LA GRANGE AREA HISTORICAL SOCIETY
444 S. La Grange Road La Grange IL 60525

2026 Fall Newsletter
Now and Then

A Message from the President

As summer begins to fade and we look toward the changing colors of fall, there is still another month to experience our fabulous exhibit, A Walk Through Time, which explores how our community evolved from 1890 through 1970. We want to extend a sincere thank you to the many local sponsors who helped bring this exhibit to life. With their support and yours, we are able to continue sharing La Grange's history with the community. If you have not yet visited, we invite you to stop by the Vial House and experience the exhibit before we begin our transition to the holiday season. We also had a wonderful time this summer at our annual Ice Cream Social as we celebrated 250 years since our country declared its independence. It was a great afternoon spent together as a community, enjoying ice cream, snow cones, and a bouncy house, balloons, & games. This year, we added a watermelon eating contest and based on the enthusiasm we saw, we may have just started a new tradition!

As we head into fall, we turn our attention to one of our most beloved events, the Home & History Tour. This year's tour features a wonderful mix of historic homes, a more contemporary home, and a very special addition, the Emmanuel Episcopal Church of La Grange. Together, these locations showcase the unique character, architecture, and history that make La Grange and La Grange Park such special places to call home.

I walk my dog through our neighborhoods all the time and find myself wondering what is behind the doors of some of the homes I pass. The Home & History Tour gives all of us the opportunity to step inside and experience some of these incredible places for ourselves.

Your support, whether through attending an event, becoming a member, volunteering, or simply sharing our story with a neighbor, is what allows the Historical Society to continue our mission.

Daniel Malloy

Upcoming Events

May 13th ~ Oct 3rd
2026 Annual Exhibit
A Walk Through Time

Sunday, September 20th
Home & History Tour
Noon ~ 5:00 pm

Wednesday, November 4th
Doorways of Chicago
7:00 ~ 8:30 pm

Wednesday, November 18th
Old No.10 Release Party at Milk Money Brewing

Holidays at the Vial House

Saturdays, December 5th & 12th
Photos With Santa
Appointments from 1:00 ~ 4:00 pm

Sunday, December 6th
Christmas Open House & Bake Sale
1:00 ~ 3:00 pm

For information & tickets to all events, go to our website lagrangehistory.org

MUSEUM NEWS

There is Still...Time!

Our extraordinary 2026 annual exhibit, **A Walk Through Time,** will be closing on Saturday October 3rd. It has been a wildly popular exhibit with the community and it's not too late to see it for yourself! This immersive exhibit offers an unparalleled opportunity to journey through the decades beginning in the 1890s and concluding in the 1970s. It features hundreds of artifacts from the LGAHS Collections including period clothing, the "technologies" of the times and family items. These physical representations along with the many posters and descriptive placards that tell the stories of each era in La Grange as well as national events such as the World's Columbian Exhibition held in Chicago in 1893, the Roaring 20s, the swinging 60s and so much more! History truly comes alive in the setting of the beautiful Samuel Vial House!

Doorways of Chicago

On **Wednesday November 4th,** Chicago-based photographer, tour guide, and influencer Ronnie Frey (better known as @doorwaysofchicago on Instagram) will join us to discuss his new book, his work—with its keen eye for details many overlook—and his deep love for Chicago's layered architectural history. Guests will have the opportunity to view some of Frey's photography collection and purchase signed copies of his new book.

Introducing Common Ground

We are thrilled to announce the formation of Common Ground, a new nonprofit, all-volunteer organization founded by Anne-Marie Eischen and Sarah Shiflett to beautify and care for the grounds of the Samuel Vial House. Drawing on their extensive gardening knowledge and experience, Anne-Marie and Sarah envision gardens that honor the LGAHS mission through historically significant plants, native species, and pollinator-friendly plantings—all while creating opportunities for community members to get involved. There is much more to come as Common Ground takes root! Watch our website, lagrangehistory.org, for more information and details about an upcoming call for volunteers.

Release Party for Old No. 10

Join us **Wednesday**, **November 18th** at Milk Money Brewing for the first pour of **Old No. 10,** the beer exclusively created for the La Grange Area Historical Society! Come and discover why La Grange once declared '*No Saloons Allowed*', test your knowledge with La Grange trivia, win prizes and help support the La Grange Area Historical Society! Delicious bites will be available for purchase and it's sure to be an exciting evening! Watch our website, lagrangehistory.org**,** for details and tickets or purchase tickets via the QR code.

Don't worry...We'll be Back!

Life In La Grange

The annual **LGAHS Home & History Tour** offers an exceptional opportunity to visit some of La Grange's most remarkable homes. But what did La Grange look like before it became the village we know today, and how did its distinctive residential architecture develop?

Before Franklin D. Cossitt began developing La Grange in the early 1870s, the area was largely prairie and farmland dotted with farmhouses, barns and livestock. Dirt and plank roads crossed the countryside, including an old Native American trail that became the Chicago-Dixon Road, later known as the Old Plank Road and today as Ogden Avenue.

By 1873, thanks to Cossitt's vision, the rural landscape was beginning to acquire shade trees, churches, schools and substantial homes. Cossitt's "fine quality homes," priced from about $2,000 to $8,000, helped establish the residential character of the new community.

Early La Grange houses reflected the architectural tastes of the Victorian era. Italianate-influenced homes featured tall, narrow windows and broad eaves with decorative brackets. More elaborate Queen Anne houses added towers, turrets, wraparound porches and decorative woodwork, while Romanesque Revival homes emphasized heavy stonework and masonry. By the early 20th century, tastes were changing. Prairie-style houses emphasized horizontal lines, low-pitched roofs and broad overhanging eaves, while the practical American Foursquare was known for its simple, box-like shape, hipped roof and efficient floor plan.

As La Grange prospered in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, it attracted prominent architects and builders, including E. H. Turnock, J. N. Tilden, Frank Lloyd Wright and C. F. Jobson. Joseph C. Llewellyn was among the most important architects associated with La Grange's development. After establishing his architectural practice in 1893, he made La Grange his home for the rest of his life. Llewellyn designed at least 23 La Grange residences, three banks and a major 1920s expansion of Lyons Township High School's North Campus, including its distinctive clock tower. In 1894, Llewellyn built his own home at 324 6th Avenue, an interpretation of Classical Revival architecture.

The work of these architects and builders contributed to the remarkable variety of residential architecture that survives today. That legacy was formally recognized on August 8, 1979, when the La Grange Historic District was listed on the National Register of Historic Places. Its boundaries were selected to encompass significant concentrations of historically and architecturally important homes that retained much of their original character**.**

8th Annual Home & History Tour

On Sunday September 20th, this year's Home & History Tour spans nearly 150 years of local architecture, with exceptional examples ranging from Italianate and Prairie influences to contemporary design. A centerpiece of the Tour is the Emmanuel Episcopal Church of La Grange, one of the village's most important historic landmarks. Located at the exact geographic center of La Grange as it was configured in 1874, Emmanuel is the community's oldest church and only the third individual building in La Grange to be added to the National Register of Historic Places. Church staff will share its rich history with visitors throughout the Tour.

The homes provide an equally compelling look at the evolution of residential architecture in La Grange and La Grange Park. An 1879 Italianate home recalls the village's earliest years, while the family home designed by noted architect J.C. Llewellyn for himself retains many of its original architectural details. A 1909 C.J. Jobson design demonstrates the growing influence of the Prairie style in the early 20th century. The Tour also reaches the present with a home completed in 2022, bringing contemporary residential design into the architectural timeline. Together, the church and homes illustrate the remarkable range of architectural styles found in our community and the changing ideas about design and daily life that shaped them.

La Grange Area Historical Society
444 S. La Grange Rd.
La Grange, IL 60525

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Vial House Museum Hours: Wed 9:30AM ~ Noon * Thurs ~ Sat: 11:00AM - 2:00PM
Contact Us: www.lagrangehistory.org * info@lagrangehistory.org

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SAVE THE DATES!

NOVEMBER 4th,2026