

Since 2015

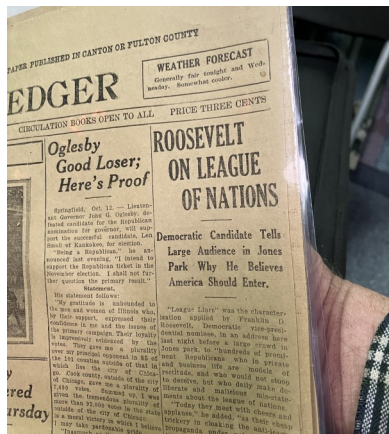
Volume 6, Issue 2

April - May - June 2023

### THE CHAIR'S REPORT

#### DID YOU KNOW?

Did you know that Canton was visited by two world-renowned politicians? The first was Abraham Lincoln, who being an Illinois resident, traveled all over the state, a circuit riding lawyer. He eventually won the presidential race in 1860 and became the 16th President, leading our nation through the Civil War.



The second renowned visitor was Franklin Delano Roosevelt. The date was October 11, 1920. Mr. Roosevelt was the vice-presidential running mate of Governor James M. Cox of Ohio, who was seeking the Presidency. He arrived in Canton via the Burlington Railroad Line in a special car attached to the regular-scheduled train. His party was transported to the "Canton House," which was a hotel on the corner of First Avenue and Elm Street.

Mr. Roosevelt's party dined with the executive committee, Fulton County Democratic Central Committee and others.

After dinner, while the P & O Band was playing at the hotel, men and women voters were introduced to the featured speaker, Mr. Roosevelt.

Headed by the band, the delegation marched to Jones Park, where Mr. Roosevelt and others addressed the large crowd gathered. His main topic was "The League of Nations," which would later become United Nations.

Although the 1920 campaign was not successful, it did not dampen FDR's quest for the White House. He later won four consecutive terms as President, 1932-1945, and led the nation through the Great Depression and victory in World War II. This most famous quote was spoken at his First Inaugural Address, "The only thing we have to fear is fear itself."

From Jones Park to major leader of the Free World, Canton played a small part.

Source: Canton Daily Ledger, Monday, October 11, 1920.

Roosevelt's Inaugural Address can be read (and heard) at, <https://historymatters.gmu.edu/d/5057/>

Jim Morgan, Treasurer



#### Special points of interest

- FOLLOW OUR PROGRESS IN THIS QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER
- MEET MOVERS AND SHAKERS, THEN AND NOW
- LEARN INTERESTING FACTS ABOUT OUR COMMUNITY
- VOLUNTEER WHERE AND WHEN YOU CAN

#### Inside this issue

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Our hours are  
Fridays, 10am-12 noon  
Saturdays, 10am-2pm  
Sundays, 1pm-4pm  
Come see us!



**Philip Gregory, Chairman**  
Canton Area Heritage Center  
Executive Board  
Cell: (309) 208-2943

**Did You Know?** We are frequently surprised by the discoveries and connections made by our volunteers. Here's a recent example. Jim Morgan and Kevin Stephenson were together while Kevin was organizing the many old newspapers which have been donated. Kevin read the headline, "Roosevelt on League of Nations: Democratic candidate...in Jones Park." He asked Jim if he had known that Roosevelt visited Canton. Jim hadn't, and he decided to dig further. You can read the rest of the story in the next article.

**Spring Work Day.** We have several projects planned for our Spring Work Day, **Saturday, April 22, 9 a.m.-12 noon.** Tasks include clearing out a store room, cleaning the facility, and installing a recently-donated business sign. Want to help? Please call the Canton Area Heritage Center and leave a message, (309) 647-2242. You'll receive a prompt callback.





## CANTON PARK DISTRICT IS 100 YEARS OLD

December 19, 1922. Does that date mean anything to you? Probably not. But voters in Canton Township made a decision that day that still resonates in the community. They passed, by a two-to-one margin, a referendum establishing the Canton Park District.

Following World War I, Van Winkle Lake was Canton's most popular recreational area but it was privately owned and there was increasing interest in having a larger, publicly owned park. In February 1921, the Canton Chamber of Commerce named attorney C.H. Hippler to head a committee to investigate the creation of a park district under the 1895 park laws, allowing the formation of self-governing municipal parks.

The Canton Park District was officially formed April 2, 1923. The first park board consisted of five members. The names were all well-known community leaders, U.G. Orendorff, President; Dr. J.E. Coleman, Vice-President; William J. Spencer; C. Lee Martin; and H.L. Wilhelm.

Engineer Jacob L. Crane of Chicago was hired in the spring of 1923 to lay out a new park that would become Big Creek Park. His recommendation to the board was to purchase land along Big Creek from what is now West Vine Street to what is now Lakeland Park Drive. It was considered the most ideal location for a park. In conjunction with the development of this area in the northwest part of town, Athletic Park in the northeast section was acquired by the park district. (1)

Big Creek Park was formally opened Sunday, July 18, 1926. The Canton Park District at the time consisted of Jones Park, South Park, the Kellogg School ground, Big Creek Park, and Athletic Park. In 1927, park district deeded Jones Park back to the City of Canton. (2)

(1) and (2). Edward R. Lewis, Jr. (1967). Reflections of Canton in a Pharmacist's Show Globe.

**Kevin Stephenson, Museum Volunteer**

Athletic Park. Pool operated 1925-1940. Date unknown. View is looking east.

Since then, the Canton Park District has grown to 1,403 acres and numerous facilities, parks, open spaces, an airport, and much more.

In recognition of the 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Canton Park District, the Canton Area Heritage Center is featuring an exhibit of 97 photographs depicting Canton Park District history. You're seeing a sampling of the photos here.

We can't guarantee it, but chances are probably good, the photos on display will bring back your own childhood and family memories of activities in Canton's parks over the years.



Big Creek Park. Mid to late 1950s. View is looking north from the bottoms. Playground is on the right.



Athletic Park. Youth tennis at the courts. Mid to late 1950s. Note back of football scoreboard at (now) Ems Field. View is looking north.



Sandbox play at unknown park. Summer playground program. Mid to late 1950s.



Athletic Park. Ice skating on flooded tennis courts. Mid to late 1950s. View is looking east.



Lakeland Park. Strip-mining in what is now Bond Lake at Lakeland. Date unknown but sometime in 1960s-1970s.



Old Big Creek Park pool. Dedication event in July, 1942. Pool operated 1942-1991. Was built by federal government Works Project Administration (WPA) at cost of \$73,000. When full, it held 250,000 gallons of water. Was leaking estimated 5000 gallons of water daily in last years of operation.

Preserving our history...

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We're on the Web:

[www.cantonillinois.org/  
heritage-center](http://www.cantonillinois.org/heritage-center)

*Honor Those who Served and Sacrificed for our Freedoms on this Memorial Day*

## NEW ACQUISITION: APOTHECARY CUPBOARD



Donated by the Jim Kuharich Family

This unique piece of furniture has an interesting history of 140+ years. In 1975, a tornado ripped through downtown Canton. Several businesses were destroyed. One of those businesses was a former drug store, Greenwell and Gray Drugs, which was located at 26 North Main, west side of the square.

Frankie Kuharich, who owned a neighboring barbershop, located at 31 West Elm Street, watched the workers at the former Greenwell and Gray building throw an old wood cabinet into the alley. He rescued it and put it in his barbershop.

When Kuharich closed his business, he gave the cabinet to his son, Jim, to use in his own barbershop on North Main. The cupboard remained in the family for 48 years until being donated to the Heritage Center in 2023.

The 68 drawers of the wooden cupboard are labeled with herbs and other natural materials: Shellac, Wahoo Bark of Root, Soap Bark (lg. boxes), Angelica Root, Ginseng, Hoarhound

Root, Turkey Pea, Mandrake Root, Foxglove, Yellow Jasmine, Stone Root, Witch Hazel Leaves.

**There's More.** Plattenburg & Co., Pharmacists had occupied the same building from where this historical piece was removed. It's reported that Perry Plattenburg, Jr. established a pharmacy on the square in 1877. He might have also stored his medicinal plants in it. The wood and construction is like that used to make wooden cigar boxes, another flourishing business in Canton at the time.

Perry Plattenburg, his wife Ellen, and six children were among Canton's early residents, having settled in the city in June, 1854, according to the notice of their house sale in the *Canton Daily Ledger*, of April 26, 1974.

The board member who shared the newspaper above also brought in a label, "Gum Opium POISON," identifying Plattenburg Pharmacists.

