

HISTORY - Cville

Local History
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CARPENTERSVILLE
ILLINOIS
1887-1987

CENTENNIAL

caring and sharing
for another
century for progress

Daily Courier News

Wednesday, August 12, 1987

"We salute the people and the Village of Carpentersville
on their 100th anniversary!"



This panoramic view of Carpentersville was taken in 1890 by photographer William F. Kobs. The hilltop overview looks east to the Fox River from what is now Illinois 31 north of Main Street. The area was the focus of Carpentersville's early industries, and some of these buildings still are used.

Industry was Carpenter's building tool

Angelo developed community with companies, land

By Garry Winter

In the village's early days, it was Angelo Carpenter who brought Carpentersville's first industrial development and who donated many of the community's amenities through the 1800s.

He was the son of Charles V. Carpenter, who with his brother Daniel stopped on the east side of the Fox River in 1837, their progress from Massachusetts to the Rock River blocked by spring flooding of the Fox. Instead of moving on when the

high water receded, they settled on land purchased on the east side of the river for \$100.

Although Daniel moved to Aurora in a few years, Charles stayed on. But it was his son Angelo who made the area into an industrial center, building his own fortune during the 40 years he lived in the village that carries his name.

At age 23, Angelo Carpenter already owned almost all the land on the east side of the river. He erected the village's first

two-story building and opened the first store.

A sawmill on the river was the community's first industry. Surrounding timberland provided black walnut trees that were cut into lumber at the mill then shipped to Chicago by ox teams.

The mining sand and gravel was another early industry, one that still goes on today around the village.

What was called Carpenter's Grove was platted in 1851 as Carpentersville after

Angelo Carpenter.

BEFORE 1850, Carpenter's purchase of a sawmill and a dam gave him control of the area's water power. His early investments were in industries that he moved into his area by the river. He bought a wool mill in what was then Dundee and moved it into Carpentersville. He turned the mill into a factory for spinning and dying

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**MAIN STORE IS STILL AT
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**"A Little Hard to Find,
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426-6761



W. L. Besinger helped expand town in 1950s

From page 2

yarn, flannel and cashmere. The mill remained in business until the 1880s, when it burned down.

He owned the Atlantic Flour Mills, which were built in Carpenters Grove in 1845. Later, in partnership with his father-in-law, Alfred Edwards of Dundee, Carpenter bought out a small reaper manufacturer. That company he made into Illinois Iron & Bolt Co., which became a major industry in the village for years.

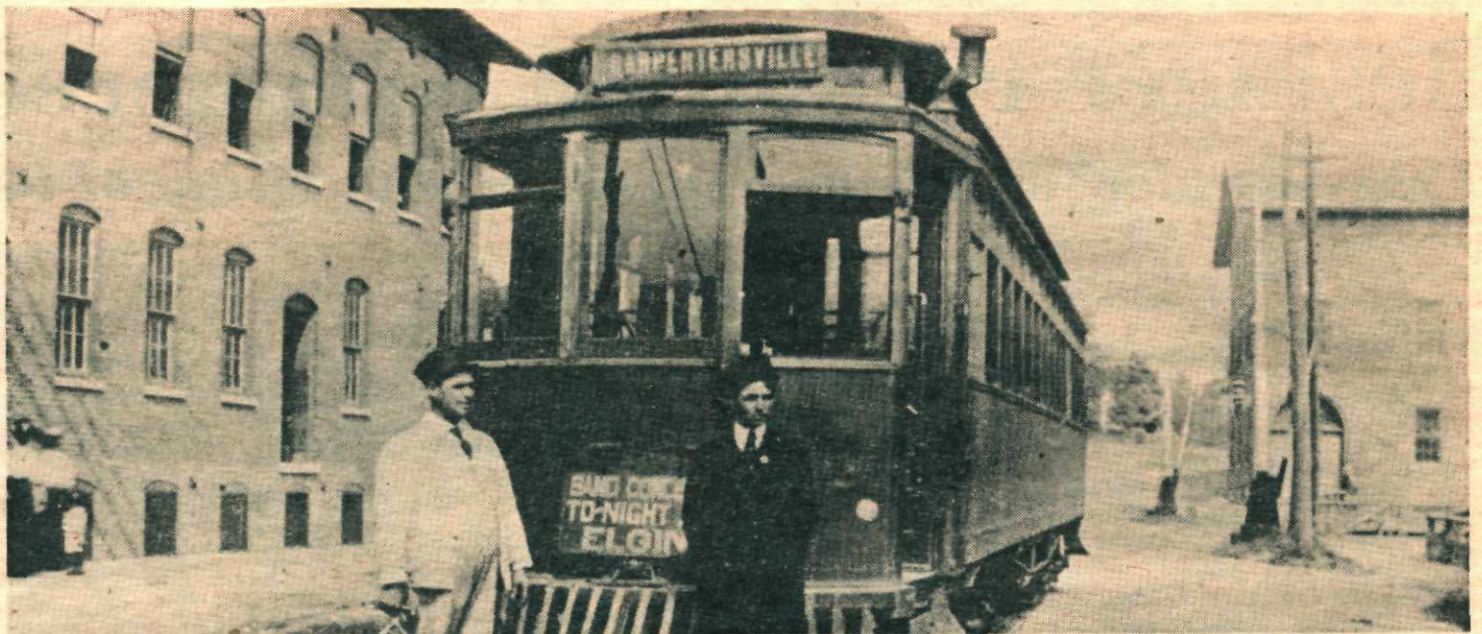
Carpenter's ownership of most of the local industry and his land holdings made him a major figure in early Carpentersville. He was able to ward off competition and develop his holdings as he saw fit.

He was also a donor to the community, providing it with recreational, religious and cultural amenities.

In 1851 he built a bridge across the Fox River, paying the \$10,000 cost himself. In 1878, three years after he and his wife move to Elgin, Carpenter offered to double the funds raised by popular subscription to bring the Chicago and North Western Railway into Carpentersville from Dundee.

CARPENTER'S family donated a public library to the village in his name, a church and parsonage, originally intended for all denominations and Carpenter Park.

Carpenter died in 1880. His widow later married George P. Lord who headed the



The two-man crew of a trolley car poses in front of it while waiting for riders outside the Star Manufacturing

Co. factory in Carpentersville in the early 1900s. Trolleys ran between Carpentersville and Elgin until 1933.

Elgin National Watch Co. in Elgin. She died in 1905.

By the turn of the century, Carpentersville, with a population of about 1,000, was the smallest of the three villages then in Dundee Township, but it had the three largest industries: Illinois Condensing Co., Star Manufacturing Co. and Illinois Iron & Bolt Co., latter being the largest of the three.

The bolt company originally made iron parts designed to reduce wear on wagon wheel axles. Carpenter and his father-in-law Edwards took controlling interest of it in 1868 and expanded its production to a variety of iron implements with a national market.

In 1873, he and others organized Star

Manufacturing Co. to make farm machinery and implements. Star and Illinois Iron & Bolt merged in 1912.

Outside of the village's early commercial development, it received its own post office in 1868 and its first railroad line in 1878.

Following its industrial growth of the 19th century, Carpentersville's development held fairly steady until the 1950s, when another great period of expansion occurred.

This time the developer was Leonard W. Besinger, whose Meadowdale housing development in the middle 1950s made Carpentersville the largest village among its Dundee Township neighbors.

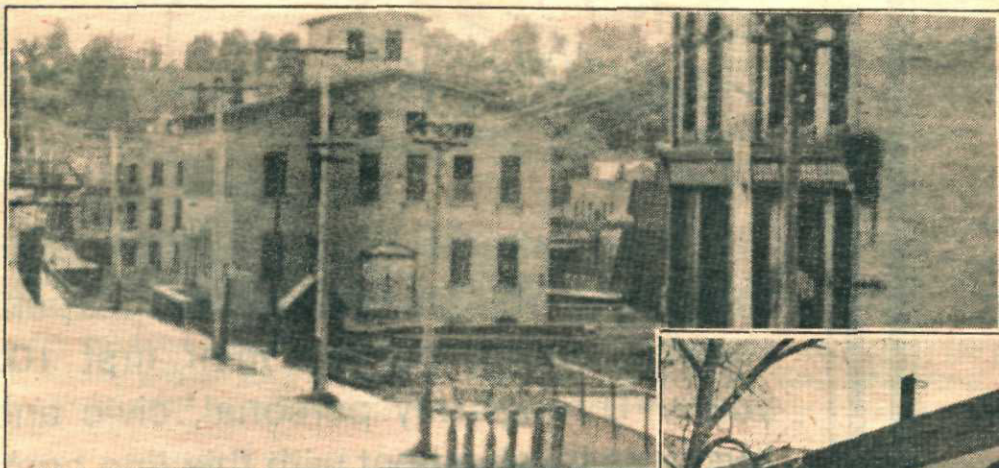
Along with affordable houses for a World War II and Korean War veterans eager to move their families away from

Chicago, Besinger also built one of the nation's first large shopping centers, and a track for automobile racing. With that also came donations of land for the village hall, local schools and other community amenities.

Carpentersville's population has steadied at about 24,000 for the last few years, but some expansion is foreseen again.

Meanwhile, village officials have undertaken an assortment of projects for improvements. A revised zoning plan is near completion, the city has repaved streets and is starting a sidewalk improvement program, and the village is following through on a property maintenance code trustees initiated a few years ago.

Growing with Carpentersville



Congratulations, Carpentersville. We're growing stronger together. Established in 1961, Otto's innovations for the aerospace industry have earned it a strong reputation for excellence in the design, quality, and manufacture of precision switches. Shown here (at left) is Otto's building in the early 1900s.

Otto now employs approximately 200 people at their updated plant. The century-old building houses Otto's Controls Division and Equipment Division, and a variety of small firms.

**OTTO
ENGINEERING**

2 East Main, Carpentersville



Besinger revolution conquered village

'Crazy builder' overcame opposition with vision of town for workers

By Dave Gathman

Some towns are shaped by giant personalities—people with a vision who single-handedly turn that town into a

different world from what it was when they found it.

Dundee Township had one such giant—Leonard W. Besinger.

By building Meadowdale housing development and shopping center in



L. W. Besinger

the 1950s and 1960, he accelerated the perhaps inevitable process of suburbanization by 20 years or more. He increased the population of the township sixfold. He turned Carpentersville from one among three equal villages into a municipality which accounts for three-fourths of the township's population and most of its manufacturing.

The changes he wrought dwarf the impact of Spring Hill Mall. They make creation of the Village of Sleepy Hollow look trivial.

BUT MOST AMAZINGLY, he did not build his empire in isolated countryside. He built it in a village that was already 120 years old, separated from suburban sprawl



Photo from collection of Leonard Besinger

Families moved into Meadowdale houses while construction virtually went on in their back yards in the subdivision's early days. The housing project got under

way in 1953 with Leonard Besinger's announcement that he would build houses for 15,000 people. Most buyers were veterans seeking affordable homes.

by 20 miles of farmland, populated by hundreds of people who could not stand the thought of what he was doing and fought him all the way.

The importance of his project was not lost on Besinger. Reading some publications his firm put out when Meadowdale was growing apace, one might be excused for thinking one was reading a 19 century French account of the French Revolution.

"The people of Carpentersville, until the advent of Meadowdale, maintained a sleepy little village of moderate-income families which had laid dormant since (Angelo) Carpenter passed away," said his "Meadowdale Pictorial," which circulated among the development's new homebuyers in 1956.

THE MODE OF LIFE was likened to the United States of 1915 in

Carpentersville, East and West Dundee, the paper said. "These towns were divided into two separate classes of people—the rich, and those who worked for the rich people of the area, who had inherited businesses from their ancestors and thereby were not progressive and not willing to change or try anything new.

"The workers, therefore, were forced to

•Turn to page 6

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- Hampshire High School
- Streamwood High School
- St. Charles High School
- Central High School, Burlington
- Burlington Grade School

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- ★ At your Community Education Center Wed., Aug. 26, 6-8 p.m.

COME *Home* TO ELGIN COMMUNITY COLLEGE

Happy Birthday

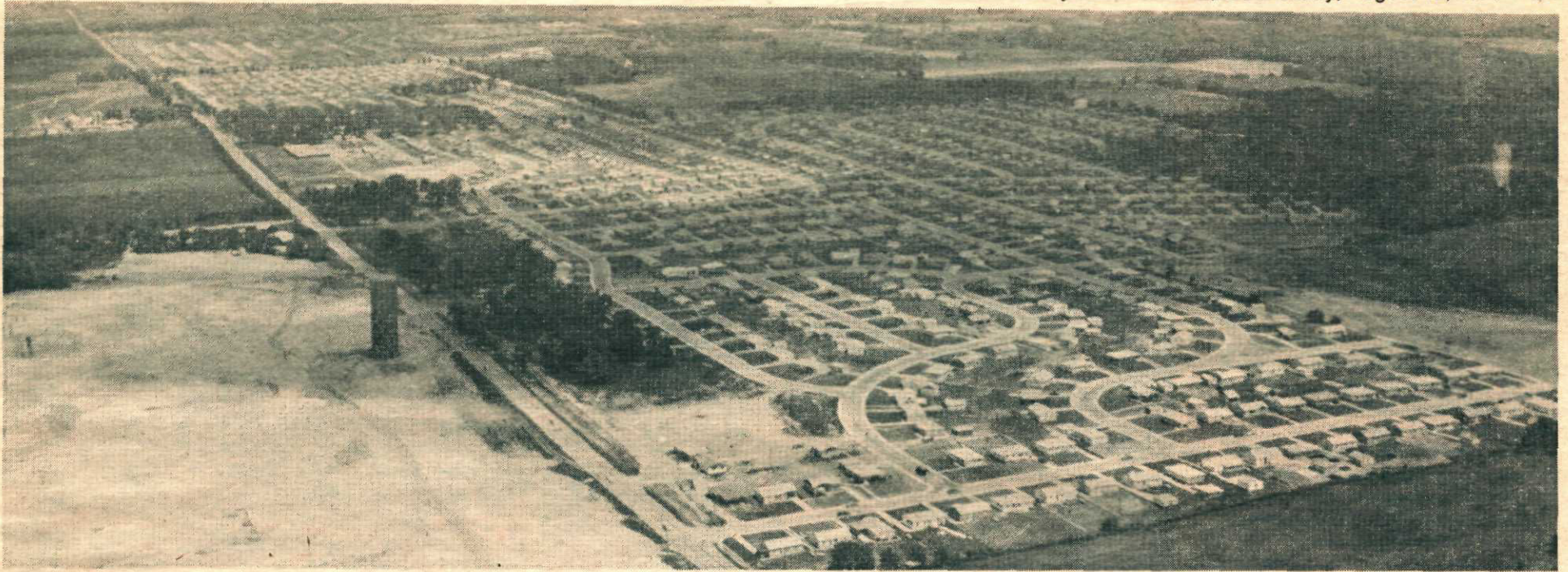


I am extremely proud to have been associated with the Village of Carpentersville during part of their first 100 years. Through my personal, civic and business involvement with this fine community I have made many fine friends.

I pledge my best efforts toward "caring and sharing for another century of progress."

Happy Birthday, Carpentersville

Jerry Christopherson
President, J. Chris Corp.



Meadowdale's growth

Courier-News File Photos


One of the Chicago area's first large housing subdivisions, Leonard W. Besinger's Meadowdale sprawls across the countryside east of Illinois 25. The light area toward the left shows only the landmark water tower at what would become Meadowdale Shopping Center.



Opened in May 1957, the Meadowdale Shopping Center on Illinois 25 had 54 stores, including a Wieboldt's department store and the enclosed Wintergarden ice skating rink, which burned down in 1963. Developer Besinger called his shopping center "the largest number of stores under one roof in the world" at the time. The center was remodeled in 1984 in an attempt to regain some of the business it lost to newer shopping malls.

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The Meadowdale Businessmen's Association
 And
The Meadowdale Shopping Center
 In Carpentersville
Salutes The Village Of
Carpentersville
On Their Centennial

1887-1987

●Meadowdale was Besinger vision of city

From page 4

go along with the trend—that is, until the coming of Meadowdale."

Enter the hero of the working man—what "The Meadowdale Pictorial" referred to as "a very optimistic and crazy builder" who "acquired this vast holding on which he envisions a whole town."

Besinger was born in Chicago in 1907. By age 12, he had entered the building contractor business with his father.

Putting up houses in Arlington Heights, Park Ridge and Flossmoor, Besinger apparently did well financially. By the 1940s he owned a 300-acre "gentleman's farm" in what is now northeastern Carpentersville. Here he kept "hackney ponies" the Meadowdale Pictorial says.

But on May 15, 1949, a fire raced through the stable and killed 25 ponies. Besinger rebuilt, but the stable burned again on Nov. 27, 1951.

"THIS TIME, I decided to forget about raising horses and sell the land," he said in an interview in 1956, which is quoted at length in "Dundee Township: 1835-1985."

His first idea was to build an industrial park on the site.

He talked to Public Service Co., which had just completed a survey of the industrial potential of each of its towns. The



Courier-News File Photo

Fire destroyed the Winter Garden, above, at the Meadowdale Shopping Center on Nov. 19, 1963. Small shops, a refreshment center, a restaurant and a lounge surrounding an ice skating rink in the en-

closed area were all destroyed. Losses were estimated at close to \$3 million. The mall was later rebuilt, but the skating rink, its focal point, was not included.

survey showed that Besinger's area had everything it needed for industry except a solid base of workers to be employed

there.

"Since I had planned to buy Chicago property and build homes on it with the

money I received from the sale of the land, I thought I might just as well build on my

•Turn to page 7

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STYLE...
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Mall)

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●Meadowdale, the vision

From page 6

own property and sell the manufacturing land" later, Besinger said.

He bought another 875 acres owned by Chicago developer Walter McIntosh, who had been developing "country club" high-income housing since the '20s. (The local remnants of what McIntosh developed are now Lakewood Estates subdivision in East Dundee and Carpentersville.)

Another 820 acres came from the Curtiss Candy Co., which owned a farm near Illinois 25. Soon, Besinger had assembled some 2,600 acres.

On March 1, 1953, residents of the "old towns" were shocked to see this headline in the Chicago Tribune: "Big Residential Center To Rise in Fox Valley; Plan Town of 15,000 Near Elgin."

BESINGER'S PLAN at first was to incorporate his own village and build a self-contained community from scratch, as Floyd Falese would do a few years later in Sleepy Hollow. It would be called Meadowdale, the name of his pony farm. But many of the 5,000 people already in Dundee and Carpentersville had other ideas. The prospect of quadrupling their area's population overnight, no doubt with strangers pouring out of the big city, held little fascination.

Some objectors who lived nearby incorporated their own village, calling it Middlebury. This meant that under state law, Meadowdale would be too close to other village borders to incorporate. East Dundee and Carpentersville fought to keep Besinger from discharging treated sewage into a creek through their villages.

With so many uncertainties, the Federal

Housing Administration refused to insure mortgages in Meadowdale. Besinger finally decided that "if you can't beat 'em, join 'em," and so did the fathers of Carpentersville. Meadowdale was annexed to that village and began going strong.

Besinger made no secret about whom he was aiming to bring into his development. It was the World War II or Korean War veteran and his wife, with several children. They lived in Chicago. They rented a row house or an apartment. They had never expected to be able to buy their own house.

But now they could, because the GI Bill provided government mortgages, and Besinger's prefabricated building techniques provided what he called "the first development around Chicago to offer so much house at a realistic price." A veteran could buy a Meadowdale house for \$10,000 to \$12,000 paying \$20 down and \$58 a month, including taxes. Most houses had 60 by 120 foot lots, no basements, and car ports instead of garages.

He advertized heavily in Chicago, publishing whole newspaper-like advertising supplements extolling the glory of suburban life and allaying fears that conditions out there might be primitive.

Chicagoans loved it. In his first year, Besinger sold 700 lots. He could get only 120 mortgages. But another 700 sold the next year.

Besinger estimated in 1956 that 98 percent of the buyers were veterans and 83 percent still worked in Chicago. In 1958, their commuting became simpler when the new Northwest Tollway suddenly made the Loop an hour away.

A NEW "CITY" needs its own business district. In May 1957, Besinger opened Meadowdale Shopping Center, which he said was the "largest number of stores under one roof in the world." It was anchored by Wieboldt's department store and included Wintergarden ice skating rink, until it burned in 1963.

During the '60s and '70s, the shopping center became a major competitor of downtown Elgin as the region's shopping hub. Later, as enclosed malls became popular, it, too, suffered heavily from competition brought by Spring Hill Mall. Wieboldt's moved out in 1983, and the center's managers undertook a costly improvement program to modernize.



Salutes
Carpentersville's
Centennial

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You...

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15 E. Main St.

ELGIN-WEST
704 W. Chicago

ELGIN-EAST
727 Villa St.

ALGONQUIN
Rt. 31

C'ville's facts of importance

Incorporated: 1887
Population: 23,272 (1980 census)
Zip code: 60110
Area code: 312
Telephone prefixes: 426, 428, 551

Village government: council-manager form with board of six trustees and a village president elected at large. The board meets in the village hall board room at 8 p.m. on the first and third Tuesday of each month.

Village president: Herbert Radtke

Village board: John Skillman, Otis "Bud" Compton, Russel Morehead, Charles Zine, Janet Rigney, Radtke; one vacancy.

Village Hall: 1200 L.W. Besinger Drive; phone 426-3439.

Employees: 89 full-time

Village manager: Curtis Carver

Village clerk: Lillian Burrian

Police: Leon Kutzke, police chief; 35 officers. To report emergency, phone 911. For non-emergency, phone 551-3481.

Fire protection: Carpentersville & Countryside Fire Protection District; Richard Paul, fire chief; 12 full-time firefighters, 50 paid on call. To report a fire or request an ambulance phone 426-4911.

Public works: Stephen Starek, director of public works and engineering; 27 employees.

State representative: Delores Doederlein, R-65th District; district office: 19 N. Main St., Algonquin, phone 658-6508.

State senator: John Friedland, R-33rd District; district office: 888 N. LaFox St., South Elgin; phone 888-0175

Congressman: Dennis Hastert, R-14th District; District office, 27 N. River St., Batavia; phone 406-1141. Elgin office in Elgin National Bank Building is open Wednesdays and Fridays from 8:30 a.m. to 4 p.m., phone 697-6622.

U.S. senators: Alan Dixon, Democrat; Paul Simon, Democrat



Courier-News Photo

The village hall is the hub of local government. The structure was opened in 1978.

Parks: Amarillo Park—tennis, baseball, soccer and playground; Besinger Community Center—baseball, basketball, soccer, senior center and playground; Carpenter Park—baseball, playground and bandshell; Fairview Park—baseball, basketball and playground; Golfview Park—softball and playground; Hickory Hill Park—softball and playground; Keith Andres Park—baseball and playground; Kemper Park—softball, soccer and playground; Lincolnwood Manor—softball, basketball and playground; Morningside Community Center—playground; Thresher Pool; and Sunnyhill Park—tennis, softball and playground.

Schools: Elgin Community College's Lakewood Center; Dundee Crown High School, Carpentersville Middle School, Golfview Elementary School, Josephine Perry Elementary School, Meadowdale Elementary School, and Parkview Elementary School, all in Dundee Unit School District 300; and Sunny Hill Elementary School in Barrington School District 220.

Major roadways: Illinois 25, Illinois 31, Illinois 68 and Lake Marian Road.

The Meadowdale Apartments Wishes To Offer
Congratulations To Carpentersville's Centennial

MEADOWDALE APARTMENTS

1 and 2 Bedrooms Available

Carpentersville, Ill.
Phone 428-6404

Happy Centennial Carpentersville

Caring And Sharing For Another Century Of Progress

From Cargill

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DIVISION

Lake Marian Rd. & Cottage Ave.
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A Company That Feels Good About Our Town And Supports The Success Of The Community.

• ECONOMIC IMPACT

Cargill has been a good neighbor for over 22 years, providing 140 jobs that in turn supports 140 area families. In addition, our payroll generates as many as 210 additional jobs by contributing to the local economy.

• COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

Cargill has a strong commitment to the community as evidenced by our financial and people support for activities such as Little League, Jamboree Days, friends of Carpenter Park and the Lions. We are community leaders and are actively involved in the Cardinal Area Chamber of Commerce.

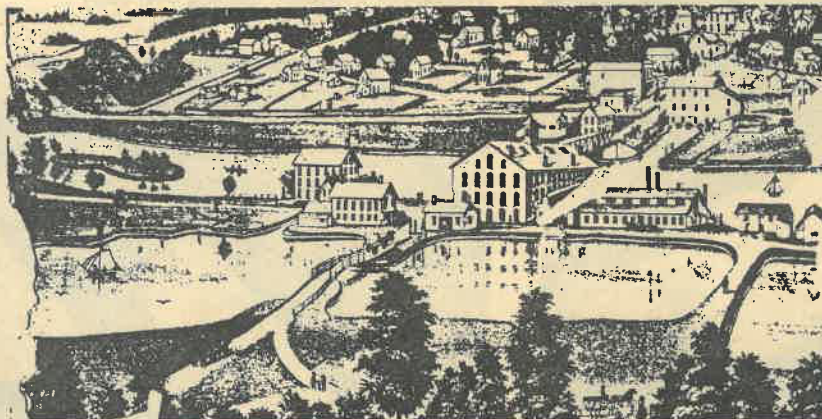
• TAX CONTRIBUTION

Cargill as the 5th largest employer in the Carpentersville area continues to support all the public programs thru its tax dollars. Cargill has an effective safety and loss control program. This is beneficial to both employees and the community.

1887-1987 CARPENTERSVILLE, ILLINOIS



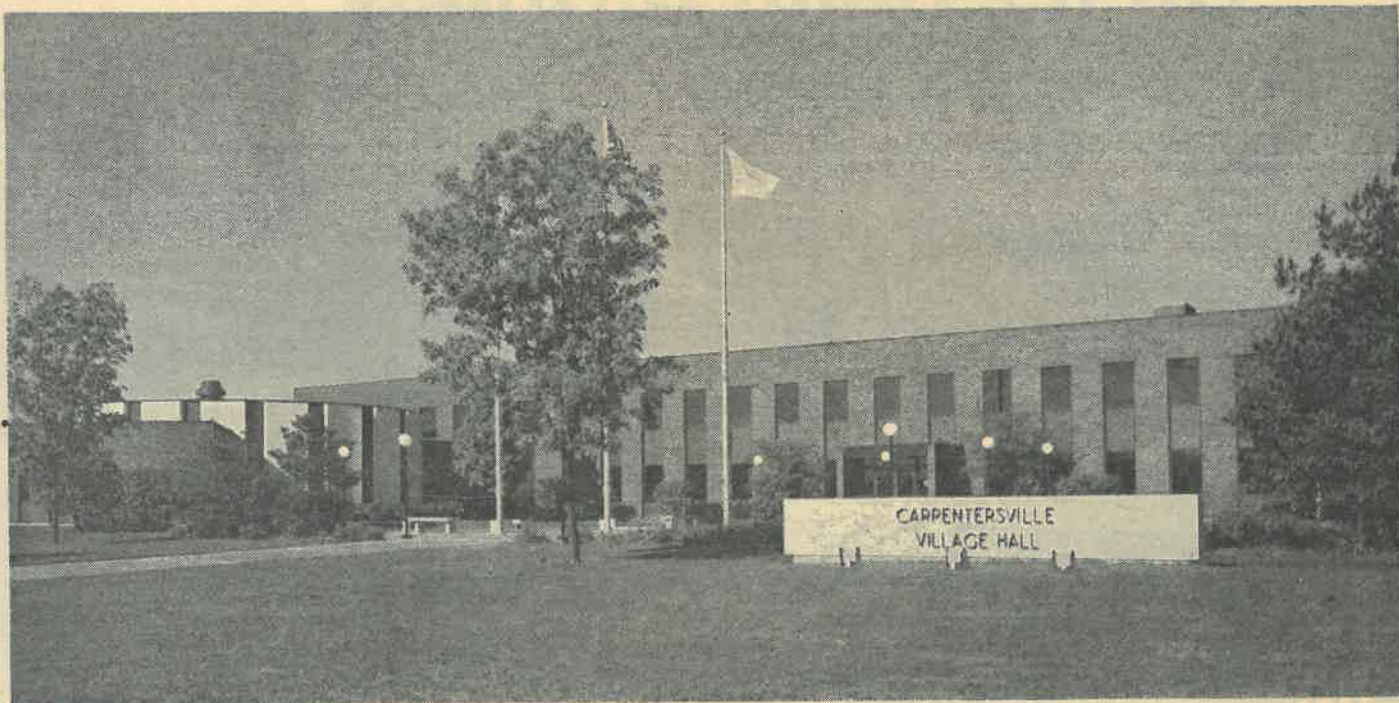
J.A. CARPENTER



CARPENTERSVILLE FROM ATLAS OF 1871

caring and sharing for another century for progress

We've grown from a sleepy little village on the Fox River in the days of our founding fathers to a thriving, active community of 24,000. Thanks to J.A. Carpenter, who chose this idyllic spot for his new home, we had the resources of the Fox River and access from Chicago via the railroad to attract industry and along with it the hard working pioneers who helped make our village grow. Today, Carpentersville mixes small town charm, an emphasis on growth and development, and a beautiful Fox Valley location to make it a community ideal for business and family. As we look forward to a bright future, we remember the spirit of those first settlers for inspiration.



1200 L.W. BESINGER DRIVE, CARPENTERSVILLE, ILLINOIS 60110 • 426-3434

HERBERT RADTKE, VILLAGE PRESIDENT

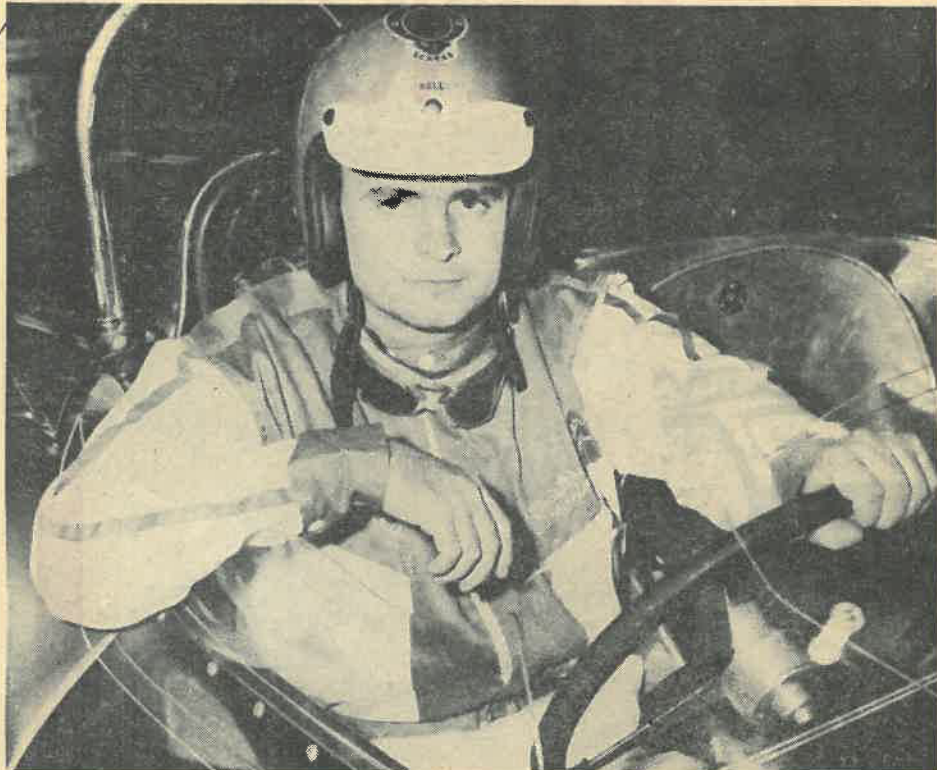
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JOHN SKILLMAN
KENNETH HEBEL

Time speeds past Meadowdale Raceway

Once a top-rate track, the unused property now is flagged for sale



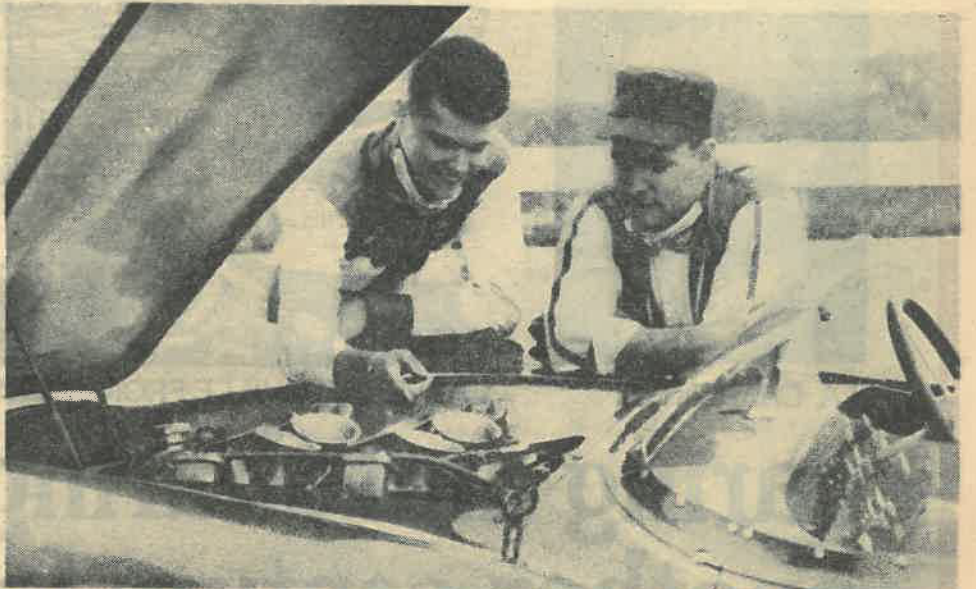
Courier-News File Photos

Driver Harry Heuer, in full racing gear here, was a frequent winner in high-powered sports car races at Meadowdale Raceway west and north of Carpentersville in the early 1960s. Joining him on the local track then were some of auto racing's big names, including Indianapolis 500 drivers Parnelli Jones, Mark Donahue, Roger Penske, and Peter Revson.

CARPENTERSVILLE — It is a lonely place now. In the open spaces, birds soar overhead add their cries to the sunlit silence. Among the trees, the only sounds are from spring water splashing from its source and a raccoon dashing over leafy groundcover.

A forest preserve? Not quite. In the 1950s and 1960s, these woodland hills vibrated with energy emanating from animals with peculiar names such as Ferrari, Porsche, Chaparral and Lotus. This

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Team drivers Don Devine, left, and Harry Heuer, check over the engine of their Chaparral road-racing car. Heuer later drove the auto to victory in the 140-mile Meadowdale feature race at Meadowdale Raceway on Aug. 5, 1962. Heuer was the main driver and Devine drove relief for the Meister Brauser Chaparral racing team.

FIRST NATIONAL BANK OF ELGIN Salutes Carpentersville Township On its 100th Birthday



First National Bank of Elgin

(We're in our 123rd year of service)

Main Office — Downtown Elgin

Civic Center Auto Bank

Town & Country Shopping Center

Tyler Creek Plaza

All Phones 312/697-1100

Member FDIC

●Opening day was a grand and comical event

From page 10

place was Meadowdale Raceway.

It was Sept. 13, 1958, when developer Leonard Besinger unveiled his racetrack, which was to become known worldwide as one of the most challenging and compelling of its kind. The checkered flag waved the last time at the Carpentersville track in 1969.

The raceway's 236-acre parcel is for sale now. It is among more than 900 acres of vacant land that Greg Besinger, the late Leonard's son, has put on the market.

In its heyday, Meadowdale Raceway was a well-known and respected name to auto racing's elite. Roger Penske, Peter Reveson, Parnelli Jones and Mark Donahue are some of the drivers who sped around the hairpin turns and the Monza Wall of the track adjacent to Illinois 31 and Randall Road. Sterling Moss, another name driver of the time, called it the finest course he ever had driven, according to Besinger.

VETERAN TV racing commentator

Christ Econamacki, a fixture every year at the Indy 500, also remembered Meadowdale from its inception, when the elder Besinger flew him out from New York to announce the inaugural races. In an interview four years ago, he remembered the track for its early glory, but also for some of the unintentionally comical features of the opening.

He said the opening-day crowd of 150,000 was "much more than the track could accommodate. There was a

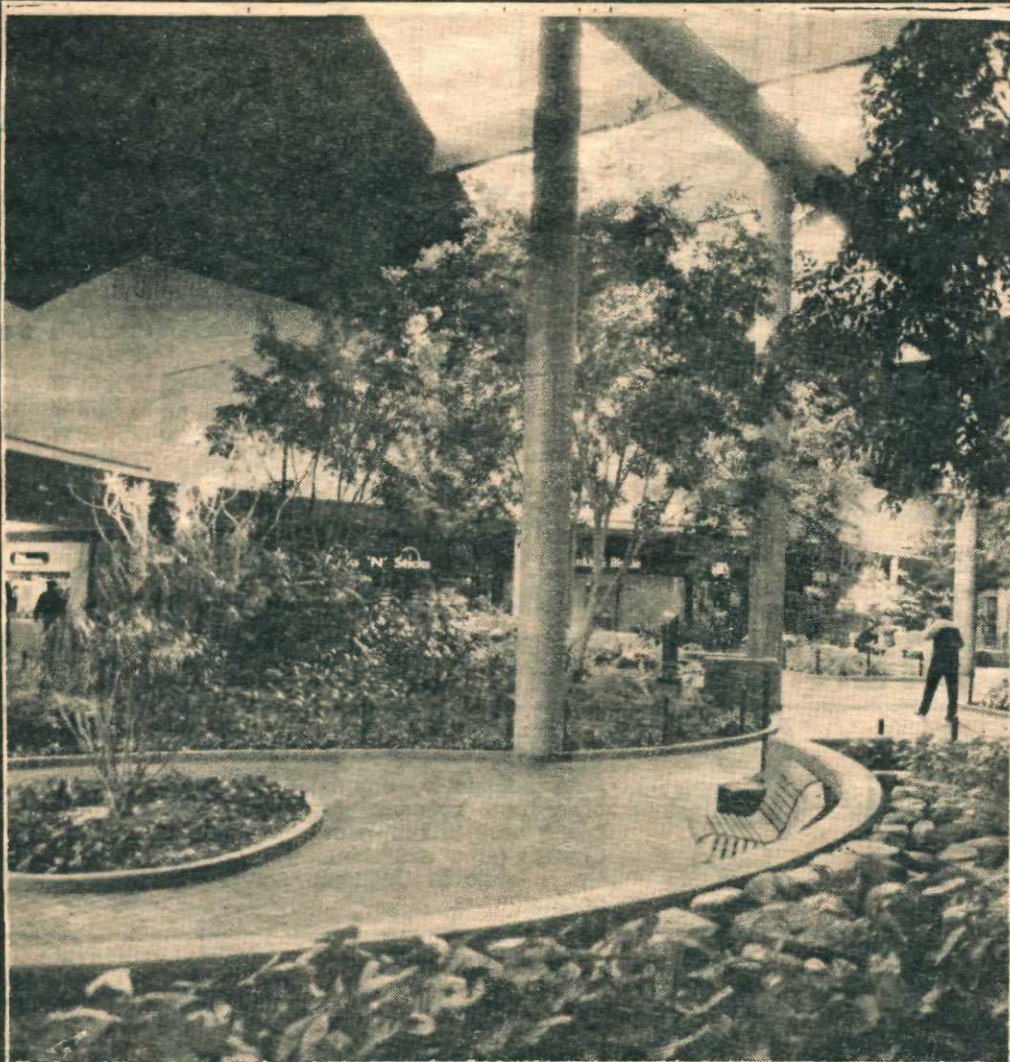
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Courier-News File Photo

Carpentersville developer Leonard Besinger points out features planned for his Meadowdale Raceway on a model of the track. The track was open for about 10 years beginning in 1958 and attracted some of the top

drivers in sports car and road racing. But the big crowds that came for its first year dwindled, and the track had its last full racing season in 1968 after being closed for a year for extensive remodeling.



Congratulations!
Village of
Carpentersville
 During Your
 Centennial Year.
 We Are Proud
 To Be A Part Of This
 Fine Community.

HEAD FOR THE HILL



Spring Hill Mall

Rts. 31 & 72, West Dundee/Sears, Marshall Field's, Bergner's, JCPenney, Spiess, MainStreet and over 130 other fine stores.

●Drive now on to sell the raceway

From page 11

tremendous dust problem. The track was asphalt, but the parking area had just been bulldozed. It was just fresh, loose dirt and there were billowing clouds—it was the dustiest track I've ever been on. You couldn't see."

Concessions for such a crowd were not entirely sufficient, either, recalled Econamacki:

"For ham sandwiches, they had to work with whole hams. The lines were a hundred people long, and the guy had to cut the slices off the ham—it took like three or four minutes. The whole thing was like a comic opera. I don't remember who won the race, but I do remember those other things."

Econamacki said he last was at the track about 10 years earlier for a Chrysler showing of new cars. He talked with Greg Besinger years later about the marketing aspects for reopening the track, but nothing came out of it.

The entire track was put together, appropriately, with racing-like speed in six months under the direction of Philip Whitenouse, then a longtime School District 300 board member.

It was "way ahead of its time," Besinger said. "At the time, there were only so many racing enthusiasts. I mean, in 1957, 100,000 at Indy was a lot of folks."

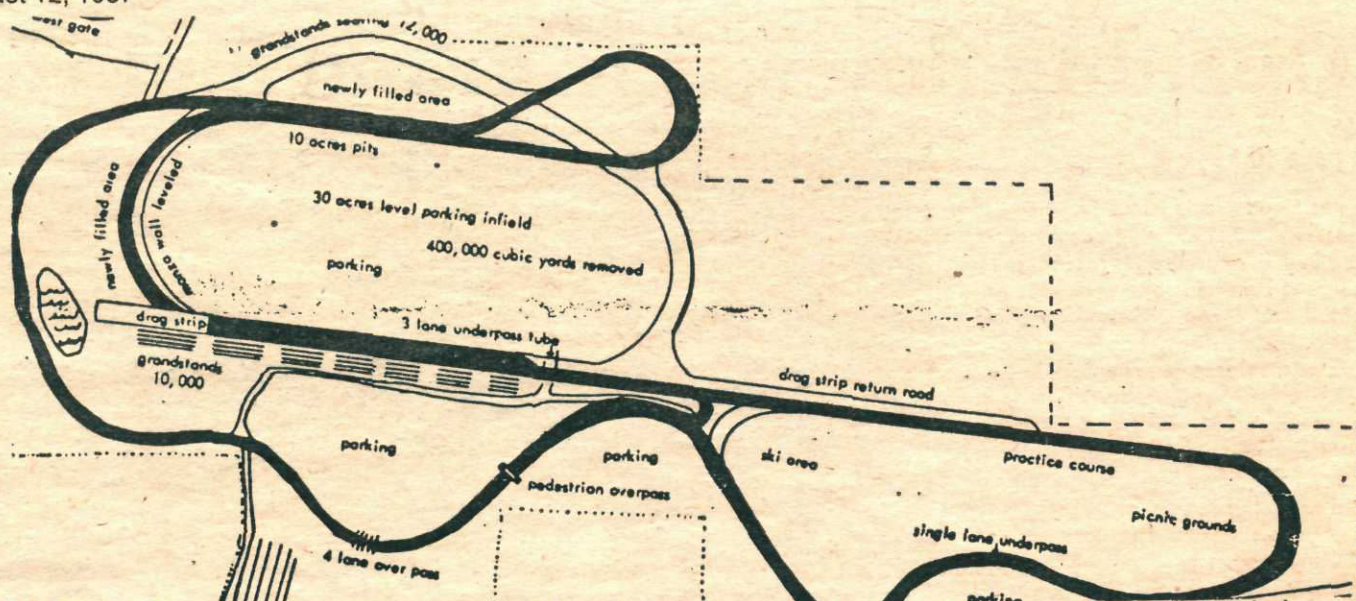
Once the engines stopped at Meadowdale, there still were sporadic bursts of activity and fireworks—literally. Greg's older brother, Leonard Jr., used to have July 4 fireworks displays for the family in an open field that is now Meadowdale Apartments. Eventually, the display got so elaborate that Leonard Sr. moved it to the racetrack and invited the public.

Greg also had a rock concert set for the site in the early '70s, but it was barred by a court injunction and never took place.

Ideas from time to time to restore the track were put down by a price estimated at more than \$3 million. Others reportedly have approached Besinger about developing it as a golf course.

This year, the racetrack was rezoned by the village of Carpentersville to allow a variety of residential, commercial and industrial development on it. Being adjacent to Spring Hill Mall, the land could be another adjunct to the growing commercial development along Illinois 31.

But there are residents of the area who wish to maintain the land just the way it is, with nature taking over the course that racing cars once ran. A citizens group failed to persuade the Dundee Township Park District to buy the property but is pushing for creation of an open space commission to do it.



Meadowdale Raceway in 1968, after the 3½-mile track was remodeled and its "Monza wall" leveled.

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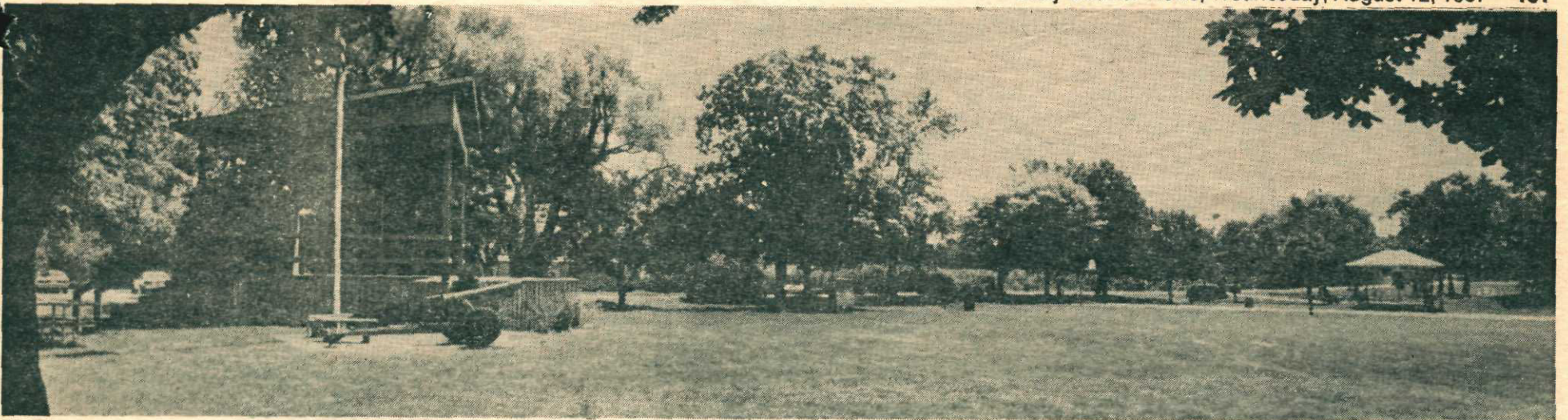
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A band shell and cannon are landmarks of Carpenter Park in Old Town Carpentersville. Although empty in this scene, the park this week is the scene of the Jamboree Days festival. The park also is used for band concerts, family picnics and other community activities throughout the year.

New village manager sees development

By Garry Winter

Growth, both outward and inward, is in store for Carpentersville's future, says its new village manager, Curtis Carver.

"From what I've seen, the village board is committed to improving the quality of life for residents," said Carver.

"It may not be an easy process, but I think the board is committed to pursue that course of action. And I am here to assist the board in any way I can."

Carver, 31, became village manager late last month following the resignation of former village manager Richard Escalante.

Escalante left Carpentersville to accept a similar position in Farmers Branch, Texas, a suburb of Dallas.

"My initial objective is mainly to acclimate myself to the position" of village manager, and "to continue the projects that are ongoing now," said Carver.

"As I handle those, then I'll look at new projects to pursue," he added.

"I think that in the future you will see development in the area," he said. Development will occur on vacant land within the village, and "I think it essentially will develop along lines of current zoning."

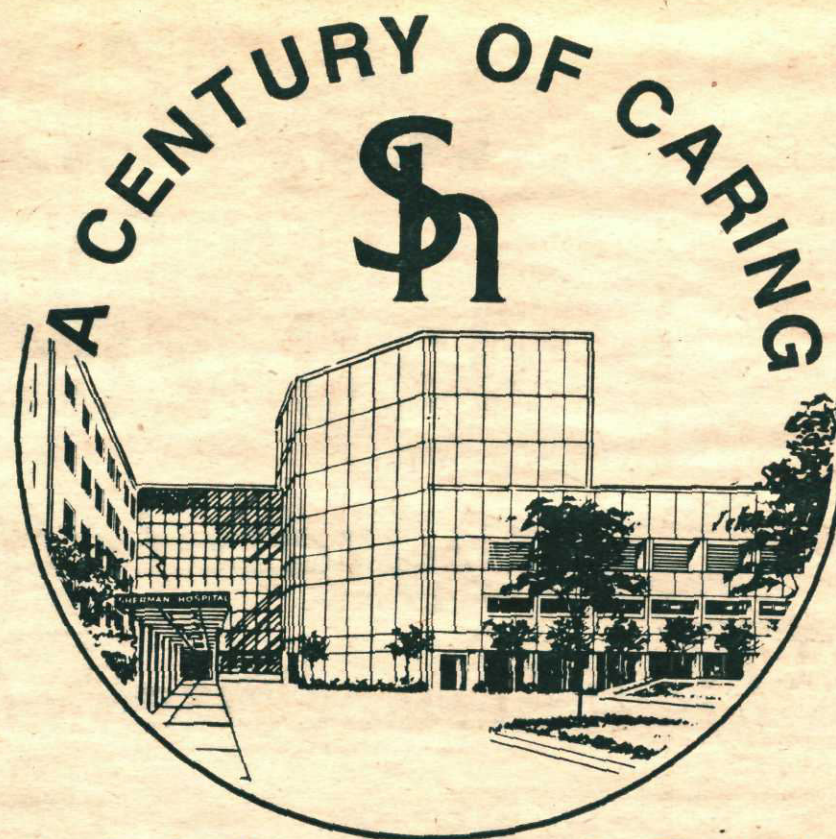
"The property to the west, in the next five years will really get going" he said, referring to the former Meadowdale Raceway and other land west of Illinois 31.

To guide its development, the village has prepared an updated revision of its comprehensive village plan adopted in 1973 and last revised in 1977. The comprehensive plan was revised to bring it "up to date in terms of what's happened in the last 15 years," and to look at how those conditions could change future uses from the plan, Carver said.

Carver came to the village about a year and a half ago as administrative assistant to Escalante. Before that, he worked for the South Suburban Mayors and Managers Association in Oak Forest.

Carver is a graduate of Northern Illinois University in DeKalb, and he has done graduate work in public administration at the University of Illinois in Champaign-Urbana.

Congratulations and Best Wishes to CARPENTERSVILLE On Your Centennial Year



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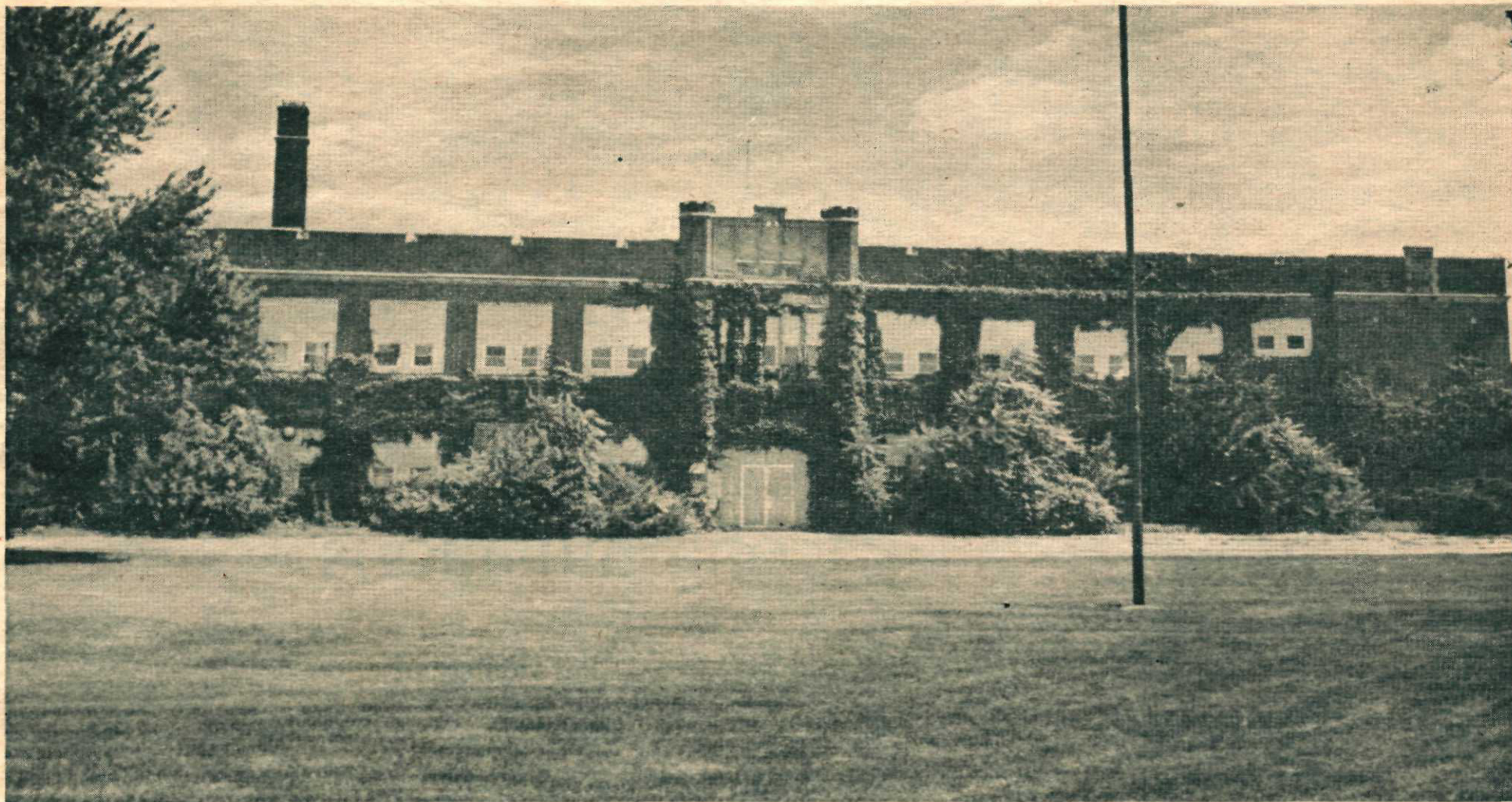
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Long history in education

Ivy-covered walls set off the boarded entrance to the Spain Center on Illinois 31. The structure was built in 1921 as Dundee High School, later became Dundee Middle School, and eventually the Spain Center for special

Courier-News Photo

education. No longer used as a school because of the cost of bringing it up to state life-safety codes, the building was sold this year. The new owners plan to raze it to build a 100,000 square-foot shopping center.



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1887-1987

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Sign of the times

Marking 100 years of incorporation, the Carpentersville Centennial logo appears on banners around the village and on Centennial souvenirs. The design is the work of Tom Thiess, a Dundee-Crown High School senior. Thiess won the design competition, which was held among students in all grades in Carpentersville schools.

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While the bulk of Spring Hill Mall, above, is in West Dundee, its northern section is in Carpentersville. Village officials are looking toward development around Spring Hill to bring new commercial and residential growth to Carpentersville's western sections.

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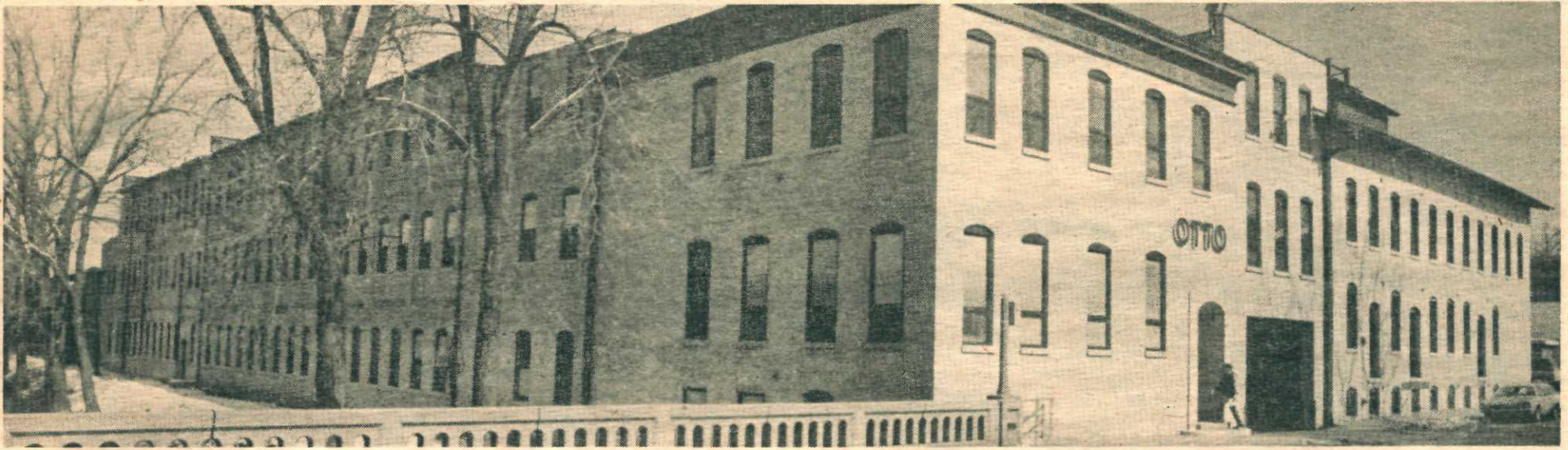
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Look for our food booth at Carpentersville Jamboree Days



Otto Engineering Inc.'s building at 2 E. Main St. goes back 110 years. The Fox River factory was originally built to house the Star Manufacturing Co.

Future grows inside 19th century walls

CARPENTERSVILLE — Outside, the massive building complex bespeaks of long ago: buff-colored original Haeger bricks, mortared together 18 inches thick; a powerhouse which once captured the energy of the Fox River, its big iron pulleys and gears rusting as they wait to lift sluice gates which long ago were carted off; an obsolete bridge which carries its railroad siding across the river only to butt up against a well-weathered barrier where the track disappears.

But inside what once was the historic Illinois Iron and Bolt Co. factory in downtown Carpentersville, 200 employees of Otto Engineering Inc. are turning out key parts for mankind's most advanced spaceships and jet fighter planes with the help of 21st century testing and manufacturing equipment.

Founder of Otto Engineering and midwife of the IIB building's rebirth is Jack Roeser, a self-made entrepreneur who has devoted his business life to the pursuit of quality.

"AMERICAN industry for too long has had its eye on production," says Roeser as he began a tour of the gleaming modern interior of the sprawling complex.

"Americans have been willing to accept 5 percent rejects because we make it so fast that you make money on the other 95 percent.

"But people forget that they are only catching 5 percent that are bad. There's no

substitute for making it right the first time."

Before the turn of the century, the building we are walking through was Dundee Township's economic heart. The main structure at 2 E. Main St. went up two years after the Chicago Fire. Before long the busy riverfront plant was a beehive of activity with snorting smokestacks, long lines of railroad cars and the nerve-shattering clamor of forming hot steel.

Two thousand people worked at Illinois Iron and Bolt and its Star Manufacturing Co. subsidiary, hammering out plows and cultivators for farmers in the surrounding prairie. It was said that when the IIB whistle blew, all Carpentersville went to lunch.

BUT THE farm machinery industry went elsewhere. In 1977, Star Manufacturing move its last operations to Freeport, leaving only its name, now in bold red paint, above the door.

"We tore out everything except the walls and the sprinkler system," says Roeser, as he led the way into a world of varnished free-standing oak staircases, carpeted offices and softly humming machinery.

Here and there, a blank wall of Haeger brick is left exposed to remind one of the building's roots. Except for those, we could be touring one of the most modern factories in Elgin's Davis Road industrial park.

"Most of this, we did with our own employees," says Roeser, sitting below a photo of the 30-foot sailboat "Jeannine,"

•Turn to page 31

SPRINGHILL SELF-STORAGE



"From the
very roots
of
Carpentersville"

Delos Dunton worked for Julius Carpenter in the 1840s. He grew and prospered with the community through his association with the Iron & Bolt Works, Star Manufacturing and his founding of the First National Bank of Dundee in 1901.

His house on the hill, built in 1871, changed hands after his death in 1905, from private individuals to the Valley Co-op School, to the present owners.

The property is now divided into 2 businesses, "Springhill Self-Storage" and the future "Focus Inn."

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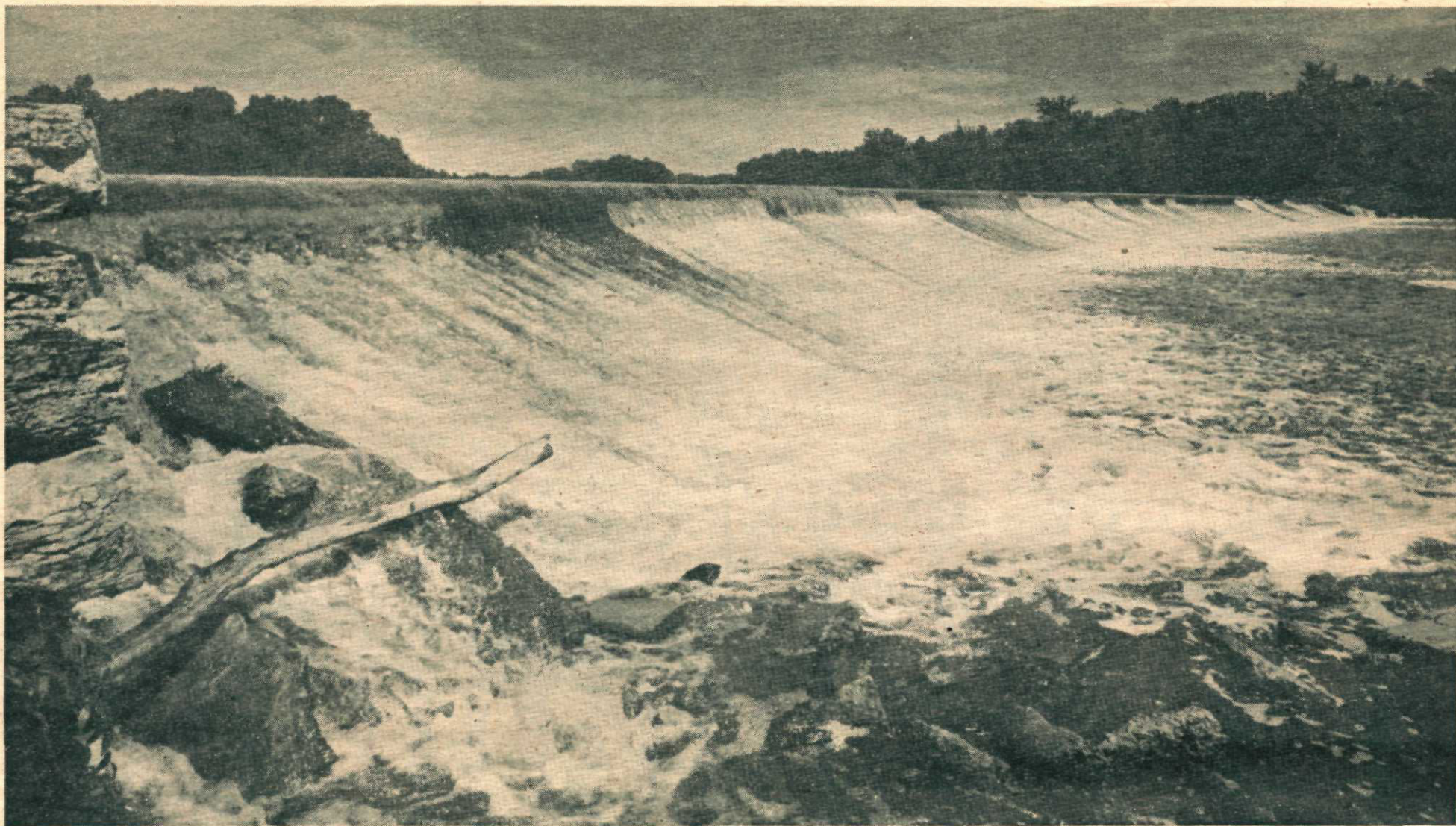
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The Fox River cascades over the Carpentersville Dam at the north end of the village. Although the dam is now surrounded by natural wooded areas,

the village's early industries were clustered around the area south of the dam, as the dam provided the factories with cheap water power.

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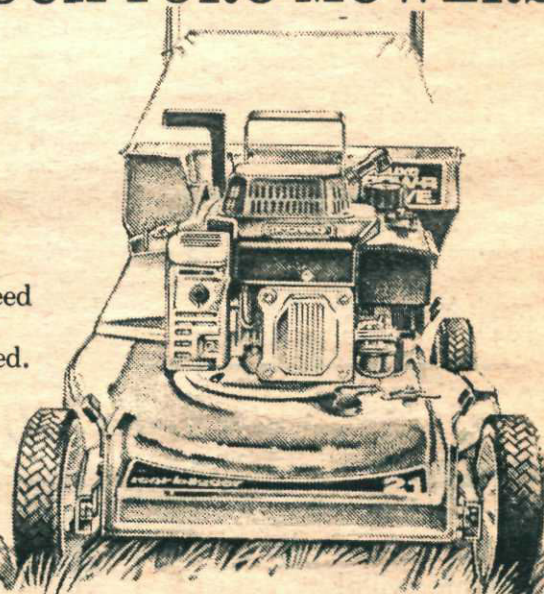
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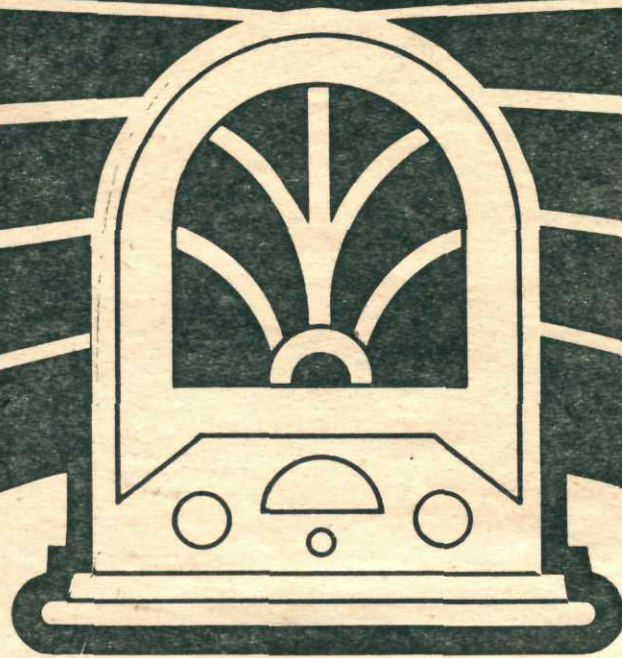
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September 10, 1949

Elgin "finds its voice" as WRMN begins broadcasting as a 500 watt daytime only station from the Fox Hotel in downtown Elgin.

1955

WRMN'S power is increased to 1,000 watts.

1960

The station moves from the Fox Hotel to its present location on Douglas Avenue and is granted an FM frequency. WRMN/FM goes on the air that year bringing evening FM radio service to the Fox Valley area with 1,000 watts of power.

1964

WRMN/FM increases power to 3,000 watts.

1969

Stereo broadcasting becomes a reality as WRMN/FM billing itself as "THE GOLDEN SOUND," begins stereo service.

1971

A major step forward is taken when the old 175 foot WRMN AM/FM tower and transmitter building are both torn down. Replacing them is a new 250 foot tower and a modern brick transmitter building. A new and more powerful transmitter is added for WRMN/FM so that it now can broadcast 3,000 watts in the horizontal mode and 3,000 watts vertically.

1973

Elgin Broadcasting Company becomes the first broadcast station in the country to install the first computer system specifically designed for radio stations. All program/commercial scheduling and business operations are 100% computerized.

1974

WRMN/FM's call letters are changed to WJKL.

1980

After two years of intense engineering and construction activity the FCC grants WRMN an unlimited license, allowing the station to broadcast after sunset for the first time. A new four tower directional antenna site is built at the north edge of South Elgin and WRMN begins twenty-four hour operation.

1981

Lengthy negotiations are complete and both WRMN and WJKL become affiliates of the Mutual Broadcasting System . . . the nation's largest radio network.

1982

Two satellite dishes are installed during the summer at the WJKL transmitter site near Lords Park. The dishes pick up the station's United Press International news service and Mutual Broadcasting System network feed. On Labor Day WJKL's progressive rock format gives way to JKL/94 — **THE GREAT MUSIC STATION**. Featuring music from the 1940s on through the 1960s, JKL/94 is Chicago's only FM big band station. Listener and advertiser reaction to this new format is immediate and extremely positive.

1984

New state of the art . . . all transistorized transmitting and audio processing equipment is installed for WRMN at the South Elgin site. After a 14 year battle with the FAA and FCC, JKL/94 wins approval to increase its tower height at the Lords Park site to 375 feet . . . a 50% increase, greatly expanding its coverage area. The station now enjoys steady listenership throughout the entire Chicago area and receives regular exposure from Chicago media.

To celebrate its second anniversary, JKL/94 — **THE GREAT MUSIC STATION** — opens its new branch sales office/studio in Schaumburg in the Versailles Village Center on Golf Road.

1985

An extensive remodeling and expansion program is underway at WRMN and WJKL's downtown Elgin location. The business and sales offices of the stations will move to a new 3,000 square foot area over Tony White Shoes . . . adjacent to its other facilities above Shockey Jewelers and Gudeman's Clothing Store. The older 2,500 square foot will also be renovated.

1986

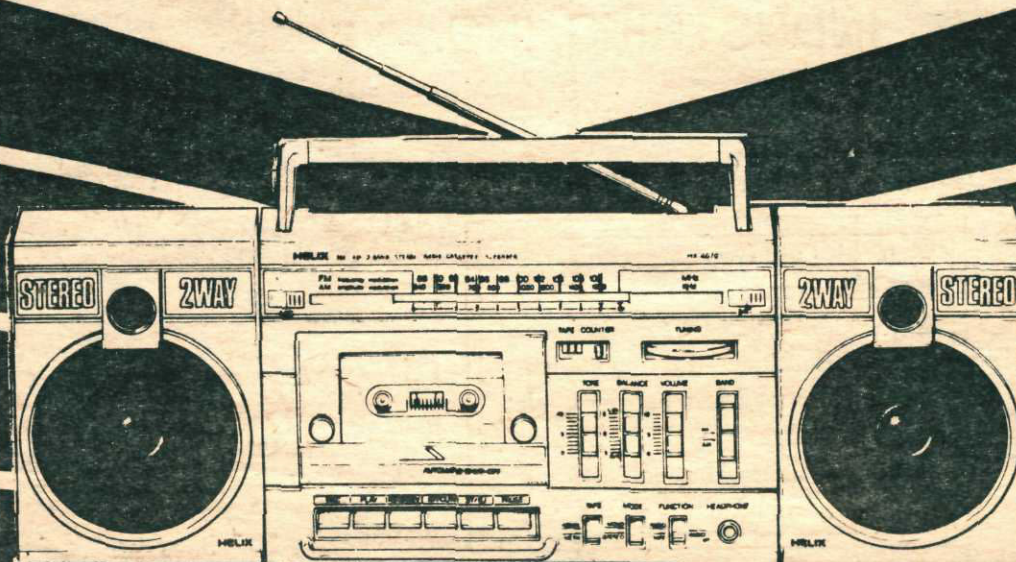
Construction of beautiful new administrative offices for Elgin Broadcasting Company are completed. Renovation and redecorating of older facilities also accomplished. Larry Foerster takes the helm as WRMN/1410's morning drive host.

1987

Planning and construction of all new studio and news room facility for WRMN/1410's award winning news team takes place. totally new JKL/94—**THE GREAT MUSIC STATION** announce and production center is done and on the air. Both projects use the latest state-of-the-art broadcast equipment.

ELGIN BROADCASTING COMPANY, INC.
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**WRMN
1410
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**JKL
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MUSIC**

Residents can buy a piece of C'ville history

Centennials are for remembering the days gone by, but for the days yet to come sometimes it helps to have something material as a reminder of the past.

That's where souvenirs come in, and the Carpentersville Centennial has its share of them for residents to keep to remember the village's 100th anniversary.

So far the biggest centennial sellers are T-shirts, says James Brasel, chairman of the Carpentersville Centennial Committee. They are sold out.

The committee ordered only 200 Centennial T-shirts, figuring that would be enough, he said. Now, the committee is trying to get more.

While residents are waiting for T-shirts, they can still buy a centennial coffee cup, or keep track of the time on a centennial wristwatch.

The digital wristwatches, like the other souvenir merchandise, bear the inscription: "Carpentersville Centennial 1887-1987." They come in men's and women's models and are available with bands of either gold or silver plating.

In May, when Brasel explained the souvenirs to the Carpentersville Village Board, he suggested villagers might want the watches more as keepsakes than as timepieces.

A souvenir whose price is to the liking of everyone is the centennial bumper sticker. They are free for the asking.

The souvenirs are available at the Carpentersville Village Hall and at Spring Hill Tire & Auto on Illinois 25 at Lake Marian Road.



James Brasel, Carpentersville Centennial Committee chairman, shows

centennial souvenirs. All except the banners are available to the public.

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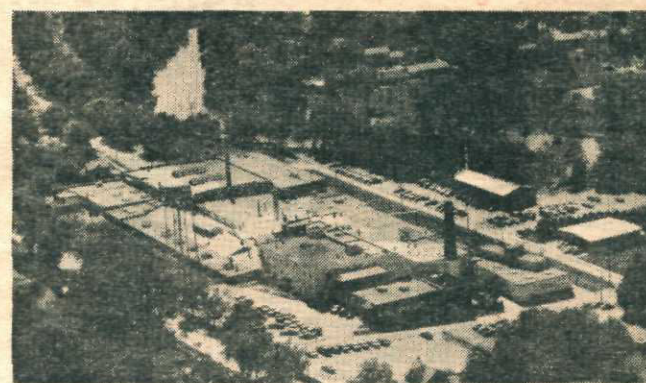
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●Hi-tech goes well in an old building

From page 27

which he races each year in the Mackinac Regatta.

Otto's offices and factory occupy the front third of the three-story complex. Other factories and warehouses rent the rest.

Eventually, Roeser would like to get an old powerhouse by the Carpentersville Dam back into action and generate most of the plant's electricity from the river. The plant has a half-mile of spillway and underground tunnels 40 feet deep. But when Otto moved in, the powerhouse had not turned a wheel since 1950.

ROESER has just hired a Polish engineer specializing in hydroelectric plants, who fled from behind the Iron Curtain five years ago in a small boat.

A University of Illinois engineering graduate with 40 patents to his name, Roeser moved up the executive ladder at Illinois Tool Works until he grew weary of working for someone else. After founding and becoming manager of ITW's Licon Division, he left it in 1961 to start Otto Engineering with \$5,000 capital and himself as the only employee.

The company was named after Roeser's father. ("A good trade name should have four or five letters, have a hard sound in the middle and have no negative connotations," explains Roeser.) Originally, the company was in Morton Grove and made a machine invented by Roeser which injects adhesives under air pressure.

"I went from a very substantial income to \$5,000 a year for about five years," says Roeser.

"BUT working for myself, I knew that the problems I had were real problems. I knew that if I didn't have money for something, it was because the money was not there, not because some other division wasn't doing well."

Unable to find the right kind of employees in Morton Grove, Roeser moved the company to 36 E. Main St., in Carpentersville in 1971. The move down the street to the Star complex followed seven years later.

Sales have grown at a compound 20 percent a year, Roeser says. Employment has doubled in five years.

Today, most of Otto's business is in high-technology switches.

When another space shuttle goes up, 800 Otto switches will be turning its motors and circuits on and off. If a pilot of the Navy's Tomcat fighter adjusts his trim tabs to evade an enemy jet, his thumb plays on a five-way Otto switch atop the control grip. When General Motors' Electromotive Division turns out a new locomotive, 65 Otto switches control everything from headlight to generator.

IN KEEPING with Roeser's hobby, Otto also recently began making sailboat parts. This summer, an Otto engineer installed a Roeser-invented lightweight boom on the king of Norway's boat.

★ Congratulations

*To You Carpentersville
On Your Centennial!!!*

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All You Can Eat Special

Batter Fried Chicken & Spaghetti Combo Adults **\$5.95**
Kids Under 12 **EAT FREE**

TUESDAY

Mexican Fiesta (All You Can Eat)

Over 30 Authentic Mexican Dishes Adults **\$6.95** Under 10 **\$2.95**

WEDNESDAY

B.B.Q. Chicken \$4.95	B.B.Q. Beef Ribs \$5.95	Chicken & Ribs Combo \$6.95
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THURSDAY

Pizza Buffet • 15 varieties of Pizza
• Baked Mostaccioli
• Hearty Homemade Soup
• Large Salad Bar Adults **\$5.95** Kids **\$2.95**

FRIDAY

Fish Choices are:
• Breaded Smelt
• Breaded Catfish
• Beer Battered Cod
• Baked Cod w/Toasted Almonds

Choice of:
• Cole Slaw
• Dinner Salad
• Potato Salad

Adults **\$5.95** Kids **\$2.95**

SATURDAY

Prime Rib Hand carved in the dining room \$9.95	Baby Back Ribs (Full Slab) \$10.95	Combo Special Ribs, Snow Crab Legs, Fried Shrimp All You Can Eat \$14.95
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SUNDAY

COUNTRY BREAKFAST BRUNCH

• Omelets & Eggs Made To Order • Corn Beef Hash • Country Gravy & Biscuits • Sausage • Hash Browns	• Fresh Fruit • Waffles • Juices • French Toast • Donuts	9 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. Adults \$5.95 Children \$2.95
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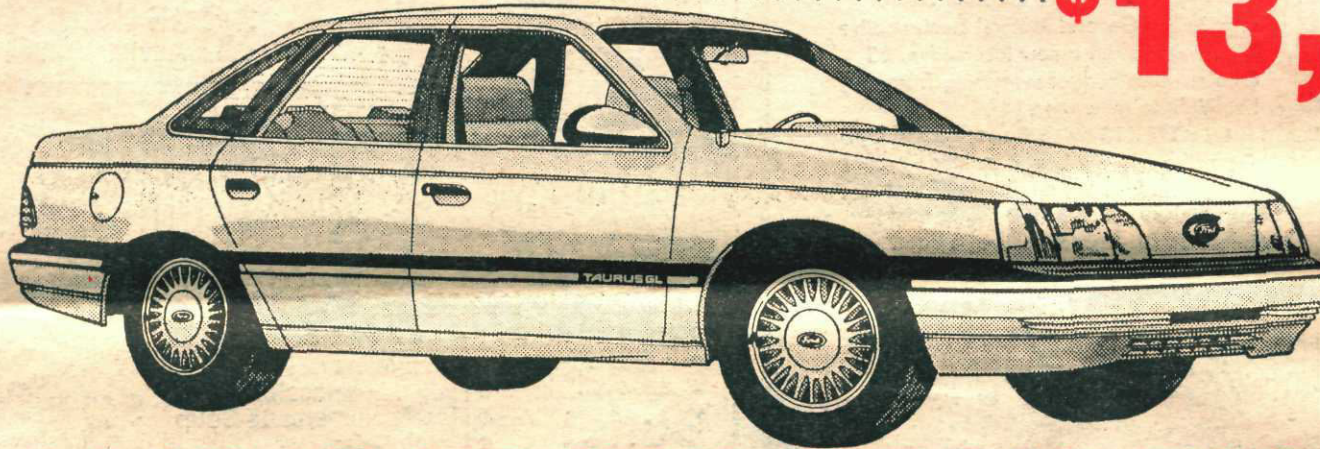
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