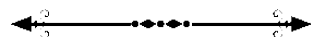


OTW Neighborhood Picnic



A record number of neighbors turned out for the OTW picnic on Sunday, August 30. We thank everyone who brought some delicious food and stayed to visit. As one OTW resident commented, “Yellow jackets down, attendance up.”



Our Friends at Hearthstone are again hosting *Haunted Hearthstone*, Fridays in October from 6-8-p.m. This is a family-friendly event, with no jumping-out at people and no maimed bodies. But there are scary scenarios so it may not be suitable for children under 8. Admission is \$10, free to members of the Friends of Hearthstone.
<http://www.hearthstonemuseum.org>



What’s happening with the Jackman St. bridge? We have been told it will be November at the earliest until it’s done. At least the W. Prospect Ave. and S. Oneida St. intersection is open. What do you think of the new bikes lanes? Traffic Engineering is under the direction of the City Traffic Engineer Eric Lom, eric.lom@appleton.org.



Neighborhood News

The Newsletter of the Old Third Ward Neighborhood Association, Inc.

Fall - 2015

A Long-Lasting Love Story



433 W. Prospect Ave.

The houses still stand just a few blocks apart: 433 W. Prospect (the home of Theodore and Cynthia Conkey) and 905 S. Memorial (the home of their eldest daughter Alice Conkey and Alexander Reid.)

Theodore Conkey was an early surveyor and a well-known and influential founder of Appleton. He named the county, donated land for the Courthouse, and served as a state senator and in the assembly. He built his home on the bluff at the end of Walnut Street and brought his family there in 1850.

During the Civil War, Colonel Conkey was stationed on the western front. For two years Cynthia accompanied him. Theodore had taught her to ride a horse and she was with him as he chased Quantrill’s Raiders. It was said she spent many a night under the stars with her head on her saddle.

Their daughter Alice, the oldest of three children, was described as a brilliant child: “Her mental processes were marked by strong originality.” Alice was not only a classical scholar and Victorian poet, she was a whiz at math! She graduated from Lawrence University in 1868 at the age of 17. Alice went on to Vassar for a second degree and then became a professor of mathematics at Northwestern University. She was enthusiastic about assisting a professor at the Chicago Observatory and she told her friends about the power of the problems of astronomy to kindle her imagination. As if these accomplishments were not enough, she also became the editor of the Chicago Post & Mail and a correspondent for several east coast magazines.

While studying at Lawrence she met Alexander Reid. Born in New York of Irish parents in 1846, he came to Wisconsin with his family in 1862. He grew up near Oconomowoc where he and his brother started a newspaper. In 1867 Alexander moved to Appleton to attend Lawrence. By 1869 he had purchased the Appleton Post newspaper. His shop printed the city’s first directory in 1874.

Alice and Alex had a few things in common. They both loved to read and write, and both were passionate about fighting for their beliefs. But Alice was a wealthy “town belle,” the headstrong daughter of an important Democratic businessman, and Alex was a teasing Irishman who decided to work his way through college by buying Appleton’s Republican newspaper.

Alice Conkey and Alexander Reid were married at Grace Episcopal Church in Appleton on January 4, 1875. The wedding was described in the Appleton Post as “THE GREAT EVENT” “Brilliancy, Bloom, Beauty.” The report of the wedding filled several newspaper columns including a description of the wedding party participants and clothing, and the wedding gifts along with the names of the givers.

“Ah, they come! A flutter of laces and Tarleton, a gleam of silk – expectation beamed in every eye – the organ in ecstasy of merry/rippling delight, joining in unison with the happy hearts, beating joyous welcome to the glad occasion and filling the house with harmonies of sweet sounds – fit type of sympathetic paean to the coming consummation of feminine grace and manly talent.”
 “In a few moments the bride and her train had swept past ... Silver Bells sounded in the distance, beating soft music on the stillness of the frosty night, and away sped the party to the palatial residence of the bride’s parents.”
 “The bridal party then repaired to the residence of the bride’s parents in the Third Ward [433 W. Prospect Ave.], where the most brilliant gathering of the elite of Appleton, Neenah, Menasha, Fond du Lac and other places, thronged and filled the house ... In other words, notwithstanding the terrible cold of Monday night, the crush was sardine-like, even in the spacious mansion ‘on the hill,’ over two hundred guests being present. The reception rooms were trimmed with rare house plants from Mr. Conkey’s prolific conservatory ... and the air was redolent with tropical perfumes. The whole house seemed to shake itself with merry laughter in its endeavor to join in the general good cheer of the hour.”

(Note: The current house is smaller than the original. Wings on either side of the building have since been removed.)

The story of Alice and Alex will continue in the next OTW newsletter: their new house, adventures, and the origin of Alicia Park.

Old Third Ward Neighborhood Association
 P. O. Box 2574
 Appleton, Wisconsin 54913-2574

The OTW and Black History

Currently the History Museum at the Castle is exhibiting *A Stone of Hope: Black Experiences in the Fox Cities*, a traveling pop-up exhibit about the history of Blacks in Appleton and the surrounding area. Recently the exhibit won an award from the American Association of State and Local History. The newsletter will publish ongoing articles about African Americans in the Old Third Ward. See the exhibit's stops: <http://www.myhistorymuseum.org/a-stone-of-hope.html>

William Sylvester Cleggett

[All of the quotes in this article were taken from William Cleggett's Civil War pension applications and are primarily his own words.]



Cleggett's barber shop, ca. 1874 (first floor, far right) on College Ave. where the Zuelke building now stands. Image courtesy of the History Museum at the Castle. Used with permission.

William S. Cleggett was born a free man in Columbia, Pa. in November of 1833. His father, also named William, was a contemporary of Frederick Douglass and was born a slave on the same plantation on Maryland's eastern shore where Douglass was born.

The younger William and his wife Rebecca moved from Columbia and settled in Stevens Point, Wis. on August 11, 1856. He immediately set up a barber shop on Main St. In December, 1861 he volunteered his service with 8th Battery Wisconsin Volunteer Light Artillery "to free my Brothers from Slavery" and was made a mess cook. At that time African Americans were not permitted to officially enlist, but William was told he "was as good as a mustered in soldier entitled to pay." Having not been paid for several months, he returned to Stevens Point and in May of 1862 the family moved to Appleton.

William and Rebecca joined the Baptist Church and each opened a business on College Ave.: William, a barber shop and Rebecca, a hairdressing salon. Later they purchased a home on the southeast corner of State and Sixth streets in the Third Ward. During their time in Wisconsin William and Rebecca welcomed nieces and a nephew into their home to live with them, their three daughters and two granddaughters.

In 1907 William applied for his Civil War pension for the first time and was immediately rejected "on the grounds that the reports from the records of the War Department fail to show that you served in the 8 Battery. Wis. Vol. L. A. as alleged." William re-applied periodically for the

I did not carry a musket - but did carry cooking utensils & braved all the perils as the rest of my comrades.

An excerpt from William S. Cleggett's Civil War pension application: "I did not carry a musket - but did carry cooking utensils & braved all the perils as the rest of my comrades."

next seven years, always providing his own recollections along with sworn affidavits to prove he was with the outfit. But the fact that he had not officially enlisted doomed his efforts. Ironically, his final resting place in Appleton's Riverside Cemetery is directly across the road from the monument to the Appleton chapter of the Grand Army of the Republic.

William S. Cleggett's obituary in the Monday, May 22, 1916 issue of the Oshkosh Daily Northwestern stated he was "the only Negro in Appleton." While this was not the case, by 1916 the African American population in Appleton had dwindled to almost zero.

Keep informed about what's going on in the Old Third Ward:

- Event calendar: http://www.focol.org/oldthirdward/event_calendar.html (includes Hearthstone events)
- Website: <http://www.oldthirdward.org>
- Join the Appleton Old Third Ward public group on Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/39288947086/> or email us: oldthirdward@focol.org



Contact Your Neighborhood PRO with any Real Estate question!

Donald Elston



523 S. State Street
TRIPLEX with great Cash Flow. This is a great investment. Plenty of updates. Long-term leases in place. On the National Register of Historic Places. \$200000 Call Me today!

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- Buying? I can show you any property in The Valley
- Go to DonaldElston.com from a smart phone or mobile device for a FREE App to search for properties near you

KW FOX CITIES
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County Expansion Update

We have been assured by the County that no houses are in play during the present discussions of expansion. A faction of the County Board is pushing for the Sheriff's Department to move near Highway 41. This, however, would free up only 11% of what the County needs. The plan which has been voted on so far calls for office space and a parking ramp in the current parking lot. The parking ramp has been separated from the plan to stand on its own. The need for parking has been acknowledged by the County study.

Contact our Outagamie County Supervisor, Katrin Patience (katrin.patience@gmail.com, (920) 202-3767), and let her know your opinion about the County expansion plans. The County's Board meeting agendas and minutes are posted: <http://www.outagamie.org/index.aspx?page=1397>

Exhibition Center

The City has until Nov. 30 to finalize the agreements for the Expo Center land sale. That's the final day listed on a property agreement between Outagamie County and the city. Nine separate municipalities, including the Town of Grand Chute, would fund the hotel through hotel room tax.

Our representative on City Council is Patti Coenen, City of Appleton Alderperson, District 11, patti.coenen@gmail.com, (920) 378-8429.