much fun." This answer is, of course, too simple.

St. Mary's came first. Not the same building that exists today, but the parish existed first. The influx of Irish settlers arrived earlier than the German immigrants. For many years, Adam Mertes (whose house exists at 601-603 S. Walnut) was the lone German Catholic, was a member of St. Mary's, and held mass in his home before a church was built. He later went on to help plan St. Joseph's Church.

In 1867, The German-speaking parishioners of St. Mary met to consider forming a congregation of their own so that they could hear the sermons in German and have their children taught in German. They petitioned the Bishop to sanction a new parish and this was granted in March of 1867.

The Irish, meanwhile, had become angry because they blamed the Bishop for replacing the English-speaking and Irish Father Dael with the Rev. Wilkins whose "use of the English language left something to be desired and his interests seemed to lie in organizing the German parish."

The year 1868 was an angry one, "ending in a suit against the Bishop, recrimination on both sides and even locking a new priest out of the church." The Irish claimed that the Rev. Wilkens refused positively to attend to sick calls except for the Germans, that he refused to baptize children unless they were children of Germans, and that he refused all English instruction to children.

Eventually, St. Mary's paid the German members \$3000. With this they found land on Lawrence St. By December of 1868, St. Joseph parish had a church and a priest. For years, it was known as the German-Catholic Church and St. Mary's was the Irish. (Quotations from Lillian Mackesy in the Post Crescent.)

From the Editor

First, I would like to apologize for not producing more newsletters and in doing so keeping the neighborhood informed of events unfolding on the riverfront. Many of you who are new to the neighborhood might not have known we publish a news-

letter. Even so, I will try to keep up.

Speaking of communication, our website is now functioning: www.focal.org/oldthirdward.

We will use the website for communication and information. We would welcome your suggestions.

Also, newcomers may request

old newsletters and an OTW Walking Tour Map by calling 739-5762.

Once again the planters around the area look great thanks to Kerstin Danielson, Bill Anderson, and Jim Long.

DON'T FORGET THE PICNIC IN JONES PARK ON SUN., AUG.20.



Be a Friend of the Old Third Ward Neighborhood Association, Incorporated

The Old Third Ward is a volunteer organization dedicated to maintaining communication within the neighborhood, to researching the rich history of one of Appleton's oldest neighborhoods, and to being a part of political decision making with regard to the neighborhood's vitality.



Name: _____
Address: _____
City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____
Phone: _____

I would like to volunteer _____ (state your interest)

Address checks and correspondence to: Old Third Ward, P. O. Box 2574, Appleton, Wisconsin 54913-2574

Chief Prim

"Chief Prim, Chief Prim, sat on a pin. How many inches did it go in?" And so, according to the jump rope rhyme of the day, the Chief would then be punished in direct proportion to the number of successful jumps to follow. (Rhyme was supplied by Germaine Stoeger.) George T. Prim was Appleton's Police Chief from 1917 through 1942. Every long-time resident of the city, over a certain age, seems to have some story about Chief Prim.

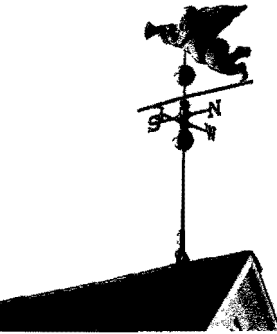
The OTW neighborhood has been home to many of Appleton's police officers. When Michael Garvey (411 S. State St.) resigned as Chief after 20 years as an officer and 20 years as chief, the city appointed George Prim of Chicago as its new chief. Patrick Vaughn (419 S. State St.) acted as interim Chief until Prim could arrive in Appleton. According to the Appleton Evening Crescent of July 16, 1917, "Chief of Police George T. Prim had two welcome visitors Saturday who will remain with him until tomorrow when they will return to Chicago. They are his wife and daughter Miss Helen. Mrs. Prim came to visit her husband and also to look around for an available residence for the Prim family. Mrs. Prim, according to the chief, is very much charmed with Appleton and is delighted at the idea of making her home in such a beautiful city." The Prim family found a home at 517 S. Elm St. and remained there for twelve years. By 1930, he lived at 727 E. Col-

lege and by 1938 he and his wife lived in an apartment at St. Elizabeth's Hospital.

The image most citizens had of Chief Prim was of a dignified man in full uniform, ramrod straight, with white hair and well-trimmed white whiskers, who sat upon a large horse at the head a parade. While in Chicago, Prim performed many of his duties as a mounted policeman. He was a first sergeant of the first mounted police platoon Chicago had. When he arrived in Appleton, his fellow officers, not knowing of his experience as a horseman, arranged to have him lead a procession while on horseback, thinking that they would fluster the Chief. Instead, the Chief proved a natural and led most processions, thereafter, on his horse. His horse was stabled in the building on S. Oneida St. that is painted green (ServPro).



Chief Prim



Angel on State Street

Many people said he was fond of children and liked to stop and talk to them. He lived to be 87 years old. A parade of seven motorcycle police and a marching group of thirty or more police led the way to his funeral at St. Mary's Church.

During his early days in Chicago, Chief Prim was assigned to Cottage Grove Ave (1888). At this time the area was considered the Gold Coast. By 1893 he was transferred to the stockyards district where he was involved in putting down the stockyard strikes and by 1904 he was on special duty during the teamsters' strike. Strikes at this time were violent affairs and the favorite form of argument was by means of sticks and stones.

One story told by many folk involves the notorious "Sunset Law". It was suggested by many that Chief Prim was the source of an unwritten "law" that the sun should not set on a black person in Appleton. Visitors, including famous visitors such as Marian Anderson, had to find lodging elsewhere. If Prim was the source, and he resigned in 1942, then others certainly must have carried on the tradition.

The Germans and the Irish

One of the first questions newcomers ask about the OTW concerns the close proximity of two Catholic churches. One early resident of the neighborhood, Tom Mullen, said the reason for the two churches is that "The Germans thought the Irish had too much fun." This answer is, of course, too simple.

St. Mary's came first. Not the same building that exists today, but the parish existed first. The influx of Irish settlers arrived earlier than the German immigrants. For many years, Adam Mertes (whose house exists at 601-603 S. Walnut) was the lone German Catholic, was a member of St. Mary's, and held mass in his home before a church was built. He later went on to help plan St. Joseph's Church.

In 1867, The German-speaking parishioners of St. Mary met to consider forming a congregation of their own so that they could hear the sermons in German and have their children taught in German. They petitioned the Bishop to sanction a new parish and this was granted in March of 1867.

The Irish, meanwhile, had become angry because they blamed the Bishop for replacing the English-speaking and Irish Father Dael with the Rev. Wilkins whose "use of the English language left something to be desired and his interests seemed to lie in organizing the German parish."

The year 1868 was an angry one, "ending in a suit against the Bishop, recrimination on both sides and even locking a new priest out of the church." The Irish claimed that the Rev. Wilkens refused positively to attend to sick calls except for the Germans, that he refused to baptize children unless they were children of Germans, and that he refused all English instruction to children.

Eventually, St. Mary's paid the German members \$3000. With this they found land on Lawrence St. By December of 1868, St. Joseph parish had a church and a priest. For years, it was known as the German-Catholic Church and St. Mary's was the Irish. (Quotations from Lillian Mackesy in the Post Crescent.)

From the Editor

First, I would like to apologize for not producing more newsletters and in doing so keeping the neighborhood informed of events unfolding on the riverfront. Many of you who are new to the neighborhood might not have known we publish a news-

letter. Even so, I will try to keep up.

Speaking of communication, our website is now functioning: www.focal.org/oldthirdward. We will use the website for communication and information. We would welcome your suggestions.

Also, newcomers may request

old newsletters and an OTW Walking Tour Map by calling 739-5762.

Once again the planters around the area look great thanks to Kerstin Danielson, Bill Anderson, and Jim Long.

DON'T FORGET THE PICNIC IN JONES PARK ON SUN., AUG.20.

Be a Friend of the Old Third Ward Neighborhood Association, Incorporated



The Old Third Ward is a volunteer organization dedicated to maintaining communication within the neighborhood, to researching the rich history of one of Appleton's oldest neighborhoods, and to being a part of political decision making with regard to the neighborhoods vitality.



Name: _____
Address: _____
City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____
Phone: _____

I would like to volunteer _____ (state your interest)

Address checks and correspondence to: Old Third Ward, P. O. Box 2574, Appleton, Wisconsin 54913-2574

Appleton's Historic

OLD THIRD WARD

Neighborhood Picnic

Sunday, August 20

3 - 6 p.m.

Jones Park

Hot Dogs & Brats
grilled by



Bring Your Own Lawn Chairs,
Blankets, Cooler of Beverages
and a Dish to Pass

Questions? Call Kerstin @ 733-8323

Parking on Lawrence St. or Under Skyline Bridge

Come Meet Your Neighbors!

Help Keep the Old Third Ward Vibrant and Safe!