

### Protect Your Heritage

**PDHA  
Next Meeting  
Thursday,  
June 11, 7 PM  
Lincoln Center  
Room 307**

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**Visit Us  
on the  
world wide web  
at  
[www.PDHA.org](http://www.PDHA.org)**

**Pierce Downer's  
Heritage Alliance**

**P.O. Box 422  
Downers Grove,  
Illinois 60515**

## Wilderness & Wildflower Walks Saturday, May 2<sup>nd</sup>

Pierce Downer's Heritage Alliance is celebrating Spring 2015 with guided Wilderness & Wildflower Walks in Lyman Woods on Saturday, May 2<sup>nd</sup>. Volunteer Naturalist Lance Herning will lead two groups of hikers, one departing at 10 AM and the other, at 1 PM. Each group will be limited to about 12 participants and should expect to spend about 1 hour & 45 minutes exploring the woods and fields of this high quality nature preserve.



*Lance Herning talks about native trees.*



*Red Trillium or Wake-Robin*

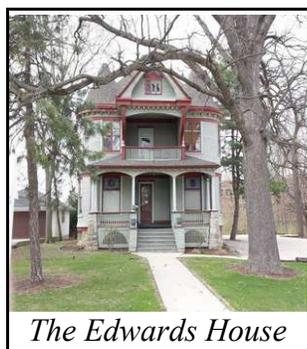
After our recent wet weather the

trails may still be muddy in spots so that participants need to dress appropriately. After the walk we will provide refreshments and opportunities for conversation. Space is limited. Register now to take part in this special exploration of Lyman Woods by visiting our website [www.PDHA.org](http://www.PDHA.org). Reserve your departure time and make a \$25 donation to support educational activities of Pierce

Downer's Heritage Alliance. Children under 13, accompanied by an adult walker, don't need to make a donation. – *By Gordon Goodman*

## Edwards House Update

Efforts continue to save the historic Edwards House, currently located at 942 Maple Avenue. In December, on a 5-2 vote, the Village Council approved a five story, 55-unit condominium redevelopment for that site, after a campaign to establish a Maple Avenue Historic Preservation District was unsuccessful. Since then efforts have focused on moving the house. The Pierce Downer's Heritage Alliance is assisting a dedicated neighborhood group of volunteers in pursuing several options.



*The Edwards House*

The best option now is to move the house east to the property at 743 Maple owned by John and Lauri Tillotson, who have developed a proposal, with extensive measures to protect the trees along Maple Avenue during the move, that includes moving and reusing their existing historic home at 743 Maple. The Village staff is now working with the Tillotsons on the specific details for the move, including cooperation with utility companies and the condominium developer. PDHA is lending its support in various ways including the collection of donations to help offset the costs. So far, donations to help with this worthy project have reached over \$6,000 – about 3 times the PDHA's usual annual budget! Please visit our website for updates, details and information about making a donation. – *By Ken Lerner*

## Protect Your Heritage

### PDHA Directors

Pierce Downer's Heritage Alliance is a 20-year old, Illinois not-for-profit corporation with charitable group status with the Internal Revenue Service. PDHA's Board of Directors manages its activities.

The following people are

PDHA Officers:

Chair Ken Lerner,

Chair Pro-Tem

Chris Saricks,

Secretary

Jim Cavallo,

Treasurer

Gordon Goodman,

& PDHA Directors:

Mark Bragen,

Wally Brown,

Sue Carroll,

Marge Earl,

Irene Hogstrom,

John Schofield,

& Mark Thoman.

Welcome to  
new Director  
Mark Bragen.

Thanks to  
retired Director  
Greg Hosé .

Newsletter

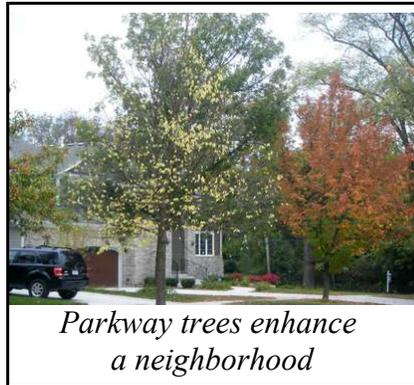
Editing by  
G. Goodman

Logo designed by  
Kate Earl

Photos by  
G. Goodman,

## Urban Forestry in Downers Grove

In late winter and early spring, PDHA volunteers Mark Bragen, Irene Hogstrom, Chris Saricks and Ken Lerner assisted the Village Public Works Dept. with screening potential locations for placement of parkway trees. The volunteers reviewed 277 potential tree locations, noting the presence of factors that might interfere with tree



*Parkway trees enhance  
a neighborhood*

placement such as overhead wires, water and stormwater utilities, narrow or steeply sloped parkways, or overlap with adjacent trees. The Public Works Dept. uses this information to identify the best locations for additional trees; at good locations, the Village contacts the adjacent homeowner to inquire whether they would like a tree and any preferences as to species. Adjacent owner preferences are honored as much as possible.

The Village is making a concerted effort to maintain the village parkway tree inventory, however, it has been difficult to keep up with removals due to mortality from the Emerald Ash Borer blight. Tree plantings have increased from less than 300 in 2010 to more than 500 in 2014, with approximately 650 planned for this year. Nevertheless, total tree inventory has declined each year. Currently ash trees comprise just under 14% of the Village's parkway trees, over 3200 trees. The Village plans to remove and replace about 54% of these trees over the next ten years, while administering preventive treatment to the other 46%. – *By Ken Lerner*

## Japanese Knotweed Update

The treatment and removal of Japanese knotweed in Downers Grove has been postponed until a more comprehensive assessment of St. Joseph's Creek is completed, according to Cathy McGlynn, Coordinator of the Northeast Illinois Invasive Plant Partnership (NIIPP). Last year, NIIPP received a grant to pay for treatment of Japanese knotweed and several residents participated. Unfortunately, this year the grant has not been renewed.

Rather than conduct piecemeal removal of Japanese knotweed along St. Joseph's Creek, the Village has funded a comprehensive assessment of the creek system, identifying areas that have experienced bank erosion, infestation by invasive species, and any other deficiencies that may need repair or restoration. This assessment will allow for a more long-term economical and holistic approach to creek corridor restoration and maintenance.

Karen Daulton Lange is heading up this effort for the Public Works Department and can be reached at [kdlange@downers.us](mailto:kdlange@downers.us) for questions. This spring, she will be sending out letters to residents who participated in the grant program, to inform them about the assessment. – *By Irene Hogstrom*

## 1846 Blodgett House Update

The preservation and restoration of the second home of Israel and Avis Blodgett in Downers Grove, which was made possible by many generous community contributions, is still a work in progress. Integrity and safety of the building was materially enhanced last year by installing additional supporting beams under the first and second floors. To make these new supports less obvious, thin tubular steel beams, as pictured below, were used instead of new thick and wide wooden beams.



*Tubular steel support beam in first floor room*



*Tubular steel support beam in basement room*



*Hand-hewn joists contrasted with new steel support beams*

In early November the Park District received a state grant payment of \$35,000 that can help pay for the structural improvements. This grant from Build Illinois Bond Funds was first authorized in July 2009 thanks to efforts of our then local legislators Sandy Pihos, Pattie Bellock and Kirk Dillard. Another state grant of \$15,000 with the same history is now expected to help pay for additional signage on the museum campus to complement the three new exterior signs for the 1846 Blodgett House installed in 2013.

Architects Kirsten Kingsley and Keith Ginnodo are currently developing specific plans for interior renovation work that will permit visitors to appreciate unique construction features of this mid-19<sup>th</sup> Century home, as well as the Blodgett Family's involvement with the Underground Railroad. In June the Park District was notified it has received a state museum grant of \$135,000 to help pay for interior restoration and interpretative exhibits.

Currently, the state museum grant is on hold while state officials work out their funding priorities for this year. The original schedule for this interior renovation envisioned construction starting in late spring 2015 leading to an occupancy permit for the 1846 Blodgett House some time this fall. We are all



*1846 Blodgett House as it looks now*

looking forward to a grand opening of the House for the general public, perhaps some time later this year. – *By Gordon Goodman*

*Please Join Us on Our Remaining 2015 Highland Ave. Adopt-A-Highway CLEAN-UP DAYS*

*April 18  
June 13  
August 15  
October 3*

*Saturdays  
8:30-10:30 AM*

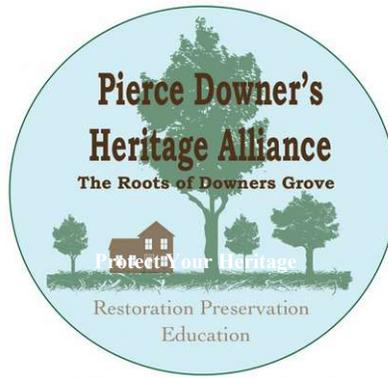
*Check our website for updates and to sign up to participate!*

*Have you renewed your membership in the Heritage Alliance?*

*See the back page of this newsletter for more info and how YOU can make a difference!*

*Check us out at [www.PDHA.org](http://www.PDHA.org)*

*Pierce Downer's Heritage Alliance*  
**P.O. Box 422**  
**Downers Grove, Illinois 60515**



Pierce Downer  
1782-1863

Pierce Downer's Heritage Alliance Spring 2015 Newsletter

**You are invited to join us at our next 2015 Meeting**  
**Thursday, June 11, 7:00 pm**  
**Room 307, Lincoln Center, 935 Maple Ave., Downers Grove.**  
Check our website [www.PDHA.org](http://www.PDHA.org) for more details.

**Your membership in the Alliance helps in our efforts to petition local government officials to preserve our heritage resources. Your participation in our programs demonstrates to our community the strength of our alliance to protect Downers Grove's natural and cultural heritage.**

Please join Pierce Downer's Heritage Alliance or renew your membership now as we work for protection of the natural and cultural heritage of Downers Grove.

Pierce Downer's Heritage Alliance  
P.O. Box 422, Downers Grove, IL 60515

Yes, I want to begin/renew my membership in Pierce Downer's Heritage Alliance.

Name(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Street Address: \_\_\_\_\_ Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_

City, State, Zip: \_\_\_\_\_ Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Contribution: \$ \_\_\_\_\_ (Employer matching contribution?) \_\_\_\_\_ I/We can also volunteer some time.

A TAX-DEDUCTIBLE VOLUNTARY CONTRIBUTION of \$10 or more will help the Alliance defray expenses, but is **not** required for membership. Your email address will allow us to keep you informed of future events.