

FALL GENERAL MEETING

7:30 P.M., Thursday, November 6, 2014

Black Jack Fire Protection District – 5675 North Highway 67

PROGRAM

CHIEF MICHAEL GANTNER, BLACK JACK FIRE DEPARTMENT-
PRESENTATION OF LATEST DEVELOPMENTS & SERVICES

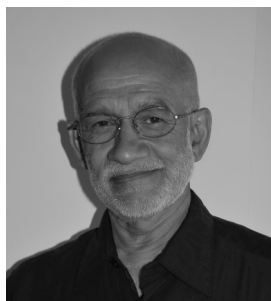
&

ST. LOUIS COUNTY OFFICERS WILL BE AVAILABLE TO ANSWER QUESTIONS
REFRESHMENTS PROVIDED-BRING YOUR NEIGHBORS!



Dues are ten dollars per single membership and fifteen dollars per family.

LETTER FROM PRESIDENT CHAN MAHANTA



I would like to welcome readers to The Old Jamestown Association's upcoming Fall General Meeting on November 6, at the Black Jack Fire Protection District's Administration Building. The evening's Keynote Speaker will be Black Jack Fire Chief Michael Gantner, who will make a presentation on the latest developments and service additions at the fire district.

I had my first meeting as a member of the St. Louis County Commission on Highways and Traffic early in September. The Old Halls Ferry Circle at Vaile project has been bid and the contract awarded. Construction is expected to begin in the spring of 2015. St. Louis County Highways and Traffic is looking for an entity that will adopt the Circle, once it is completed. If you are in-

terested or know of someone who may be, please contact Old Jamestown Association at: oldjamestownassociation@outlook.com.

Peggy Kruse is continuing to develop the Old Jamestown History project. She has shared some interesting history with us in an article in this newsletter. We are looking at affordable publishing options. Donations for the project to our 501 (c) (3) tax-exempt organization will be greatly appreciated.

Recently a position with the MSD Rate Commission became open and North County Inc. was given the opportunity to nominate a representative. I was asked by NCI and am honored to accept the position. I will serve alongside another North County resident and past OJA Board member, George Tomazi. My tenure runs through January 31, 2019.

The Walmart construction project at Highway 67 is in progress. There is nothing to report on the status of Jamestown Mall at this time.

Finally, Old Jamestown Association's long time standard-bearer and

tireless promoter, Ken Smith, has decided to step down from the Board of Trustees, due to health reasons. We thank him for his enormous contribution to Old Jamestown Association area's well being. As allowed by the OJA Constitution, I will appoint Olga Smith to complete Ken's term on the Board, which ends in May 2015.

Please be sure to go vote on November 4.

My very best wishes for the coming holiday season. Chan



1942—THE BEGINNING OF THE OLD JAMESTOWN ASSOCIATION

Prominent Citizens Living in the Old Jamestown Area Form the “Old Jamestown Association”

In March of 1942 the “Old Jamestown Association” was awarded a *Pro Forma Degree of Incorporation*. The first officers were Henry C. Morrison, President, Francis A. Mesker, Vice-president, Harold W. Jennings, Secretary, and Paul Hammerschmidt, Treasurer. Among the early members were a number of prominent people in the St. Louis area.

Dr. and Mrs. Evarts A. Graham retained the services of Harris Armstrong (1899-1973), a student of Frank Lloyd Wright and long considered the dean of modern architects in St. Louis, to design a home for them at 14 Jamestown Acres. The home was finished around 1940.

Dr. Graham (1883-1957) was one of the most respected and honored physicians in St. Louis History. Professor of Surgery at Washington University from 1919 to 1951 and surgeon-in-chief of Barnes Hospital, he was called the dean of American surgery. During World War I he served as a major in the Medical Corps. As a surgeon he was particularly well known for the test he developed for gall bladder disease and for being the first, in 1933, to perform the one-stage pneumonectomy for carcinoma of the lung—this technical achievement by the founder of thoracic surgery was the culmination of his many studies on pulmonary physiology and on the open treatment of empyema. He was co-editor of the *Archives of Surgery* and editor of the *Journal of Thoracic Surgery*.

After retiring Dr. Graham concentrated his research on the relationship of cigarette smoke to lung cancer. His find-

ings, published in 1953 in *Cancer Research*, found positive evidence of such a relationship through studies of mice. A follow-up, reported in 1956, found similar evidence in rabbits. These studies form the cornerstone of subsequent research, legislation and public education on this subject. Ironically, Dr. Graham died of lung cancer in 1957.

Mrs. Graham, the former Helen Treadway, was an associate professor of pharmacology at Washington University and highly respected in her own right. She became a specialist in histamine and its relation to allergies. She served as president of the St. Louis League of Women Voters and the St. Louis Branch of the American Association of University Women, and she was active in the ACLU. She retired from teaching in 1959 but continued to do research until her death in 1971.

Dr. and Mrs. Alexis F. Hartmann were neighbors of the Grahams with a summer cottage they built at 10 Jamestown Acres. Dr. Hartmann was a pediatrician and head of the Children’s Hospital in St. Louis. Their son, Dr. Alexis Hartmann, continued using the cottage until his death in 2013.

Other Old Jamestown Association members had homes on Portage Road. During the 1940’s, Frank Mesker (1859-1952) used the Fischel* guest house as his summer home. Frank Mesker and his brother, Bernard Theodore Mesker (1852-1936), founded an iron company in 1879. Incorporated in 1912 as Mesker Brothers Iron Company, the firm was especially known for sheet metal work, including patented building forms.

Francis A. and Pauline Mesker built a beautiful palazzo in 1933 at # 6 Portage. The home, called Ferncrest, was constructed of iron, not only because it

is highly practical, but also as a showcase for the business that built the family fortune. Francis Mesker, the oldest son of Frank Mesker, was vice president of the family company until his retirement in 1966. He died in 1981.

Mrs. Mesker was a founder of the old Children’s Art Bazaar and a former board member of the Missouri Historical Society, the St. Louis Art Museum and The Forum. Their son, David Mesker, now owns the property.

John B.G. Mesker, brother of Francis and youngest son of Frank, built his first home at 19 Portage Road. He succeeded his father as president of the firm, which went out of business in 1966. In 1959 John and his wife, Grace Wilhelmina, sold this property and moved back to Ladue. They moved back to Portage when their new home was finished at #9 Portage.

Another resident of Portage, but not a member of the Old Jamestown Association, was Dr. Villay Blair. At 16 Portage, Dr. Blair added on to a much older home (built before 1850 with an addition in 1880) between 1931- 32. Villay Blair was a descendant of Pierre Laclede through the Papin family.

During World War II, Dr. Blair was in charge of Plastic and Oral Surgery in the U. S. Army. An excerpt from *The Founding Family of St. Louis* states that “He startled the world at that time with extraordinary work done in restoring shattered faces and skulls.” Dr. Blair was associated with Washington University’s Medical School.

*Ellis Fischel never built the large house he had originally planned, but he did build a large, beautiful guest house in 1932. Dr. Fischel was a noted surgeon and leader in cancer research and treat



SHELBY CURLEE—CURLEE CLOTHING CO.

Mills. They relocated to St. Louis in 1903 and the company eventually became one of the most successful clothing manufacturers in the country -- at the end of World War II it was larger than Levi Strauss. Shelby Curlee died in 1944 and the property was later sold. His 5-bedroom 'castle' still exists on 15 acres within Castlereagh. Shelby and Francis were also great grandnephews of Daniel Boone. In 1925, Francis bought the Nathan Boone home near Defiance, where Daniel had died in 1820. Francis eventually accumulated 509 acres there and the historic home opened to the public in 1956.

Aerial View of the Curlee Property



A Bit of History: Peggy Kruse

Castlereagh Subdivision on Old Jamestown Road was developed in 1956 on land with a very large orchard once owned by Shelby Curlee. Shelby and his brother, Francis Curlee, started Curlee Clothing Company in Corinth, Mississippi, as the Corinth Woolen

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ment. He began private practice in 1913. He was on the staff of the Barnard Free Skin and Cancer Hospital and taught at St. Louis University and Washington University.

He led a campaign to establish a state cancer hospital which led to the enactment of such legislation in 1938. He was appointed chairman of the State Cancer Commission to locate, plan and construct a hospital.

Unfortunately, he never saw his dream come true. He was killed in an automobile accident in 1938. In 1940, the Ellis Fischel State Cancer Hospital, named in his memory, opened in Columbia, MO. It was the second of its kind in the U.S. and the first west of the Mississippi. The hospital has attracted many scientists and physicians of international renown over the years.

He married Marguerite Kaufman, daughter of John Kaufman, whose home had been the site of the Chase Hotel. She was an expert on "spastic children" and a composer. After her husband's death, she moved to New York to teach nurses and physicians. She died there in 1950.



Pictures of the Villay Blair Home during the time Kathleen and William Hueppauff and their three children lived in the home in th 70's.

Note the brick serpentine fence around the stable.



The fire place was huge. As I remember it, it was taller than me.



After the Hueppauff Family moved, David Mesker bought the property.

The home and outbuildings have been torn down.



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