

CTPA Quarterly Meeting

March 13, 2013.....or Three Thirteen Thirteen

at Lawry's

69 people attended the second quarterly meeting of 2013 at Lawry's and enjoyed a little food and time to visit before the meeting began at 6:00pm. There were three "no shows" one walk in.

Before introducing our speaker of the evening – Julia Bachrach -- CTPA president Donna Primas made remarks as follows:

- The annual directory was distributed as people entered the meeting; those who were not in attendance will receive their package by mail. Included this year thanks to Associate Member Amanda Scotese (Chicago Detours) is a copy of a pedway map. Dates for currently scheduled upcoming events and for certification training are published.
- More members are acquiring the individual liability insurance made available as a group policy by the National Federation of Tourist Guides Assn.-USA (NFTGA).
- In the news: Changes made to membership in the relatively new "Choose Chicago" organization set up to promote tourism in the City. Formerly, the cost to join was prohibitive for a group like ours (over \$900). Now, there are many categories of membership from individual to group, with reasonable cost. It was decided at the CTPA Board meeting earlier in the day that CPTA will join as a group at the \$99/year level under the category of "Meeting and Event Supplier." Individual CTPA tour guide members can also join for \$99/year, under the "Tours and Attractions" category. Donna will send an email to the membership explaining this more fully.
- CTPA will be developing a "mobile version" of our website, making the information more user friendly when using smart phones.
- To hopefully have a holiday party in 2013, Donna indicated a committee will be formed to work on making it happen. Volunteers are also invited to participate in the planning of CTPA tours, lectures and events with Al Walavich and Sharon Sylvester who co-chair the Programs and Education Committee.
- In January 2015, the World Federation of Tourist Guides Assns. (WFTGA) biennial (every two year) meeting will be held in Prague hosted by the Czech Republic guide organization. Esther Banike CTG is on the board of the WFTGA and will make a presentation about the WFTGA later in the year.
- Donna introduced Associate Members present (those who hire guides!!):
 - Drew Sexton of Accenting Chicago
 - Alice Tell and Cathy Holleb of My Kind of Town
 - Daniel Ecklund of Hosts Chicago
 - Brian Whitaker and Stephanie Casstevens of Chicagoland Transportation Solutions
 - Stephanie Kite and Kara Ligenza of Brightspark
 - Gilbert Longoria of Chicago Tour Company
 - Jacob Kaplan and Patrick Steffes of Forgotten Chicago
 - Steve Sanford of Chicago Meetings & More
 - Paula Cline of Creative Impact Group
 - Amanda Scotese and Sophie Grimes of Chicago Detours

Also introduced, new members and guests:

In all, CTPA had 10 new members in 2013. A few were present at this meeting. Jacquie Brave is a new individual member but a founder of Accenting Chicago Mary Ellen Beckmann, also a new member, brought Bill Beckman as a guest Mike Humphrey is a new member who was present Linda O'Connor is another new member Emilia Ellsworth brought a guest, Patty Miranda.

PROGRAM on Chicago Parks

Our speaker for the evening was **Julia Bachrach**, author of **“The City in a Garden, A History of Chicago’s Parks, Second Edition.”** It’s not a surprise that “Second Edition” is prominent in the title. Julia explained that after writing the first edition, she did not expect to author a second, but over the last decade so much money has been spent on Chicago Park District (CPD) landscaping, gardens and sculpture, and so much archival material is now available on line from major newspapers and Google books, she expected perhaps 15% of new copy for the new edition. Instead, an amazing 90% is new material!

Julia’s book is a rich and entertaining resource for any tour guide, and installs the desire to tour all of Chicagoland parks. Indeed, audio tours are being prepared just for this purpose. Julia’s education began with an undergraduate degree in historic preservation from Roger Williams University and continued at the University of Wisconsin, Madison, where she obtained a Master’s of Science degree in Landscape Architecture and Cultural Resource Preservation. While there, she worked with others in conducting one of the first surveys of designed historic landscapes in the region of Highland Park with its wooded ravines and lakeshore, where they became interested in the work and ideas of Prairie Style landscape architect Jens Jensen.

Here is a part of Julia’s profile (on line, paraphrased): In 1988, after the Chicago Park District discovered a cache of archives in a sub-basement vault under Soldier Field, Julia was hired as a consultant, and later as Planning Supervisor working with an architectural historian and an archivist, setting up the archives, documenting the parks and nominating them to the National Register of Historic Places. In 1989, Julia began producing National Historic Landmark nominations (including Jensen’s Columbus Park in 2003 and Alfred Caldwell’s Lily Pool in 2006). During her time with the Park District, Julia has written and received preservation grants, contributed to master plans, curated exhibits and written books and other publications related to the history of Chicago’s parks.

Her lively and entertaining talk for the CTPA was illustrated with many photographs, sometimes before-and-after images of various park features. Julia opined that when Chicago was incorporated on March 4, 1837 and the city seal bore the phrase *Urbs in Horto* – City in a Garden – it was really an aspiration to be grand one day, and to make Chicago attractive to established east coast investors and people. Early illustrations of Chicago are of a bleak, treeless landscape, yet our city seal features a tiny tree. In 1837 we had no provision for creating parks. Once Chicago got going, developers would purchase large tracts of land and donate some acreage to the City for a park. In an 1858 Chicago Tribune article, one politico said “let us be taxed” to provide parks. By 1863, we had three divisions likely to become areas for parks, but one included the dead and buried on the north side, indeed called Cemetery Park.

Without attempting to recreate Julia’s presentation, one story among many tells of how the landscape architect Swain Nelson was charged with creating the original Lake Shore Drive, and his work was impeded by cows wandering amidst the construction. It was decided to round up the cows each day and charge the farmers \$15, an astronomical sum at the time, to pick up their particular cows. (At the time one could buy a cow for \$25.) On another note, Julia told of how she found in her research exactly how much the shepherd was paid to gather at day’s end the sheep who were purposely grazing on the grass – the Sheep Meadow – in Washington Park. This tiny item was the proof she needed to convince a skeptic that such a thing existed.

One of Julia’s images was of the stone building which stands today just off the southeast area of the Museum of Science & Industry. It is a bathroom today, and it was a ladies bathroom in

1887, already in place before the 1893 Columbian Exposition. The famed Japanese Garden was not in place at that fair, but built at the time of the 1933 Century of Progress. On the wooded isle at the time of the 1893 fair, it was the Japanese pavilion at the Columbian Exposition that most impressed Frank Lloyd Wright. We learned that once Frederick Law Olmsted decided to create an island for the fair, everyone wanted their buildings on such a special site, but the Japanese pavilion became the chosen one.

The depth of information in the book – nay, in Julia Bachrach's HEAD – is phenomenal. The stories of interest never end. She told us many documented truths and busted a few myths. We here in Chicago invented the park fieldhouse! Jane Addams' Hull House created the first playground for little kids! We filled in the lake and built museums atop the newly created mud! Jensen's Columbus Park is now a National Historic Landmark! Architect Clarence Hatzfeld haunts Julia Bachrach! He designed fieldhouses in Jefferson Park, Portage Park, Eugene Field Park, Indian Boundary Park. And she discovered that he designed the house she and her family moved into...after having an amazing feeling about it when deciding to purchase. As for Buckingham Fountain, we simply asked Kate Buckingham to fund it because she had the money. And what did Chicago do during the Great Depression? We threw a big party – the 1933 Century of Progress. Compared to the 1893 White City, this was the city of color. We hired Joseph Urban who decreed all the brilliant hues, and Alfonso Ianelli for some of the sculptural design work.

In 1934, the 22 different park district agencies fighting for funds were consolidated and artists hired to create murals and sculptures inside and outside on park district buildings as part of the WPA grants. Alfred Caldwell last saw his famed lily pond when it was in terrible disrepair. We wish he could see it today, beautifully restored, with docents in attendance in season on Friday afternoons and in two shifts Saturday and Sunday.

Read the book, take a trip to one of the parks. Be proud of Chicago.

Judith Randall, CTPA Co-Secretary