

CALUMET HERITAGE PARTNERSHIP NEWSLETTER

*To identify, preserve and reclaim the natural, historical and recreational heritage
of the Calumet region of Illinois and Indiana*

13300 S. Baltimore, Chicago, Illinois 60633

(773) 646-0436

www.calumetheritage.org

October 2009

“CALUMET REGIONALISM: PAST AND FUTURE”: Ann Durkin Keating knows the Chicagoland region: after all, she wrote the book. Author of *Chicagoland: City and Suburbs in the Railroad Age*, Keating, who is a Professor of History at North Central College, will keynote the 10th Annual Calumet Heritage Conference, to be held Saturday, October 10 in the New Academic Library at Chicago State University. Keating will be speaking on “Regionalism in Chicago Before the Burnham Plan”. Her talk opens a day of reflection on the theme of regionalism in the corner of Chicagoland known as the Calumet region. The occasion marks not only the centennial of the famous Burnham and Bennett *Plan of Chicago*, which nestled the city’s urban planning issues in the context of a four-state region, but it also observes the tenth annual Calumet Heritage Conference. Conferences have been held since the Calumet Heritage Partnership was formed to identify, preserve and reclaim the natural, historical and recreational heritage at the scale of the bi-state Calumet region of Illinois and Indiana.

Rod Sellers, historian and author, and curator of an exhibit at the Southeast Chicago Historical Museum on “Burnham in the Calumet” will review some of the bi-state planning history since the Burnham Plan in a talk that follows Keating’s. And a panel of folks who have been intimately involved in CHP’s past and future will track where CHP has been in its short life and discuss some of the thinking about where it might go as regional planning efforts in the Calumet region continue to move forward.

The exhibit “Burnham in the Calumet” will be specially opened to conference attendees from 1 to 3 pm at the Calumet Park field house a few miles east of Chicago State down 95th Street. The conference is also timed to coincide with the annual Pullman House Walk. Registration for the conference includes a box lunch. Registration materials and a poster are included with this distribution of the newsletter. Many thanks to Tony Dzik for the design of the poster and to the Pullman State Historic Site for defraying the costs. And as usual, Michael Siola has done a tremendous job of behind-the-scenes help with the conference planning.

Keating is also the author of *Building Chicago: Suburban Developers and the Creation of a Divided Metropolis*. She recently edited *Chicago Neighborhoods and Suburbs: A Historical Guide*. And she was a co-editor of the majestic *Encyclopedia of Chicago*. Her work centers on the building of the urban landscape we now see before us. She pays close attention to the local scale, but always sets what happens in one particular place into a wider regional and national context. In *Chicagoland*, for example, she develops a method of classifying Chicago’s suburbs by how their economic origin – as railroad suburbs, as farm villages, as tourist towns, or as industrial settlements. When you map them all out, as shown by squares in the map that appears in the *Encyclopedia* in the link that follows, the industrial character of the Calumet region is plain to see. Here’s the link:

<http://www.encyclopedia.chicagohistory.org/pages/1765.html>

THISMIA AMERICANA: Congratulations to Christine Hodak and the intrepid band of actors and crew who mounted the play *Thismia Americana* in the Historic Clock Tower Administration/Factory Building at Pullman in the last week of September. Roughly three hundred people watched this excellent production whose name is drawn from the tiny plant which has only ever been found here and which has not been seen since 1916. The venue itself was a stunning reminder of the dramatic possibilities for theatre and other sorts of productions afforded by restored or even partially restored industrial spaces. Here's a link to the now well-known article from the annual "Garden Issue" on the *New York Times* from 2004 discussing the Landscape Park in Duisburg, Germany, constructed around abandoned blast furnaces and including a museum, theatre, and sound and light show: <http://www.nytimes.com/2004/05/16/magazine/the-anti-olmsted.html?pagewanted=all>.

ABOUT THIS NEWSLETTER: The Calumet Heritage Partnership is an all-volunteer organization. Your annual membership dues largely go to staging the conference and supporting various other small projects. For years, this *Nemsletter* was written and produced by Marian Byrnes. Did I just say "produced"? Good grief: I mean typed, folded, collated, stapled, stuffed, stamped, and mailed. Over the past few years I've gradually taken over the task of writing. But "produced"? In Marian's retirement, it's increasingly clear that electronic distribution is the way to go. This summer, we mailed postcards to each of the subscribers, informing them of the decision to email the newsletter and offering an option to have it snailmailed. So, here you go: your first electronic CHP Newsletter, replete with conference poster and registration materials. Please feel free to distribute it widely to friends and networks. And don't hesitate to send in items that you like posted in the newsletter.

NEXT MEETING: The next bi-monthly meeting of the **Calumet Heritage Partnership** will be held **Thursday, December 3, 2009 at 7:00 p.m** at the **Hammond Public Library**.

I-WITNESS TO SOUTH SHORE HISTORY: Ken Schoon has done a marvelous job getting this newsletter out since mid-summer. To send news, send an email to kschoon@iun.edu with the subject: News. To subscribe send an email to kschoon@iun.edu with the subject: Subscribe. To unsubscribe send an email to kschoon@iun.edu with the subject: Unsubscribe.

NEWS?: If you or your organization have items that you'd like to post in this newsletter, email the editor, Mark Bouman, at mbouman@csu.edu.