



# URBANDALE HISTORICAL SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

4010 70<sup>TH</sup> STREET  
URBANDALE, IA 50322  
(515) 270-2917

www.urbandalehistoricalsociety.org



## Winter 2019

### Upcoming Programs

#### Soup Supper/Potluck (January 7)

Start 2019 by attending the traditional soup supper/potluck at the Olmsted-Urban House **January 7 at 6 p.m.** Long-time president Madeline Kaloides started the tradition many years ago by preparing a beef meat stock base for the soup. Members then bring a can of soup or a container of cooked vegetables to add. There is no recipe, but the results are always delicious. Bring some other food item to share and your own table service.



Those who do not wish to Some for the supper should arrive at **7 p.m.** for the regular meeting. Ed Morrow, who has presented several programs based on items he has collected, will give a mystery program, "Enigma". He will display vintage items form the early part of last century that will not labeled. Can you guess what they are and how they have been used?

This should be an entertaining program.

#### Capt. Edward Fleur (February 4)



How many times have you driven on Fleur Drive on the southside of Des Moines? The namesake for this busy street is Captain Edward O. Fleur.

At the meeting **Monday, Feb. 4 at 7 pm.** we will have an opportunity to learn about this World War I hero.

Torn Clegg, author and historian will appear in proper uniform to tell about Capt. Fleur who died in France as a result of a gas attack on troops fighting

in the spring of 1918. His tombstone in Woodland Cemetery lists

*Edward O. Fleur 1874-1918  
Machine Gun Co. 168th Infantry 42nd Division*

You do not have to be a member of the Historical Society to attend meetings. Invite your friends, especially veterans and those interested in history to come with you.



### Meeting cancellations

Historical Society meetings are scheduled for the first Monday in February and March but there is always a possibility that weather will cause cancellation. If it is announced that the local schools are closed and other community events are being cancelled you can assume the Society will not be meeting. Sometimes the weather conditions change during the day and the answering machine message at the Olmsted-Urban House may not be correct. President Norm Huitt will make the decision if a meeting is to be cancelled. If you have questions call his home 276-1443 or Virginia Gee 276-0222. A cancelled meeting will not be held at another date in the month.

### Historical Society Christmas Open House



Since the Historical Society purchased the Olmsted-House in 1987 the public has been welcomed to a Holiday event the first Sunday in December. This year the tradition continued.

The House was decorated inside and out. Special vintage items included the small goose feather tree with fragile glass ornaments, a complete nativity set made in Italy, red cellophane wreaths in the windows and the large tree bedecked with countless ornaments and tinsel. Children and "children at heart" enjoyed looking at the special display of metal cars, trucks and trains from Norm Huitt's collection. A table display featured the story of St. Nicholas. A visit by Santa (Jeff Couch) was a treat to all.



Thanks to several generous members visitors were treated to a variety of decorated cookies. Green sherbet punch was

served as a special treat. Music was supplied by guest pianist Amelia Hammond.



If you missed this special event plan now to join us next December 1 (2019). It's a great way to start the holiday season.



Special thank you to all the Ladies, and Norm, for the decorations.

---

### February Open House

Do you have some questions about some aspect of Urbandale history? The Olmsted-Urban House will be open **Sunday, Feb. 3 from 2-4 pm**. Members will be on hand to help you look through some of the historic clippings, maps and photos that are being preserved.

There is a collection of Urbandale High School yearbooks dating back to 1955 and copies of the Blue Jay Chatter school paper for some early years.

There is a copy machine available if there are some page you would like to make a copy of.

You are encouraged to bring any items to share that could be copied to add to our files.

---

### Learn About Urbandale's History

The stated purpose of the Urbandale Historical Society is to collect, preserve and maintain historical memorabilia of

Urbandale. The objectives of the Society are to educate and make available to all people information pertinent to the development and growth of the area immediately surrounding and including the city of Urbandale, Polk County and Iowa.

The information collected about Urbandale is basically preserved at the Olmsted-Urban House, 4010 70th St. There is no official publication. Because the Historical Society members are all volunteer, there is no paid staff to have the House open on a regular basis. If you have some special question or have some photos or other materials you would like to share call the Society at 270-2917 and leave a message on the answering machine.

You can also get in touch with the Society by e-mail: [info@urbandalehistoricalsociety.org](mailto:info@urbandalehistoricalsociety.org)

Another basic source of historical information is the Society website:

[www.urbandalehistoricalsociety.org](http://www.urbandalehistoricalsociety.org)

This gives you a way to view information on your computer at home. Go in on the category City History and you will find links to articles such as the history of the streetcars, Urbandale public library, Urbandale Lions Club, Lions Park, Urbandale Police Department and McDivitt Grove Cemetery.

For even more information, go in on the category of Newsletter. Since 2010 the newsletters sent to members and friends of the Society have been scanned and can be viewed in their entirety. A collection of the newsletters is also in the vertical file at the Urbandale Public Library along with other interesting information regarding the history of Urbandale.

---

### Urbandale Citizen of the Year

Urbandale Chamber of Commerce has a history of annually honoring an Urbandale resident as Citizen of the Year. Pat Finnerty, an Historical Society Board Member was recognized at the Chambers *Sample Urbandale, a Celebration of Business Event* this past November.

The Citizen of the Year may be just a resident, a business owner, or someone affiliated with a business in Urbandale. Involvement in a variety of civic activities is a primary consideration. Over 50 persons have been honored over the decades.

Barney Wilder, pharmacist was the first recipient honored in 1965 for his many contributions to the welfare of Urbandale residents. Recognition of his accomplishments gives an insight into what was important to the growing community of over 6,000 people in the 1960's. Wilder sponsored training programs for student pharmacists, worked with the Urbandale Booster Club and Lions Club, furnished resuscitation equipment for the expanding volunteer fire department, gave gifts to new mothers and their babies, and furnished three television sets for shut-ins.

## Urbandale Chamber Hall of Fame

Iyleene Lemon in 1971 was the first woman to receive the award. She had served on the City Council, helped bring the first Library/City Hall to a vote of the people, served on the Library Board for 10 years and even promoted tennis courts at Lions Park. She was acknowledged for helping organize the City Hostess Plan to welcome newcomers to Urbandale. During her years she estimated her calls on newcomers had totaled over 4,000. She was also well known for her work with advertising sales for the hometown newspaper *Urbandale News* for many years. Over the decades Iyleene has continued her interest in the community and even now is a supporter of the Downtown Neighborhood Association and the Urbandale Historical Society.

Many former *Citizen of the Year* winners have continued work for Urbandale in a variety of ways at City departments, appointments to Boards, serving City Council term and taking active roles with many civic organizations.

Over the 50 years some of those honored have passed away but some names still familiar include: Marilyn Kollmorgen, Mike Carver, George Long, Don Avaux, Don Brush, E.J. Giovannetti, Bill Lawson, Ron Cross, Steve Lytle, Phil Noah, Bob Simon, Greg Robinson, Al Kuduce, Al Cross, Mark Courter, John Forbes, Mary Polson, Sheila Twaroski, Bruce Bernard, Larry Jablonski, Monte Halferty, Rodger Curnow, and last year's recipient Betty Devine. It is not surprising that many have been long-time members of the Historical Society.

Now, following the tradition of service to the community is 2018 Citizen of the Year Pat Finnerty. Pat and his wife Marilyn came to Urbandale in 1983 and he soon became a dedicated volunteer in the community. He coached UGRA girls' softball in the late 80's and early 90's and served on the School Districts Board of Directors for over 12 years, including six years as president. Pat has served the City through membership on the Beautification Committee, Community Action Council and Senior Center Advisory Board. He participated in the Urbandale Citizens Police Academy, was president of Lions Club and is active in St. Pius Catholic Church where he served on the Parish Council. Pat is a retired Professor Emeritus of Des Moines University. With a long-time interest in history in recent years he was named to the Board of the Urbandale Historical Society. In addition to helping with Buildings and Grounds, he has taken active leadership in the areas of membership, newsletter preparation, computerized organization of community information and planning for the electronic preservation of Historical Society records.

A brick with his name will be placed with other honorees in the Walk of History that leads up to the Olmsted-Urban House.

---

A unique honor was given to Historical Society Board Member Virginia Gee when she was named to the Urbandale Chamber Hall of Fame at a recent Chamber event this past November.

Not automatically awarded annually, this recognizes people who have made a long-time contribution to the community. Previous winners have included city officials, school administrators, Chamber leaders and notable achievers. Virginia commented that "she was honored to represent the ordinary citizens who volunteer to serve the community in many ways."

Starting in 2000 the recipients have been Leonard Eichaker, Sue Mears, Shar Pardubsky, Wayne Robbins, Marilyn Kollmorgen, Julie Kroll, E. J. Giovannetti, Dick Christian, Bob Layton, Brad Zaun, Jack Gooding, Larry Jablonski, Mark Nagel, Greg Robinson, Don and Kathryn Brush, Bill Lawson, Scott Raecker, Greg Edwards, Robert Andeweg and Officer Justin Martin.

Virginia and her husband Don moved to Urbandale in 1969. When daughter Lorrie started school across the street at Jensen Elementary Virginia began her many years of school related volunteerism with the newly formed Jensen School PTO on up to the formation of the Urbandale High School Performing Arts Booster Club. She worked for the Urbandale School District to expand the Adult Education Program. She was employed for many years at the Urbandale Library when it was located on Aurora and for 10 more years at the 86th Street location.

She has been a long-time member of Aldersgate United Methodist Church, Lioness Club, Senior Center activities and just completed three years as president of the Urbandale Garden Club. Through the years she has served on a variety of City committees and most recently the Urbandale Centennial Committee.

But, Virginia feels her greatest contribution has been her volunteer work for over 30 years with the Historical Society. She has held a variety of Board positions related to acquisitions and upkeep of the Olmsted-Urban House but her main focus has been on local history, collecting and organizing a variety of materials and doing research for the newsletters and the website.

For the past year Virginia has contributed articles for the URBANDALE LIVING magazine that is delivered monthly to residents in Urbandale. Some of the topics have been Early Holiday Celebrations, History of Rider Corner, Urbandale Mayors in the First 25 Years, Public Gardens, Water Shortage of 1935, Fourth of July Celebrations and the Urbandale Fire Department.

Following the tradition of the long-time Society president Madeline Kaloides, Virginia has become a spokesperson for

the Society presenting programs for club and community meetings and school groups. For these many years of service to the community she has been named to the Urbandale Hall of Fame.

---

### **Endow Urbandale Grant**

The Urbandale community foundation, **Endow Urbandale**, graciously honored the Urbandale Historical Society with a substantial grant this past November that will be used for sidewalk repair work at the Olmsted-Urban house property. We are very grateful for their support.

---

### **Urbandale Volunteer Fair**

The Urbandale Public Library is sponsoring their 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Community Volunteer Fair on Monday, January 21 from 6:30–7:30 pm at the Library. The Urbandale Historical Society is planning to participate.

---

### **New Members**

Bryan & Caron Osberg  
4208 Melanie Dr.  
Urbandale, IA 50322  
515-778-0684

### **Address Changes**

Bob & Marilyn Kollmorgen  
9225 Cascade Ave.  
Apt. #2426  
West Des Moines, IA 50323  
515-240-5171

Sharrie McKinney  
604 Hillcrest Ave. #101  
Indianola, IA 50125  
515-210-1644

William & Janet Lawson  
4210 Hickman Dr.  
Des Moines, IA

---

### **Membership Renewal**

This is the time of year when we all look to making Resolutions for the coming year to ‘improve’ ourselves and the world. While there is only so much we can do for the world there are some things we can do to promote the Urbandale Historical Society and our mission of the Society.

To that end we would encourage all of you to please seriously consider renewing your membership in the Historical Society. As well, please talk to your neighbors, friends and family

about their becoming involved with the Society.

As we look to the coming year, we also need to mention that a good many of us who are actively engaged in the operation of this all-volunteer organization are getting older and between age and health, we need to encourage more people to become active and engaged participants in the Society. To that end the Board is looking at developing a committee structure to provide opportunities for more of our membership to be engaged in the various activities of the Society.

We are exploring having six active committees composed of members focusing on specific aspects of our organization. The proposed committees and their responsibilities could be:

1. **PROGRAMS AND TRIPS**
  - a. Identify and plan topics and speakers for our monthly program meetings.
  - b. Identify and plan trips and tours to offer our membership and community to locales of interest.
2. **REFRESHMENTS**
  - a. Plan and coordinate providing refreshments for our monthly program meetings.
  - b. Plan and coordinate providing refreshments for our special events (Ice Cream Social and Christmas Open House).
3. **BUILDINGS/GROUNDS/HOUSE MAINTENANCE**
  - a. Provide light maintenance work around the house and grounds to maintain the house in good working order.
  - b. Put up and take down outside Christmas decorations
  - c. Provide advice and assistance in projects for the Building and grounds of the facility.
  - d. Light housecleaning.
4. **RECORDS AND HISTORY**
  - a. Light office work in maintaining the records and inventory of the membership rolls, materials and holdings of the Society.
  - b. Provide assistance with developing and cataloging the materials in an electronic fashion.
  - c. Develop and disseminate the quarterly newsletter and other communications of the Society including the website.
  - d. Provide assistance with the Acquisitions and Restorations of materials.
5. **OPEN HOUSES AND TOURS**
  - a. Provide assistance with the monthly Open houses and special tours.
6. **SPECIAL EVENTS AND PROJECTS**
  - a. Provide and coordinate for the special events: Ice Cream Social and Christmas Open House.
  - b. Provide and develop ideas for other special events or projects.
7. **PUBLICITY**
  - a. Develop and disseminate publicity items to local venues to promote the Society and its events.

This is only a proposed structure, but it describes our thinking of developing an organizational structure which would provide more opportunities for our membership to become

active and engaged participants in the Urbandale Historical Society. We hope that this will provide us with greater visibility and to grow as a vital organization. So, as you complete your renewal form, please consider sharing your talents with us by checking one or more of the interest boxes on the form.

### URBANDALE HISTORICAL SOCIETY MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL

Membership is on a calendar year: Jan. 1 to Dec. 31  
Contributions are tax deductible.

- |   |   |  |
|---|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Supporting: \$25 | <input type="checkbox"/> Patron: \$100            | <input type="checkbox"/> Name on permanent plaque: \$1,000 and |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Sustaining: \$50 | <input type="checkbox"/> Benefactor: \$500 and up | <input type="checkbox"/> Other                                 |

*Special Gifts – Memorials are appreciated*

Name: _____	Spouse: _____
Address: _____	Phone: _____
City: _____	State: _____ Zip _____
e-mail: _____	

Please indicate your interests below:

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Buildings/Grounds/House Maintenance<br><input type="checkbox"/> House-keeping<br><input type="checkbox"/> Ice Cream Social<br><input type="checkbox"/> Publicity<br><input type="checkbox"/> Refreshments<br><input type="checkbox"/> Special Proj / Events<br><input type="checkbox"/> Tour Guides<br><input type="checkbox"/> Collecting / Preserving Hx / Historian | <input type="checkbox"/> Finance<br><input type="checkbox"/> Gardening<br><input type="checkbox"/> Membership<br><input type="checkbox"/> Programs<br><input type="checkbox"/> Records/Office work<br><input type="checkbox"/> Restoration / Acquisitions<br><input type="checkbox"/> Trips<br><input type="checkbox"/> Other talents (please specify) |
|---|--|

\_\_\_\_\_ Have Urbandale information, photographs or memorabilia to donate or lend for copying.

Send Completed for to: URBANDALE HISTORICAL SOCIETY  
4010 70<sup>th</sup> Street Urbandale, IA 50322-2616

**Urbandale Historical Society**  
**4010 70<sup>th</sup> Street**  
**Urbandale, IA 50322**