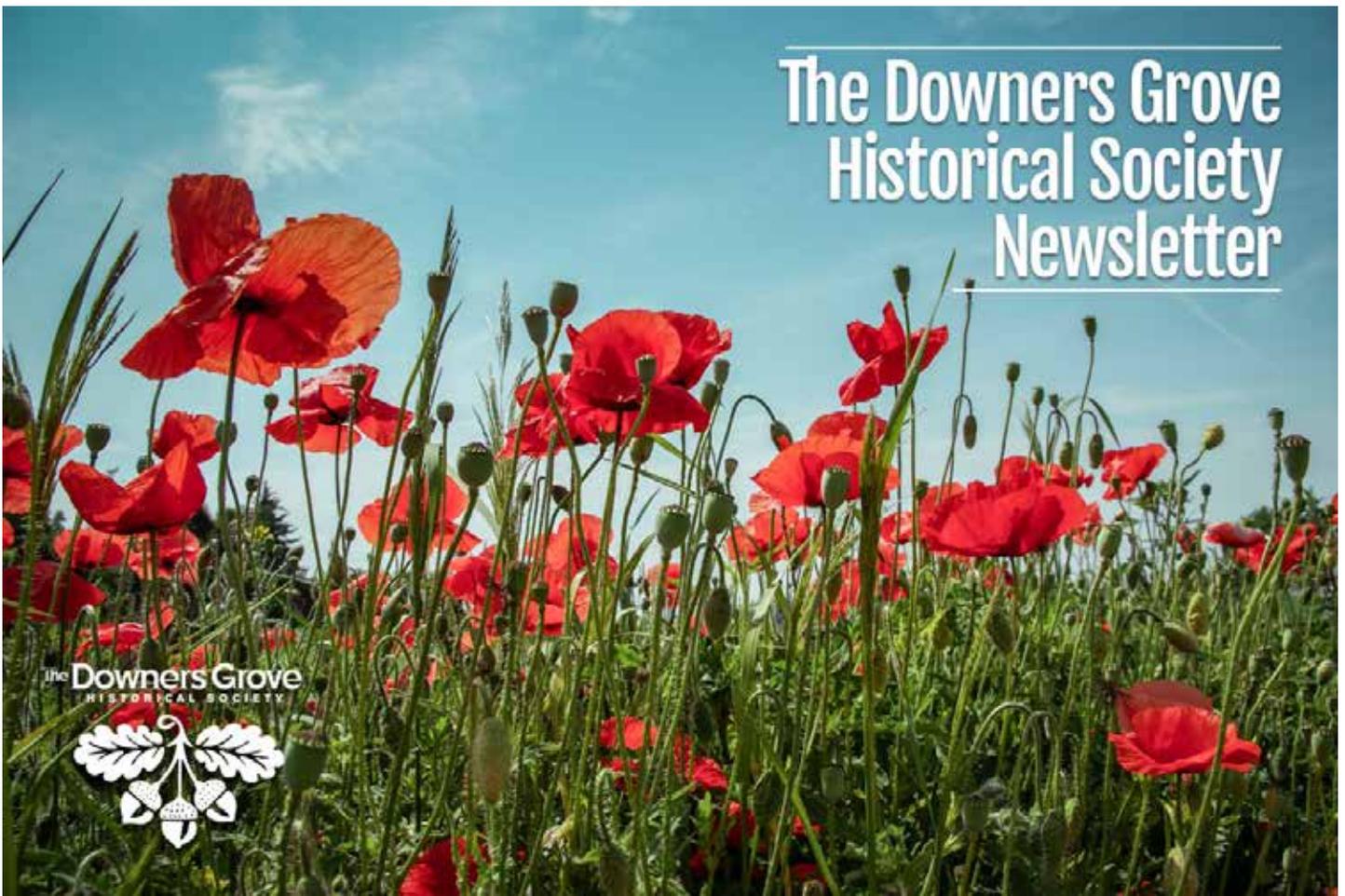


# The Downers Grove Historical Society Newsletter



## History of Poppy Day

**N**ext time you buy a poppy from the American Legion think about why they are selling them and when this tradition started.

The tradition of wearing a red poppy comes from an idea by Moina Michael (1869-1944) a teacher from Athens, Georgia. During WWI she was a volunteer with the Y.M.C.A. working in New York. After reading the poem In Flanders Fields by Canadian physician John McCrae she decided to wear a red poppy as she worked. She said "always wear a red poppy as a sign of remembrance and emblem of keeping the faith with all who died." Soon people around her were also doing this. She decided to send letter to many organizations to ask them to wear the poppy. In 1920 the poppy became the official flower of the American Legion and by 1924 the distribution of poppies became a national program of the American Legion. Other countries also joined the tradition and monies raised went to support those wounded in the war. Moina was honored in many ways for her idea. She received a Distinguished Service Medal from the American Legion; a postage stamp was issued in her honor; and a few months after her death a Liberty Ship built in 1944 for WWII was named for her - the SS Moina Michael.

The ladies of the Woman's Auxiliary of the American Legion of Downers Grove participated in the poppy program by adopting the red poppy as the official flower of the Downers Grove American Legion. Mrs. Almyra

Hawkins (1871-1933) was the president of the Woman's Auxiliary of the Downers Grove American Legion Post in 1921. Almyra Burk was born in Kansas and married Gaius Hawkins in 1896. They moved to Downers Grove in 1904 and raised a family of 6 children. Three of her sons fought in France during World War I. In May of 1921 Almyra arranged for artificial cloth poppies made in France to be sent to Downers Grove. They were sold and the money that was raised (about \$88) was sent back to France for orphans of the war. This was the beginning of Poppy Day in Downers Grove. Mrs. Hawkins volunteered a great deal for organizations that benefited veterans and she did much to help the soldiers after the war. By 1929 the American Legion in the state of Illinois was helping about 47,000 veterans with money raised from the sale of poppies. Their work continues today.



Many stories and poems are written about the wearing of the poppy. Here is just one found in the book A Star for Mrs. Blake by April Smith.

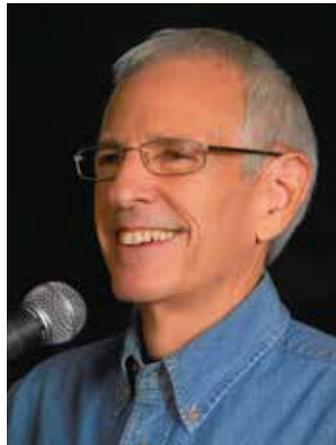
*I wear a poppy on my breast  
Where a boyish head found rest.  
And often when the day is done  
I see again my soldier son.  
He comes to me in such a way  
That I can almost hear him say  
Do not worry mother dear  
I am coming home someday.  
And when the tears unbidden start  
I place a hand above my heart  
To where caressed a tousled head  
But only find a poppy red.*



## Dave Humphreys - 2021 Montrew Dunham Award Recipient

The Downers Grove Historical Society is pleased to announce that Dave Humphreys has been named the 2021 Montrew Dunham Award recipient. This award, established in 2019, honors those whose significant service and contributions to the Village of Downers Grove have earned them a place in its history, following in the footsteps of noted teacher, author, historian, and community volunteer, Montrew Dunham.

Dave has served on the Downers Grove Library Board as trustee for 27 years and has served on many Village commissions and task forces focusing on finding ways to improve the cultural life for Downers Grove residents. A self-described "Music Enabler", Dave created the Two-Way Street Coffee House (recently celebrating its 50th anniversary), has been the producer for all the music for Heritage Fest and now Rotary Grove Fest since its inception in 1982, and has created or been very involved in programs which help young musicians gain experience and visibility. Through his efforts, he has brought name recognition to the Village on a national level in the folk music industry. For a complete look at his civic involvement, awards, and many contributions to Downers Grove, visit our website.



The award ceremony is scheduled for September 18th at 10am (SAVE THE DATE). In partnership with the Downers Grove Museum, the event will be held at the Montrew Dunham History Center on the Museum Campus.

More details and registration information will be released in August on our Website [www.downersgrove-history.org](http://www.downersgrove-history.org) and Facebook Page Hot Link needed here in

August. There might still be some restrictions on gathering numbers. We will keep you posted. If you would like to join the Historical Society to get early registration access, visit our website.



## William S. Carpenter House Approved as Historic Home



The home at 5234 Lyman was originally built by William Sheldon Carpenter & his wife Martha. William was the youngest child of Henry & Martha Carpenter who were among the first settlers in Downers Grove. William was about 38 years old when he and his wife built this home (circa 1892). William was a licensed pharmacist in town and in his store was the long-distance telephone where "one may, if he so desires, speak with anyone in the principal cities of the U.S." per an article in the Downers Grove Reporter 11/28/1895. William was also president of the village board from 1894 to 1896. The Carpenters sold their home in 1905 to Allen & Elizabeth Wheeler and moved with their daughter Nellie to California.

Allan Wheeler was also an early settler in Downers Grove. From New York he moved with his parents to Downers Grove when he was about 4 years old in 1844. He was a farmer and known for raising "fine Durham Cattle." His farmland was located near Fairview & 55th. He served as a Private II Co E, 8th Cavalry the Union Army during the Civil War. He and his wife lived in their house until their deaths. Allan died in 1921 with Elizabeth dying in 1923. He and his wife are buried in Oak Crest Cemetery. They had 8 children, 3 of whom are buried in in the Main Street Cemetery.

We congratulate the current homeowners, Stacey & Michael Lane, for preserving the history of their home. If you are interested in learning more about the Historic Home Program, please visit our website at [www.downersgrovehistory.org](http://www.downersgrovehistory.org) and click on Historic Homes.

## 44th Pine Hollow Open Was Largest Ever



Photo of the original Chicago Golf Club (now Downers Grove Golf Club) established in 1892. Golfers enjoy the good weather and a day out on the historic DG Golf course. Park District Golf Club Manager and Historical Society Board Member Bruce Swanson, organizers of the event.

The 44th annual Pine Hollow Open at the historic Downers Grove Golf Club was a huge success. This annual event is a partnership between the Downers Grove Historical Society and the Downers Grove Golf Club and is normally part of the annual Founders Day week-long series of events. The pandemic crimped our style on the larger celebration, but not for this outside event. Over 120 men and women completed the 9 holes on April 24th and thankfully the weather cooperated. It gets bigger every year and has become a well-loved tradition.

### Winners this year are as follows:

Champion-John Ghan(34); Senior Champion-Bill Altier (38); Flight Winners: First Flight-Mike Wealton; Second Flight-Jay Stocki; Third Flight-Doug Week; Fourth-Joe Morgan; Founders Flight-Evan Smith.

### Contest Winners:

Longest Drive-Barry Fitzgerald; Closest to Pin 6-John Ghan; Closest to Pin 8-Matt Herbeck; Longest Putt-Uche Olekanma; Putting Champion-Craig Morgan (12); Prediction Winner Craig Morgan; Birdie Contest-Bill Altier.

Congratulations all!

## Partnership Renewed for Main Street Cemetery



On May 18th, the Main Street Cemetery Agreement between the Village and the Historical Society was renewed by the Village Council for another 10 years. This agreement, dating from 2000, arranges for the Historical Society to help the Village by providing research, guidance, and support for the ongoing maintenance and upkeep of this historic resting place of many of our early settlers.

Research into who is buried there is an ongoing project by board member and historian Lois Sterba. Twelve new stones were placed marking the locations of researched and previously unidentified interred, and a number information plaques were installed at graves where legibility on the original stones has deteriorated. New monuments were installed to commemorate those fallen from the Civil War, and another to provide educational information about Downers Grove's place in the Underground Railroad history.

Our new web app [www.mainstreetcemetery.com](http://www.mainstreetcemetery.com) was launched, the new sidewalk was installed, and 9 Living Cemetery and Founder of the Year events have taken place. Most important, this partnership led to the successful Landmarking of the cemetery.

We have more important work to accomplish and we look forward to continuing our stewardship mission for this downtown historic site.

## Reminder: Celebration of Life for Carol Wandschneider

Carol Wandschneider was a local historian and long-time Downers Grove Historical Society board member. She sadly passed away in January 2020.

### Saturday, July 24

**10am** Funeral at St Andrews Episcopal Church  
1125 Franklin St., DG

**4:30pm** - Celebration of Life at the Downers Grove Museum  
831 Maple Ave, DG

#### Parking

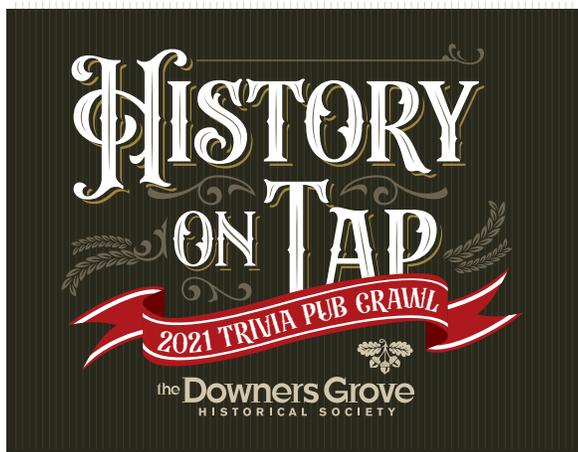
The Museum's Main Parking lot will be reserved as handicap parking. Parking for other visitors is available on the streets surrounding the museum including Lyman Ave and Belden Ave. In addition, there will be parking available in the Lincoln Center Parking lot, located at 935 Maple Ave, to the west of the Museum.



## We're Back! Pull Out Your Calendar and Save These Dates!

All event details will be available on our website [www.downersgrovehistory.org](http://www.downersgrovehistory.org) as they become available

- **July 24** – Celebration of Life for Carol Wandschneider - see article for details
- **September 18** – Montrew Dunham Award – 10am – Downers Grove Museum Campus. Come celebrate our own 'Music Man' Dave Humphreys for his dedication and contributions to Downers Grove
- **October 16** – Historian of the Year – You won't want to miss this chance to thank our next honoree (to be announced in August) for the time, talents, and treasure dedicated to preserving and promoting Downers Grove history
- **October 23** – Living Cemetery – 10am-12pm – Main Street Cemetery - Visit with our pioneer families as they give you insight into their lives in early Downers Grove in the mid-1800's
- **November 11** – History on Tap – more information coming soon!
- Still to Come with Dates to be Determined:
  - Historic Site and Founder of the Year dedication – Pierce Downer Burial Ground



## History on Tap Trivia Pub Crawl is coming back bigger and better than before.

We're excited to announce that planning of this event have already begun. Our team is busy working on ways to include more stops and more trivia. Mark your calendars for **November 11** and stayed tuned for more information!



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

