



NOJOSHING

Indian word for "straight tongue"

land protrudes out into Lake Michigan like a straight tongue

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God Bless You, Sacred Heart of Jesus Parish

By Karen Gersonde

It is only fitting that I write this article for the 150th Anniversary of Sacred Heart of Jesus Parish in St. Francis. One hundred and fifty years!!! Wow, I can't even imagine where that time has gone. As I sit and contemplate that thought, my memories take me back to my very early childhood and growing up in the City of St. Francis in the 1960s. Since my parents were devote Catholics, we belonged to Sacred Heart of Jesus Parish and as kids, my brother Glenn, and I went to school there, as did most of the neighborhood kids from East Crawford Ave. It was a short walk for us and we usually got to walk with our friends to and from school, which was nice.

My memories of that parish go as far back as the old church that was demolished. I have vague memories of it being razed. It was a grand old church and I hated to see it come down, but the new school and church that was built was pretty awesome, too. It was a pleasure going to school in a new building and it was so convenient to stay inside and go down to the "basement" every day for mass. Ah yes, mass every day, at least in the early years of school. I remember as girls, we had to wear a chapel veil in church. I clearly remember mine was pale blue in a little plastic container complete with bobby pins to hold it on my head. Heaven forbid if you forgot it, because then the nuns would make you wear a handkerchief on your head! Yup that's right! And let me tell you, the boys would tease the heck out of you during the entire mass or they would try to take it off of your head. Of course the sisters were not happy that we got rowdy. I'm surprised that we never got kicked out of church!

And who could forget the uniforms that we had to wear. For the girls, we had to wear brown plaid uniforms. Grades one thru five had the bibs on them. And then in grades six thru eight we switched over to brown plaid skirts, because we were more grown up. They were awful, as the blouses we wore had to be tucked in but they never stayed tucked in. So the teachers would always be telling us to tuck in our blouses, which was a never ending battle.

I guess one of my favorite memories was learning to play the violin. I believe I started playing in fifth grade and continued through eighth grade. Sister Grace Ann was the music teacher and lessons were given in the Sisters' house adjacent to the school. We got to get out of class to have our lessons, which was pretty special. And we got to see the inside of that building, which otherwise was off limits to everyone else. Piano lessons were also given in that building. Too bad it is now torn down. But every time I drive past it, I think of



what used to be in that vacant spot and the memories pour back in of the good times that I had. I still own my violin after all of these years. I had it totally refurbished and truly did intend on playing it again. But with age, I'm not that great at reading music anymore. Perhaps one day, though, I will give it a try again. One can only hope!

I don't have a lot of photos of my time spent at Sacred Heart of Jesus School. I did find my eighth grade graduation photo, though, from June 1969. We had to wear dresses and the length had to be just above the knee and no shorter. In the attached photo, I was walking down the aisle in church, as that is where the graduation ceremony was held. My mother, Fausta Gierzycki, made my pale blue dress. She was an excellent seamstress. I got to pick out the pattern and material, which was special. The waist had a velvet blue ribbon, which I loved. To this day, I still love pale blue. And of course, I was wearing a corsage that my parents bought for me. It was of pink and white carnations, which to this day are my favorite flowers.

So congratulations and best wishes to Sacred Heart of Jesus Parish on the anniversary of 150 years. May you have 150 more years that are even more blessed. You have served your community well! You have made me the person I am today. I will never forget you!



Please consider including a gift to the St. Francis Historical Society in your will, trust or beneficiary designation. For more information, please contact Anna Passante at 414-316-4391 or st.francishistoricalsociety@gmail.com.

What's New?

Welcome new Members:

Welcome Scott Jenquin and Mona Gizawiy

Busy Summer

Fourth of July parade including a table at the park. Jan Pientok assembled a nice photo display enjoyed by all. August was National Night Out. We had a suitcase full of 'curiosities' and the kids had a good time trying to figure out what they were used for. After the St. Francis Days parade we held a pie sale. Slices of 10 homemade pies and 1 cheesecake sold quickly.

Operation Eat Local

We will be eating at Swayz Mexican restaurant after our general meeting on October 19th. We'd love to have you join us!

Lake Protestant Cemetery

There will be a grave marker placed in the cemetery to remember five shipwreck victims who are buried there---three sailors from the Sebastopol and two female victims of the steamship Niagara.

New Book

Lake Protestant Cemetery, Our Pioneers' Resting Place, St. Francis, Wisconsin, by Anna Passante is now available for purchase at the Society office and Amazon.com. Anna will be presenting at the St. Francis Library on Thursday, September 26th at 6pm. Her program "Corpses, Coffins, and Crypts" will enlighten all about Victorian burial practices. Anna will also talk about her new book. Books will be avail for purchase. Register in advance at the library for this free program.

Christmas dinner Thursday, Dec 5

Mark your calendars for the annual Christmas dinner at the Polenz restaurant. Social at 5:30, dinner at 6:00 pm with a speaker to follow. Complete information will be send through the mail.

Cousin's Sub Fundraiser

Our Cousin's Subs fundraiser will be on Monday, October 7 from 4-8pm. Just come to the Cousin's Subs at 3058 E. Layton Avenue in St. Francis.

The Suicide Bridge

by Barbara Janiszewski

There are lots of memories about the bridge that once went over Norwich Avenue. I wonder how it got the name "suicide bridge"? I remember the first time I went over the bridge. I thought my stomach was going to end up in my throat! What a thrill! One of my daughters said it scared her when we drove over it. Another daughter said, "It's just a bridge." But when her sister's boyfriend drove over it she flew. And another daughter said that she and her friends used to go over the bridge when they were pregnant and near their due date to try to induce labor. I didn't ask if it worked.

The following are some of the comments from the historical society Facebook page when we posted a picture of it there.

- We drove over it in a '65 Galaxie 500 convertible. We went airborne with the top down and no seat belts. We lived but never tried it again.
- Save car as yours and we did the same thing. The car flew over the bridge too, and we thought the bottom was going to fall off when we hit the pavement.
- High school bus drivers enjoyed giving the kids a thrill by driving over it.
- As a kid we loved being lifted off our seats and sometimes even hitting our heads on the roof.
- I almost ended up in someone's front yard. I took the bridge with a "hold my beer" attitude. I screamed like a girl when I landed. I never went that fast over that bridge again.
- I think that bridge wrecked many suspension parts.
- My poor little Horizon could barely get over the bridge.
- I remember going too fast and not hitting the road until halfway down the other side and then roaring through the stop sign.
- I bottomed out at '79 Buick Skylark on that hill. Took it "just a tiny bit" too fast. Over the top and WHOOMP!
- It was as awesome bridge. Our kids called it "Bumpity Bridge" and we would drive over it as often as possible.
- It was more fun on a motorcycle.
- Scrapped many a frame there.
- My father used to take us over at 100 mph. I've never forgotten it.
- The bridge was the best part of going to visit my aunt and uncle. Good times!
- I remember being on the back of my brother's motorcycle. We flew over the bridge and my bottom was 100% off the seat. Scared the s*** out of me!
- We went over at 65 MPH in a '69 Pontiac Tempest. We were airborne and had to stop before the stop sign on Pennsylvania Avenue. We broke the motor mount.
- I hit the roof and broke a tooth. It sure was fun!!



Photos from recent events

On June 27 the St. Francis Historical Society co-hosted an event at the civic center with the Wisconsin Historical Society (WHS). Attendees were invited to view design concepts for a new Wisconsin history museum and give feedback. Barbara Janiszewski and Bill Drehal (pictured here) obviously enjoyed the evening.



Getting ready to participate in the 4th of July parade, left to right: Dillon Drehfal, Bill Drehfal, Anna Passante, and the new Miss St. Francis 2019, Sarah Bittner.



Historical society group getting ready to participate in the St. Francis Days parade left to right: Barbara Janiszewski, George Ramponi, Anna Passante, Dillon Drehfal, Bill Drehfal

St. Francis Street Names and Their Origins

The following is a reprint of an article by Carl Baehr for the Winter 1991 issue of the St. Francis Historical Society's *Nojoshing* newsletter. Some added information is found in brackets. The bracketed information comes from internet sources and the book *Generations of Pride, A Centennial History of Cudahy, Wisconsin*.

Streets of St. Francis

Portions of what is now St. Francis were originally meant to be part of the Village of Cudahy. In 1892, Patrick Cudahy announced his plans for the founding of an industrial town with his meatpacking plant as its base. The prosperity of the times was in evidence throughout the county. Huge buildings like the city hall and the Pabst building were being built in downtown Milwaukee. South Milwaukee was being developed by inventors. Bay View was expanding southward and parts of St. Francis were being subdivided.

Land speculators and real estate developers, some of whom were Patrick Cudahy's friends and business associates, began buying land in the area around the site of his plant. The names of some of their subdivisions reflected their intentions and their optimism

Among them were Cudahy Heights (now part of Mitchell International Airport), Cudahy Station (West of the Northern Rail Car Company), and Cudahy Park. The area now being developed west of Layton Mart was platted in October of 1892 and was called "Sivyer and Betz Addition to the Townsite of Cudahy." The development companies followed a similar pattern with names like Cudahy Central Land Company, Cudahy Beltline Company, and Cudahy Improvement Company.

Developers, in an effort to integrate with Patrick's Cudahy, followed his street naming scheme in their plans. Avenues with names of meatpackers like Cudahy, Armour, Layton, and Plankinton began to show up on plat maps of subdivisions. [Most were named for the meatpackers in 1892.]

The panic of 1893 put an end to many of these planned developments. While Patrick Cudahy was able to continue with his plans, the growth of the area was not as vigorous as hoped. In 1894, the mechanism for incorporating the Village of Cudahy was started. A census of the proposed village was taken. Notices were posted throughout the area.

The proposed northern border was what is now Waterford Avenue. The western edge was to be Pennsylvania Avenue. However, the landowners to the north of Lunham filed an objection to the plan. They did not want to be part of the [Cudahy] village. They could not afford to operate their farms and pay village tax rates. They said their land was too sparsely populated to be considered part of the village. There were only eleven houses in this section. Farmers in the western section, between Barland Avenue (then known as Axtell Avenue) and Pennsylvania Avenue, protested for the same reasons. There were only eighteen houses in their area, which extended south to Grange Avenue.

The judge agreed with them, and they retained their rural status, although part of the western section would later become part of Cudahy through annexation. Decades later their lands became urbanized, and many of the streets, which came to crisscross their fields, brought names with them showing their earlier connection with Cudahy.

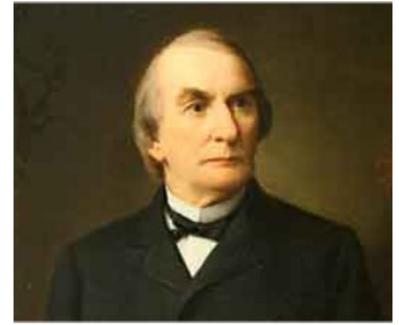
The series of east-west streets between Pennsylvania and Nicholson avenues, which carry names from the genealogy of the Cudahy Brothers' meatpacking business, are examples. Layton, Plankinton, Armour, and Cudahy were all at one time or another partners in a firm that traces its roots to Milwaukee's infancy. John Plankinton began his meat business in Milwaukee in the mid-1840s. Frederick Layton merged his own business with Plankinton's in 1852 under the name "Layton & Plankinton." At the dawn of the Civil War, the pair split up. Then in 1863, Philip Danforth Armour joined Plankinton and formed the Plankinton and Armour Meatpacking Company, a relationship that lasted until 1884. From 1884 to 1888, Patrick Cudahy was

a partner of Plankinton and Company. Then Plankinton retired and Patrick and John Cudahy took over and the company name was changed to Cudahy Brothers, later changed again to Patrick Cudahy Company.

St. Francis Streets Named for Meatpackers

Plankinton Avenue

The first of the line, John Plankinton (1820-1891) born in Delaware, lost the distinction of having a St. Francis street named for him when Plankinton Avenue was changed to Price Avenue in the 1930 Town of Lake street renaming project. Besides the Plankinton Avenue in Cudahy, he has a second street named in his honor, this one west of the Milwaukee River in downtown Milwaukee.



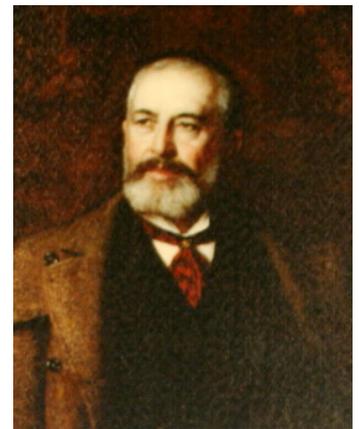
John Plankinton

Layton Avenue

English-born Frederick Layton (1827-1919) also has a Milwaukee street named for him in addition to Layton Avenue. Layton Boulevard (27th Street between Lincoln Avenue and the viaduct) was named as a tribute to the man who contributed so much to Milwaukee's art heritage. [Editor's note: In 1888, Layton founded the Layton Art Gallery at Mason and Jefferson streets in downtown Milwaukee. The gallery contained 38 of Layton's personal painting collection. The gallery later combined with the Milwaukee Art Institute and moved to the War Memorial Center in Milwaukee. Much of Layton's art collection is presently in the Milwaukee Art Museum.]



Philip Danforth Armour



Frederick Layton

Armour Avenue

Philip Danforth Armour (1832-1901) came from the state of New York to Milwaukee before the Civil War and left the city for Chicago around 1875. In Chicago, he became one of America's wealthiest men as president of the world's largest meatpacking company.

Cudahy Avenue

Patrick Cudahy (1849-1919), a native of Ireland, was from a Milwaukee family of five brothers who were successful in the meat business. Among them they founded at least three meatpacking companies. In addition to Patrick and John's Cudahy company, brothers Michael and Edward owned the Cudahy Packing Company, with plants all over the country; it was one of the "Big Five" of Chicago. John also owned Cudahy Packing of Louisville, Kentucky.



Patrick Cudahy (1902)

Other streets named by Patrick Cudahy that extend westward into St. Francis are Van Norman, Allerton, Bottsford, and Whittaker

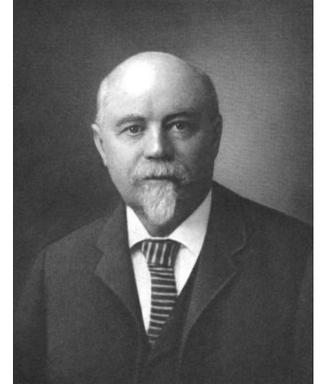
Van Norman Avenue

George Bosworth Van Norman owned a Milwaukee livestock commission business, which purchased livestock, mostly pigs, from stock growers and farmers and then sold animals to meatpackers. Van Norman was instrumental in the "booming" of South Milwaukee. He was among a group of land speculators who

hoped to draw potential homebuyers to the area to work for the factories the speculators planned to entice there. Van Norman was president of the Eagle Horse Shoe Company, which was located in South Milwaukee. With this experience, he assisted Patrick Cudahy in developing the Cudahy area.

Allerton Avenue

Allerton Avenue is named for Samuel Waters Allerton (1828-1914) who was in the meat business and was based in Chicago where he ran for mayor at the time he was having a street named for him in the Cudahy area. He started his career as a cattle grower in this native state of New York. He became a cattle grower in Illinois in the 1850s. Just before the Civil War, he moved to Chicago as a livestock commissioner and later, after the war, he started a packing firm in Chicago. He had interests throughout the Midwest and when he died "owned more actual farming land than perhaps any man in America."



Henry Botsford

Bottsford Avenue

With Henry Botsford (who spelled Botsford with one 't' unlike Bottsford Avenue), Allerton formed the Chicago National Stockyards Company, the largest of its kind in the world. Botsford was born in Ann Arbor, Michigan, and traced his ancestry to colonial America. He died in Chicago in 1919, a few months prior to Patrick Cudahy's death in Milwaukee.

Whittaker Avenue

Francis Whittaker, a St. Louis meatpacker, was, like Patrick Cudahy, born in Ireland. He learned the meatpacking trade in County Sligo at a time when Ireland was the world's major meatpacking center, a distinction eventually lost to the United States.

Lunham Avenue

The Northern border between St. Francis and Cudahy was named for Robert Thomas Lunham a Chicago pork packer who was born in County Cork, Ireland in 1856. [In 1874, Lunham immigrated to Chicago where he operated meatpacking and stock commission businesses until his death in 1913.]

A number of north-south street names, which continue into St. Francis from Cudahy, were also named for those in the packing industry.

Lipton Avenue

Thomas Lipton, an Irishman born in Scotland, was more famous for his tea business than his Chicago and Omaha packing interests. He was also well known during the first third of this century for his five challenges for yachting's revered America Cup. In spite of naming all of his yachts "Shamrock," he never had good luck to win.

Kingan Avenue

Thomas and Samuel Kingan were also Irish packers who set up operations in the United States. In addition to their Belfast business, the company had plants in Cincinnati, Indianapolis, and Kansas City.

Kirwood Avenue

William Kirkwood was a commission agent in Chicago and helped support Frederick Layton's art gallery in Milwaukee. [He was a friend of meatpacker John Cudahy, brother of Patrick.]



St. Francis Historical Society
3400 E. Howard Ave.
St. Francis, WI 53235

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Newsletter

Anna Passante
Barbara Janiszewski

Mark Your Calendar

Meetings:

September 21, 2019, Board Meeting 9:30 am
October 19, 2019, General Meeting 9:30 am
November 16, 2019, Board Meeting 9:30 am

Upcoming events (see “What’s New” for details)

Corpses, Coffins, and Crypts: Victorian Burial Customs & Superstitions Thursday, September 26 at 6pm.
Cousin’s Sub Fundraiser Monday, Oct. 7 from 4:00-8:00 pm
3058 E. Layton Avenue in St. Francis.

The historical society office (3400 E. Howard Avenue) is open most Thursday afternoons from 1:00 to 3:30. Before you come, please call Anna Passante at 262-327-8958 or email passante.anna@yahoo.com to confirm that the office will be open.

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