



LOMBARD HISTORICAL SOCIETY REPORT
LOMBARD HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION

July 23, 2025

MEMORANDUM

TO: Chairperson, Historic Preservation Commission

FROM: George "Ed" Seagraves, LHS Board President and Alison Costanzo, LHS Executive Director

SUBJECT: Actives of Lombard Historical Society which include a review of programs and events.

Action Requested: For information only, no action requested

Lilac Emporium Gift Shop

Lilac Time concluded with strong final sales, generating net proceeds of \$3,888 from the Coach House at the Park District. Preparations are underway to restock the Lilac Emporium Gift Shop this fall, ensuring readiness for the upcoming holiday season. Overall, sales performance continues to remain consistent with last year's figures.

Partnerships and Meetings

LHS continues to actively engage in meaningful partnerships and productive meetings. Recent initiatives include an in-depth conversation with Kurk Burger on the McKee House Foundation, Steven Thompson (Glen Ellyn Trustee) about the McKee House project. In this meeting, LHS raised concerns about project building condition, and funding.

Visits from Westmore teachers further support ongoing educational collaborations, and partnerships such as those with the Lombard Juniors Club during Lilac Time for the 90th reunion of past Lilac Courts as well as Witches' Night Out event that will take place in October. We are also working with the Lombard Chamber of Commerce and working with them to host the Lombard documentary "Lilacs & Legacy: Welcome Home to Lombard, Illinois," created by Lemon Town Films.

Exhibits and Museum Maintenance

Recent exhibit updates include the successful run and subsequent redesign of the temporary and core exhibition spaces following the Little Orphan Annie exhibit. The new layout enhances storytelling and integrates technology, particularly to showcase Lombard's business history and railroad development. The Carriage House is set to host the new temporary exhibition, "Breaking the Mold: Lives Beyond Convention," on September 6, as part of the Food Truck Social and is scheduled to run through May 2026, with a short break in January. Additionally, the Sheldon Peck Homestead launched the "Pioneering Women: The Peck Women and Their Legacy" exhibition, open through November. Collaboration with State Archaeologist Dale Simpson is ongoing to enhance Indigenous narratives and we are hoping that we can encourage the DuPage Forest Preserve to facilitate an archaeological survey at Churchill Woods.



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Programs and Events

Programs and events during Lilac Time in May were highly successful, nearly 3,000 visitors engaging across multiple museum sites, including the Carriage House, Victorian Cottage, Lilacia Park tours, and the craft fair booth. During Lilac Time we saw visitors from across Illinois and several other states, highlighting broad regional appeal. Summer programs feature the Music on Maple Street concert series, the Multicultural Art Fair with BLAC, family-friendly activities at the Peck Homestead, and new walking tours of downtown Lombard. Efforts continue to strengthen community engagement through collaborative events such as the Wedding Expo with local businesses and partnerships with local schools and community organizations.

Site	Visitor Numbers	Notes
Carriage House	1,030	Visitors explored the core exhibit and gift shop. A majority were out-of-town guests.
Victorian Cottage	354	Open Wednesdays, Fridays, and Saturdays for guided tours during Lilac Time. Saturdays functioned like an open house.
Lilacia Park Tours	418	Attendees on guided Lilac Time tours of Lilacia Park included groups from West Chicago, Sheboygan (WI), Joliet, Niles, Chicago, and more.
Lilac Time Craft Fair Booth	1,042	Visitors to our booth learned about our events, sites, and programs during the festival. Significant public engagement through outreach and information sharing.

Summer highlights include:

- **Summer Camps:** at Peck Homestead in partnership with Lombard Park District, hosting 120 older and 60 younger campers for history-themed activities throughout the summer June-August.
- **Music on Maple Street:** June 13: Ben Bedford, June 27: Barry Cloyd, July 11: Jukebox Hero, Stone & Snow on July 25 and our last concert Joel Styens & Herine Coetzee Koschak on August 8.
- Farmers Market Booth on July 29, featuring gift shop merchandise, raffle tickets, and Food Truck Social promotion.
- Documentary Premiere ("Lilacs & Legacy: Welcome Home to Lombard, Illinois") on August 15 in collaboration with the Lombard Chamber of Commerce.
- **Picnic at the Cemetery** on August 30, exploring Victorian burial customs.
- **Food Truck Social** on September 6, with live music, face painting, bubbles, and a stilt walker.



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Marketing and Outreach

Marketing efforts have continued to raise awareness of LHS programs and exhibitions. Our website saw more visitors in the spring, helping folks discover upcoming events, and our Facebook and Instagram pages picked up new followers each month. Targeted advertising on social media. Facebook followers grew from 6,524 in February to 7,106 by June, while Instagram rose from 1,485 to 1,573 over the same period. Targeted ads drove significant reach: the Lilac Time ad hit 91,000 people with 1,200 clicks, the Discover LHS advertisement reached 45,000 with 200 clicks, and the Wedding Expo ad drew 10,000 impressions and 385 clicks.

New open signs at the Peck Homestead and Victorian Cottage have attracted walk-in visitors, while MailChimp campaigns and newsletter features maintain high engagement with our members and mailing list.

Interns and Volunteer Updates

Interns: Francesca Parrillo and Audrey Neibel have focused on cataloging, photographing rehousing our textile collection, and entering textile data into CatalogIt. They also organized our newspaper collection and 3D artifacts onto new In June, they completed a portion of textile cataloging and will be working on repacking and organizing the textile collection.

Volunteers: Five new volunteers have assisted in entering items in our new database CatalogIt. In April, eight docents (including two new guides) completed our Victorian Cottage tour training and offered valuable feedback for improvements. Volunteers also gave guided tours during Lilac Time, assisted at the Multicultural Art & Craft Fair, and we are working on securing volunteers for the Food Truck Social

Conferences & Professional Development

This summer, staff took advantage of a number of professional learning opportunities. In late July, Rae Slowik and Alison will be attending the Association of Midwest Museums and Illinois Association of Museums joint conference in the Quad Cities, with Caitlyn and Laura joining virtual sessions. In September, Alison will present at the AASLH Conference in Cincinnati on "Museums on Call: A Healthcare Innovation," alongside partners from VITAS and the Joliet Museum, and plans to visit the National Underground Railroad Freedom Center. Attending these events not only enhances our staff's expertise but also raises LHS's profile among museum professionals and potential partners.