ST. CHARLES SINCE 1834	**AGENDA ITEM EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**	
	Title:	Recommendation to approve a Historic Sign designation for 221 S. 2nd St., Old Style Sign for Second Street Tavern
	Presenter:	Russell Colby

Please check appropriate box:

	Government Operations		Government Services
X	Planning & Development (11/10/14)		City Council

Estimated Cost:		Budgeted:	YES		NO	

If NO, please explain how item will be funded:

Executive Summary:

The Zoning Ordinance requires all existing signs to be brought into conformance with current sign standards.

The ordinance provides for signs that meet certain criteria to be designated as "historic signs." The "historic sign" designation simply allows a non-conforming sign that has been found to meet the applicable criteria to remain in place as it currently exists. (The designation does not prevent the sign from being removed in the future).

Existing signs for the Arcada Theatre and Zimmerman Ford were designated as "historic signs" when the Zoning Ordinance was adopted by the City Council in 2006. The sign for St. Charles Bowl was designated a historic sign in August 2014.

Craig Bobowiec, property owner of 221 S. 2nd St., has requested a historic sign designation for the "Old Style" sign that advertises Second Street Tavern and has submitted documentation to substantiate that it meets the applicable criteria. The ordinance calls for the Historic Commission to provide a recommendation to the City Council on whether the standards to designate a historic sign have been met.

The Historic Commission has found that the sign meets the applicable standards and has recommended approval of the Historic Sign designation.

Attachments: *(please list)*

Ordinance text on Historic Signs, Historic Commission recommendation, Historic Sign Request

Recommendation / Suggested Action *(briefly explain)***:**

Recommend approval of a Historic Sign designation for 221 S. 2nd St., Old Style Sign for Second Street Tavern.

For office use only:	*Agenda Item Number:* 3e

Excerpt from the Zoning Ordinance:

17.28.070 Historic Signs

A small number of existing signs in the City may be closely identified with a cultural or commercial entity or building that forms a part of the character or history of the community. Such signs, however, may have been erected under a previous code and may not conform to all of the provisions of this Chapter. The intent of this Section is to permit such signs to be maintained. Therefore, a sign erected at least forty (40) years prior to the year of application for Historic Sign designation that does not conform to one or more provisions of this Chapter may continue to be maintained and shall not be subject to the amortization provisions of this Title, if the City Council determines, upon the recommendation of the Historic Preservation Commission, that all of the following standards have been met:

A. The sign was lawfully erected at least forty (40) years prior to the year of application for Historic Sign designation and has been continuously maintained in the same location since that year.

B. The sign:

    1. Is attached to a significant historic building or landmark, and has come to be identified with that building or landmark, whether or not it is original to it; or

    2. Is located on a site that has been continuously operated for the same business use for at least 40 years prior to the year of application for Historic Sign designation.

C. The sign is of a unique shape or type of design representative of its era, and that is not commonly found in contemporary signs.

D. The sign identifies a building or business that is associated with a family, business or organization that was noteworthy in the history of the St. Charles community.

E. The sign does not violate Section 17.28.080, Prohibited Signs.

City of St. Charles, Illinois

Historic Preservation Commission Resolution No. 10-2014

A Resolution Recommending Approval of a Historic Sign Designation (221 S. 2nd St. – Old Style Sign for Second Street Tavern)

WHEREAS, it is the responsibility of the St. Charles Historic Preservation Commission to review requests for Historic Sign designation per Section 17.28.070 of the Zoning Ordinance; and,

WHEREAS, the Historic Preservation Commission has reviewed the request for Historic Sign Designation for the "Old Style" freestanding sign for Second Street Tavern, located at 221 S. 2nd St., and has found the request meets the standards listed in Section 17.28.070:

A. The sign was lawfully erected at least forty (40) years prior to the year of application for Historic Sign designation and has been continuously maintained in the same location since that year.

B. The sign:

   1. Is attached to a significant historic building or landmark, and has come to be identified with that building or landmark, whether or not it is original to it; or

   2. Is located on a site that has been continuously operated for the same business use for at least 40 years prior to the year of application for Historic Sign designation.

C. The sign is of a unique shape or type of design representative of its era, and that is not commonly found in contemporary signs.

D. The sign identifies a building or business that is associated with a family, business or organization that was noteworthy in the history of the St. Charles community.

E. The sign does not violate Section 17.28.080, Prohibited Signs.

NOW THEREFORE, be it resolved by the St. Charles Historic Preservation Commission to recommend to the City Council approval of a Historic Sign designation for the Old Style sign for Second Street Tavern, located at 221 S. 2nd St.

Roll Call Vote:
Ayes: Malay, Gibson, Pretz, Norris
Nays: None
Abstain: Bobowiec
Absent: Withey
Motion Carried.

PASSED, this 1st day of October, 2014.

_____
Chairman

9/24/2014

Dear Russell,

As property owner I am writing to request that the sign at 221 S 2nd St be deemed a "Historic Sign" and that I believe it meets the required criteria.

A. The sign was lawfully erected at least forty (40) years prior to the year of application for Historic Sign designation and has been continuously maintained in the same location since that year.

I am providing notarized statements that verify the sign was there prior to the time frame required.

B. The sign:

1. Is attached to a significant historic building or landmark, and has come to be identified with that building or landmark, whether or not it is original to it; or

2. Is located on a site that has been continuously operated for the same business use for at least 40 years prior to the year of application for Historic Sign designation.

To #1. The entire property is a designated Landmark in the City of St. Charles.

To #2. The business has been continuously operated as the same business use since1962. Provided Kane County Chronicle article, photo of owners inside the bar showing clearly the period of dress and age of Florence Arteberry is that of sometime in the 1960's.

C. The sign is of a unique shape or type of design representative of its era, and that is not commonly found in contemporary signs.

By providing proof the sign was indeed erected prior to the date required, then the design and materials has to be "representative" of that era, there is no way it cannot If newer signs have similar features, then they actually would reflective of the older sign designs since there would be no way designers would know back then what designs or how signs would be made today. Newer signs are commonly made out of many other materials, use channel letters, backlighting and LEDS and many other features and technologies not available back then.

D. The sign identifies a building or business that is associated with a family, business or organization that was noteworthy in the history of the St. Charles community.

The sign clearly identifies with a business that is and has been well known in the community and location for over 50 years at this location and that historically was associated with a noteworthy family that had originally owned and operated the same business in STC since the 1940's at both its current and original location. That the daughter Joan Arteberry has been a well respected person in the Community and served on the STC Youth Commission for years. (Storylines of the history have been provided)

E. The sign does not violate Section 17.28.080, Prohibited Signs.

To the best of my knowledge it does not violate this section.

Respectfully,

Craig Bolourian

9/25/14

To The St. Charles Historic Commission,

I Joan Arteberry, daughter of Harold and Florence Arteberry who along with my grandparents owned and operated the Oasis Tavern at 221 S. 2nd St. in St. Charles from 1962 thru 1987, hereby verify to the commission that the sign pole and sign in question was indeed standing prior January 1, 1974. In fact, it could have very well been installed in 1962 when bar opened. I know it was the only sign on the property for a very long time until my mother installed an Oasis wall sign on the building at a later date.

Respectfully yours,

Joan Arteberry

Joan Arteberry Ph. D,
(Mrs. Phillip Zavitz)

Judith L. Schlarb – 9/25/2014

"OFFICIAL SEAL"
JUDITH L. SCHLARB
Notary Public, State of Illinois
My Commission Expires 10/24/15

9-24/2014

Dear Historic Preservation Commission,

I Carrie Rogers, hereby swear to the very best of my knowledge, the sign and pole located at 221 S. 2nd St. in St. Charles has been located there prior to 1974 and very well likely was there from the opening date in the 1960's when the bar was originally opened at the location

I know this to be so because my family who owned and operated "Vi's Last Call" were also close friends to the Sharkin and Arteberry families who owned and operated the tavern at that location as well as its original location at Main & 2nd Streets which opened in the 1940's and who also lived next door in the home. My family and I visited the Arteberrys often throughout my life and I actually lived in one of the apartments above the tavern after I graduated High School in the late 1970's.

Sincerely,

Carrie Rogers

Carrie Rogers

"OFFICIAL SEAL"
ELIZIO GAYOSO
Notary Public - State of Illinois
My Commission Expires July 09, 2018

This sign, having been in place for more than 40 years not only has become a visual landmark from Main St & 2nd St, it has come synonamous with identifing the business (no matter who's name has been placed on the wall sign over the years) as well as its location. This sign has become an ' visual icon" leading patrons in cars, on motorcycles, bicycles or on foot to it's off main street location. How many businesses can survive and thrive by being identified by a sign that does not even have the business name or logo? That is the unique impact this sign has provided for decades to all who have owned and operated this business.

HEILEMAN'S
Old Style
OPEN FOR BREAKFAST 7:00 AM
AUTO REPAIR

A TAVERN IN THE TOWN

A Narrative History of The Oasis and The Owners
From Early Days--to the 70's

Contributed to the Joe K. Anderson Round Table
October 19, 2005; revised May 2006

Phillip and Joan Arteberry Zavitz
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THE OASIS--A TAVERN IN THE TOWN

Some will recall the days, broadly speaking in the days between the Repeal of Prohibition the mid 30's through the 70's, when there were three "neighborhood" taverns on the block of South Second Street between the Post Office and Main Street. The Oasis was operated from a two story building owned by banker and entrepreneur P.S. Nichol. The business living unit, two car garage and "yard" were the domain of Steve and Selma Sharkin, his succession of pick-up trucks (at least one a Studebaker) and her luxury cars (at least one Studebaker). A succession of two pure-bred German Shepards, both improbably named "Fu-Fu" stood ready to greet customers or ward off the unworthy.

FAMILY AND SOCIAL HISTORY

Steve (S.J.) Sharkin was a man of many dimensions, coming somewhat vaguely from Eastern Europe (The Ukraine?) escaping conscription into the Czar's army, as he told it, and possessing the skills of an agricultural certificate which included understanding crop propagation, animal castration, and the kingly arts of fishing and foraging the woods for mushrooms! First arriving at the Port of Boston then following the family trail to Detroit, he reported that due to his language skills, "17 languages" he was generally the foreman at the factory--Goodrich Rubber, U.S. Steel, etc.

His build and demeanor made his leadership level appointments plausible--Steve could easily take the stance and attitude of a wrestler and never hesitated to tell any person of any rank what he thought he should be doing instead of sitting idle!

Selma Isak was born in Latvia, near the Lithuanian border, and nearly always functioned both in language and association, as a Lithuanian. As far as anyone in St. Charles knew, she and her lady friends Jennie Ruby, Nellie Montviedos, Josephine Shulski, and Amelia Roman were all Lithuanians and at the core of the ethnic circle that created the phenomenon of so many "Lithuanian" taverns. Sites were variously owned by "Mama" Galkas and/or her daughter, Amelia; Walter Roman, Bill Rimcus, Frank Young, Christ Ambrose, and the Sharkins, and others.

A history of taverns, of course, follows the history of how alcoholic beverages were made and sold and in this country, the notorious interruption of that process known as Prohibition. It must be kept in mind, too, that places to buy and sell and enjoy alcoholic beverages were very much marked by class distinctions. The rich could drink in clubs and in their drawing rooms and could be tastefully tipsy or as overwhelmed by the tragedies of alcoholism as the poor--it just was considered to be a private matter.

The working class drinkers in the last century tended to gather in clusters: neighborhoods, ethnic groups, or in proximity to the working place. All of these, with the exception of the "lodges" were open to the public--and subject to public scrutiny and

regulation.

Much of the romance of Prohibition, as depicted in the music and films of the era, was imaged by swanky "speak easy" joints, roaming socialites drinking out of tea cups and smoking cigarettes from long holders…and all that jazz! The heroic figure of Al Capone made it all possible.

Working class folks had some interesting choices--make their own and/or get it from someone who did or had a finer source. Selma and her first husband operated a tavern in Beloit, Wisconsin before the government made its famous social gesture to close down the taverns and the distilleries.

During Prohibition, Selma and her three girls Antoinette, Olga and Florence moved with her to Cicero, Illinois. The first husband departed and Steve Sharkin entered the picture. They operated an ice cream parlor that sold very little ice cream--which was not problematic since the gin business out of the back room was very lucrative. Their supplier, not surprisingly, was Al Capone.

Family legend has it that Olga Sharkin, an attractive young blonde, caught the eye of Al's brother Ralph. They dated, but only under the close supervision of Selma, who just like Steve, never stepped back from any authority figure. Her power device was her charm, not her intimidating size and her arsenal included a cast iron frying pan.

Olga went on to have a fine career as an entertainer, night club singer known as "Kay Vernon" who appeared numerous times in Chicago at the famous Chez Paree. Florence always recalled days at Morton High School where Frank Young was a classmate.

When things got intense, so the story goes, they moved to DeKalb and took along the old family recipe which was available to the ethnics in the Pleasant Street neighborhood and the cohorts at the steel factory at the East End.

THE OASIS IN ST. CHARLES - AFTER PROHIBITION

In the early 30's, "Happy Days Are Here Again" meant that Steve and Selma could find their way to St. Charles and open one of the first post-Prohibition taverns: The Oasis. Word has it that their oldest daughter, Antoinette, came up with the name as sort of in the mode of other upbeat themes such as "Copa Cabana" that had been made popular both in New york and in the Hollywood version of night life. Names that had a tropical or Parisienne motif seemed more suited to the more sophisticated spots but often fell to the blue collar domains as well. Local taverns tended to be named for the owner "Romans" or the location "Three Deuces or 222 West".

Suppose that the large, sturdy German Shepards got the frilly "Fu-Fu" name out of that same, overreaching motif?

So, the Sharkins moved into 18 South Second Street. The family lived upstairs until 1945 when the historic brick house owned by "Bet a Million" Gates and established for his mother, became available after World War II.

The tavern could be described as typical: An ornate mahogany back bar which serviced a long drinking surface known obviously as "the bar" which could be accessed by the patron who stood erect (hopefully for the duration) with a footrest and spittoon as accessories--or seated at a barstool (working class guys didn't need a chair back).

The back bar at the Oasis was notable for a display of back-lighted cocktail glasses--hardly ever used except by the occasional aristocrat who stepped away from the traditional "shot and a beer". The liquor for pouring was arranged by price (blended whisky or the "house" brand was cheapest)...and by assortment e.g. gin, rum, etc. On the top shelf, separated by price and presumably quality (stronger concentration of alcohol or more unusual) were the straight whiskeys (Canadian Club, Seagram's VO, Scotch whiskey, and the vermouth and cordials needed for those "fancy" drinks.

Cigarettes, sold by the pack, were under the National Cash Register. The space next to the cash register was the sacred resting place of the "tab". A couple of dozen regulars were allowed to charge their purchases (the days long before Visa!) and settle up on pay day--which for the working class was always on Friday.

SERVING THE FACTORIES, THE FRIENDS AND THE FAMILIES

In the 40's and 50's the tendency was for each tavern to attract a core group--sometimes by ethnic category but moreover by the proximity of the stores and factories. Consequently, The Oasis tended to attract the crowd from the Howell Company--both during the half hour noon time (remember the 12:25 whistle that warned to scurry back before the 12:30 whistle?) and after work--for many just at the 3:30 whistle.

"After work" generally meant a quick, cold beer to get rid of the taste of the metal work of the furniture and, at noon, a quick sandwich--Steve's specialty of either ham or rye or a roast pork sandwich. Selma was there before the official opening time of 7 AM to supply some hot coffee to get the salesmen started or the half pint of whiskey which was the working man's canteen.

During the day there would be a steady procession of farmers checking-in while their wives shopped or things got settled up at the feed store. Some of the farmers brought the fresh eggs that customers had ordered, others checked in with Steve to see if he needed any chickens or a side of beef for the freezer. Needless to say during World War II or during hunting season these relationships were a priceless commodity-- and part of what made the tavern the place to go.

The story goes that each factory had a "marker" or identity factor. Besides the Howell

Company gang, who tended to be hard of hearing due to the high pitch of their machines, there were the Hawley Products guys missing a digit or two due to the punch press, and the Moline Malleable guys who tended to have that lung congestion called "Buckalosis" by their Belgian and Lithuanian workers.

NOT JUST A TAVERN

Most taverns featured some kind of food--if only a good line of peanuts and potato chips--sometimes a free lunch, sometimes a favorite or special line of food. The noontime sandwiches at The Oasis were a tradition and available at any hour--as long as someone could be persuaded to turn the light on in the kitchen and get out that really sharp knife that made the thin slices that were the key to a great sandwich.

In the 40's the upper level of The Oasis, just four steps up at the far end of the bar, featured a full dining room. The women in the kitchen were Selma's lady friends and they served up a highly popular Friday Fish Fry and a Saturday Chicken Fry. Long before MacDonald's, the secret for great French fries had been developed locally: lard!

The cole slaw was the finely-shredded cabbage, radishes, onions and a touch of vinegar variety and the secret to the crisp coating on the fish and chicken can now be told--but only for a price! It was a family affair--families coming for dinner and the families of the owners--all ages--doing the serving.

There was an unwritten "code of conduct". Kids were welcome at the tavern, but not to sit at the bar. There were side tables for that and free glasses of pop-as long as they would sit still and amuse themselves. The early days of television often prompted a family visit when the tavern had the only TV set available to watch "Uncle Miltie" or a Cubs or White Sox game.

Drunks were taboo. Not allowed in, not allowed to get too inebriated to drive or go home to the family. Strictly enforced. Period. There is a witnessed report that a certain Santa Claus costumed gentleman was manually forced out the front door when he presumed that he could be a jolly as he needed to be.

Selma set the standards on her shift: No swearing. Clean up after yourself in the washroom. Respect the women. Steve had his own issues: Don't be so stupid-read the newspaper and get in touch; if you go fishing, you need to help clean the fish. Later, when he engineered the perpetual games of cards in the basement, a sort of *caveat emptor* which meant if you can't hold your own in the card game, don't play.

The company dog was also vigilant. Those thinking to start a fight soon found a big, mean dog in between before things got out of hand. Children were tolerated when trying to pet or poke the dog, but no mean stuff (such as the beer truck driver who though he'd get smart and almost lost a leg). Fu-Fu the Second was an especially gentle soul who

used to travel down to Gartner's Bakery where he would go behind the counter to coax one of the Gartners or Pat Brennan to fix him a vanilla ice cream cone.

FACES AND FAMILIES

Most taverns had "regulars". There were the all-day regulars who, by reason of being retired, on a different shift, or just plain available were in and out all day, every day. Probably no different, socially speaking, than the folks who read the papers or go online at Starbucks. The point was not to drink--although the liquor was handy--but rather to have a headquarters, a place to be, a place to belong.

At The Oasis the "regulars" were counted on to appear, to bring news, exchange goods, set the record straight when it came to sports, politics and community affairs. In exchange they got a steady cup of coffee, the newspaper to read (don't do the puzzle!), and the privilege of the same seat, access to the kitchen and the telephone, and more often than not, a seat at the dinner table or a family event.

Bartending was a noble profession. Cully Berg held the longest tenure--despite his rather droll demeanor. He would arrive at 3 PM, costume himself in a clean, white apron and white shirt and tie and carefully manicured hands which he frequently washed and dried with a clean towel. He could mind his own business or, if asked, share a tid bit.

A beer was a simple thing to order then. They were all pretty much the same--just a matter of loyalty. Blatz, Atlas Prager, Meister Brau were on the low end price wise. Mainstream brands such as Schlitz, Heilman's and Pabst Blue Ribbon were in the next bracket. If you don't recognize the brands it is because they are all extinct. Then there was Griesedieck (warehoused for a time in Earl Hahn's garage) and the regional favorites Budweiser, Leinenkugel's and Millers. Still surviving. The only accessible import was Heineken's and, literally an import, Coor's.

No one would dream of mixing two or more sticky cordials, fruits and vegetables or other non-potent "sissy" combinations. Wines were domestic and sealed with a cap. Mogen David was cheap and nicely purple. Bargain beer could be had in quart bottles. Cans had to wait for postwar retooling before becoming the popular and convenient format.

Florence Arteberry was the Sharkin's daughter and mainstay. She did the "books" then made the rounds to the National Bank (with a nod to P.S. Nichol, the landlord). Rumor has it that after she and Cully had made their picks, a stop at the rear of Chris Ambrose's place was needed to place a friendly wager on the ponies. Follow her around Main Street in the morning.

Bills were paid going door to door, the telephone bill next to the bank at Nieman's Jewelry, the gas bill at the end of the block. Buy a birthday tie from Block's Toggery; check in at Rehm's to get a vacuum cleaner belt. School shoes? Mack Brothers (that's Makaraitis, you know) of course!

Get some rye bread at Tony's Market. Chat with Johnny Morise, Marion Budde and the Tony Bernotas clan (Lithuanian boys) and order a turkey. Make time for a cup of coffee with George Kacheres at the St. Charles Hotel, chat with Jim, Helen, and Tula. Pick up a prescription at Klick and Worthley's, Maybe Mabel or Arthur Bagge have that new face powder?

Tony Brazonis at Colson's needs to measure the window for new curtains. Stop by his domain in the lower level. Wave to Ella and the other girls upstairs. Nylons mostly came with a seam down the back and were attached to the sometimes quirky garters and (don't laugh you guys) the rubber girdle was a needed everyday accessory.

Essig's Hardware (or for the Eastsiders, Borman's) has that new downstairs section--maybe they have those new copper-bottom sauce pans? See that Fred Kaiser has his Halloween decorations ready and check out the goldfish in the tank. A reminder about a November birthday and a need for one of those naughty birthday cards that Jerry Fischer sells at the News Agency/Candy shop. Get a shirt at Larson and Johnson to match the tie that Harry Block had suggested. These local haberdashers were the sane alternative to Erday's in Geneva which always smelled like moth balls.

Never made it much to the East Side although such trips were generally on foot. Not ever much of a town for mass transportation and parking was usually a pain even when it was diagonal instead of parallel. Pay some bills at City Hall, of course. Wave to Chief Covalsky if he was around. There were some potential stops at one of the bakeries: Krampford's for raisin bread, the "Swedish" bakery for a good coffee cake. Keith Anderson's dad would be at his barbershop. Nord's Electric had those new television sets along with the big, sturdy radios.

Haskins and Debates? Anderson's? Koch's? Get your groceries at so many choices, but only a few things at a time since space and choices were limited. Roman's tavern and that Nelson's snack shop on the corner, the National Tea, Tony's Café--the only remaining business in Burger Drugs (where I got my motorized scooter this week courtesy of Medicare).

Back to West Main Street and in and out of Krogers--remember to get Rival dog food for FuFu and the butter that ran out before Cully Madsen could bring the next order from the Dairy. Maybe you got your moo juice from Riverview?

Back to The Oasis through the back door of Kroger's (ok because the rats were asleep), past Smash Anderson's insurance and real estate office in time for the lunch crowd. Or, if the stop at Klick and Worthley was last, back around the corner between the Log Cabin (Marie Close might be just leaving) and around the corner past Slim Perry's cab stand/bus stop, up the street behind the Post Office and the Davis Feed Store, past the Yee's Chinese Laundry and Bernice and Ed Green's Greenhouse, Hahns International Harvester Store and the house on the corner where the Toon family lived.

Few had the nerve to go along the First Street riverbanks. The ruins of the old Glen Foundry lingered for years and years making a handy habitat for the river rats, the raccoons and the homeless.

Stroll back up Second Street toward Main Street to tip your hat to other business owners. The Thusius family had a dry cleaning shop there. Subsequently, Frohling's had a tavern and then the popular Check Mate held forth. The North side of Second Street was pretty car-centered: The Chevrolet dealer, Zimmerman Pontiac and half on Main Street and half behind, Davison the Buick dealer. Foreign car? Are you kidding!

Did you shop at Kroger's? The A and P? The National? Get your jewels at a real jeweler's domain such as Matson's? George Simon went in and out of the shoe business with his Maxwell Street marketing devices; Mack Brothers sold all of the old standard lace-up shoes and the devil's own invention, the saddle shoe that was a challenge to both the shoe polish and the polisher. Listen to those tunes at Van Hanxleyden's Record Shop.

Stan's DX on the corner of South Second Street and Walnut (Stan Pakenas another Lithuanian) might be a quick stop for a chance on the punch board. Guys going into Ron and Syl's Tavern across the street don't wave. For some reason guys keep their heads down when going into a tavern.

The Oasis at the Second Street location withstands the great fire in the 60's. There went the Kroger up in flames, leaving to this day a vacant lot on the busiest corner in town. Harold Arteberry told the story of getting on the roof of his father-in-law's tavern with a garden hose to get ready if the fire spread beyond Kroger's corner.

Time marches on through the 60's. Joan Arteberry meets Phil Zavitz at the tavern but they do not marry until 20 years later. The food service closes down after attempts by George Neri and Frank Hagaman fail to override the reputation of the Lithuanian ladies. Steve stops fishing in the Fox River citing that "these fish have cancer" years before the biologists make the same observation.

Landlord Pete Nichol decides to sell the property to the Savings and Loan. The "O" packs up and moves to 217 South Second Street in the coach house of the Gate's landmark location. Popular bartender, "Tweet" Weber and a cadre of regulars assist with the move. The last items to go are the taxidermy trophy full wingspread osprey and the stuffed "pheasant brought back from South Dakota by Harold Arteberry.

The dog had been run over and the janitor, Martin Baranski (a gentle Lithuanian) whom few had ever noticed had been placed in a long term care facility. The card game moved to Selma's kitchen at the big house and the boys from the Howell Company rejoiced that lunch was now only a block away.

The new era at The Oasis began in the 70's in time to welcome the next generation, Joan and Phil Zavitz and Christina, born in 1980, as the last elements of the Steve and Selma

last page
missing

I'm not sure what tangibles I might have to contribute, but I have a trunk full of images, don't you? Step in with me off the street down that long, cool outer lobby with the enchanting posters. Colin Campbell, that rascal, remembers the one for Jane Russell in "The Outlaw". I'm remembering those pirate ships, guns ablaze, and Errol Flynn.

Were you there that summer to be introduced to the magic of Broadway in our precious theater as we were presented with "Carousel" "Brigadoon" and each week another timeless treat?

How many Sunday afternoons did you spend immersed in the first run feature film and the five acts of live vaudeville? My growing-up tastes ran more toward the film--what would much later be called blockbusters but in those days just the biggest and best that Hollywood had to offer. The stars and their stories were carefully outlined in the magazines purchased earlier that week at Gartner's.

Three cheers for that live entertainment. Skaters, sopranos, jugglers, smart dogs, dumb comedians, and all those elements that brought our American culture close enough to touch and feel are never forgotten--but pictures will help the remembering.

Contact o-shows.com or the telephone number on the familiar marquee 312-733-7469 to support and enjoy today's live entertainment. Contact Colin Campbell at 630-232-1132 to send your memories and pictures to the Friends of the Arcada Theater.

Now if it could be engineered to get Bill Haley and the Comets to "Rock Around the Clock" just one more time for the Class of 1956, I'll bet we could even get Jerry Anderson and Janice Ellis and a few more (and you know who you are!) to raise their voices to "SC Will Shine Tonight" just one more time.

Reprinted with permission from The Republican May 19, 2005

The Oasis Migrates from 18 to 218 on Second Street

The Oasis Tavern now occupies the original coach house connected to the two story brick house built by John "Bet a Million Gates" for his mother.

Steve and Selma Sharkin purchased the property from theBuick Dealer, M.R.Davison just before the end of World War II. In fact, the house was newly occupied by the Sharkins downstairs and the Arteberry's upstairs when news came that **the Japanese had surrendered.**

In line wih his generous nature and true patriotism as a naturalized citizen, Steve Sharkin closed the 18 South Second Street tavern, hauled "supplies" to is new, not finished but large basement and presided over a three day party.

Joan was there and remembers the party but had to miss the heart of the celebration when one of the guests, Sailor Tony Zudis, had to be retuned to Great Lakes when his leave expired! Harold Arteberry drove him and Joan went along for company. At age 6 and looking forward to First Grade in September at Shelby School, it was a taste of history that stimulated a lifelong interest in military and political history.

The "house" is inextricably linked to the "tavern" as not only the home of the owners but as a vital link to the kind of hospitality and "open family" that was a strong tradition.

The apartments above the coach house were originally rented to long-time bartender Cully Berg and his wife, Ethel. Their well-behaved dog, Penny, was included. The adjoining apartment was rented to Leroy and Alice Anderson who were

close enough to be addressed as "Aunt Alice and Uncle Roy". Roy was one of a host of individuals who were volunteer bartenders, called into action when the crowd unexpectedly grew and another hand was needed wo understood the complexities of draft beer--both the skills of drawing and changing barrels!

The volunteers went on the clock during such predictable "big nights" as New Year's Eve or the opening day of pheasant hunting season.

Steve chose to live in the upstairs apartment of the 18 South tavern for many years. It was a haven for his lifestyle which included FuFu the German Shepard, an easy chair for smoking (strictly forbidden by Selma), spare rooms to smoke his sausage, dry and repair his fish nets, and a spare room for Martin Baranski the janitor, his buddy who hauled coal up from the cellar for their stove pipe stove in the kitchen.

Selma's digs were a modified lavish: crystal chandeliers, a grand piano, a remodeled kitchen with Pittsburg Pate Glass wall coverings and a floor plan copied by the contractor from a Better Homes and Garden magazine. Yet, she kept the furniture covered in plastic and unless her soap operas were being broadcast preferred to sit in the closet and knit or crochet.

Sometimes if friends such as Jenny Ruby (who owned the original Tastee Freeze) or her sister Connie Rimcus came to visit, she would brew a cup of tea. Otherwise, until Steve moved in after the tavern moved, too, there was never a meal cooked in that kitchen!

Steve was the head cook of the family. The 18 South tavern

had a full kitchen and large dining room. In the original days, 30's and 40's, their Lithuanian lady friends and Selma put on a classic Friday Fish Fry (Chicken on Saturday) that was very popular. Later the kitchen was leased to Frank Hageman and George Neri and some subsequent enterprises, but for the most part Steve kept the kitchen as his domain for baking his bread, stuffing his sausage, frying his freshly caught pan fish from Pistakee Bay and storing his homemade pickles and freshly canned peachs and tomatoes.

Taverns in those days often offered some kind of light food as a noon time service to those fellows who didn't have a long enough noon hour to eat one place and drink at another. Steve's specialty was either a quick ham or pork sandwich; Maybe a pickle, buy your own chips.

Pete Nichol had been the landlord from the beginning. Pete was a modest guy despite the fact that he owned the First National Bank and many, many properties and investments. He had vision issues that Steve respected even to the point of being sure Pete took the deserved number of pegs on their cribbage board. Joan once drove Pete to his bank downtown and his business at the Stockyards where he was hailed affectionately by many.

Despite the friendly relationship with the family, the time came when Pete decided to raise the rent on the tavern. Sensing a trend in rent raises, taking note of the lack of parking in the Main Street commercial district, and deciding it was time for a more manageable and efficient property, the decisiion was made to close down the 18 South location and move two blocks down the street to the coach house.

Selma was heartbroken but understood the necessity. Gone

would be the royal parking space for her car inside a heated garage. Good-by to the lawn that she had nurtured and hand-picked dandelions. The fenced in privacy would yield to a commercial business.

Harold Arteberry sketched out the concept that would include a large open bar. So many times the narow back bar area at 18 South made it difficult to add supplies, avoid a collision with a helper coming down that narrow split to get to the tap. The dozen bar stools could be doubled yet served by the same number of people.

No tables. Food service would be low key and no waitresses would be on hand. More room for the jukebox and the polka dancers! A coat room--what a luxury--and a private space for the pay phone for those Romeo's to make their appeals.

The liquor license included both bar and package so it was decided to bring along the wine and liquor and beer inventory and install it in the North wall along with the beer cooler and the walk-in cooler in the storage area.

The deliver men rejoiced! At 18 South the beer barrels and cases of beer went on a dolly down the outdoor/sidewalk level steps into the cellar. The new approach was straight-in through the side door with plenty of room to maneuver.

The tenant's laundry room was sacrificed for the small kitchen with just a gas stove to cook the soup and chili and an oven to roast the ham. When Harold took over the kitchen patrol he added his "Cowboy Stew" which included the mushrooms gathered in the woods by Florence and a really hot pepper sauce kept moldering in a jar for those manly enough to try.

"Tweet" Weber, who took over as bartender when Cully retired claimed he learned the secret of tolerating the hot peppers from Frank Sieti, his Italian-Mexican friend from the Howell Company who took the challenge every lunchtime. Frank cautioned him to "wash it down with a scoop of ice cream". Tweet, who always had a repertory of jokes would set the place to roaring when, from the men's room, he could be heard yelling; "Come on, ice cream!"

The Oasis regulars all followed down the street to the new bar. There was A.D."Chappy" Chapman who retired from supervising the young inmates assigned to farmwork at the State Training School. Chappy was a very gentle man but all knew had an expectation of respect.

Ray Nord, who owned an appliance store could be counted on to tap on the rabbit ears to get better reception when the Cubs game was on. Steve was the leading White Sox fan, along with Clarence Gorden the insurance agent--but for the most part it was a Cubs crowd

When Joan was dealing with polio and missing the family's annual outing to Wrigley, the Meister Brau distributor obtained an autographed baseball for her. They're all there: Ernie Banks, Roy Smalley, Hank Sauer and Jack Brickhouse, too.

Later, the Stroh's distributor would share the company box tickets at Wrigley several times each season. On one such outing, seated just behind home plate, Joan noticed a flash from the sun reflected off the ring of the gentleman seated next to her. A closer look at the diamond ring revealed the inscription: Chicago White Sox-1959. "Are you Minnie Minoso?" "Si" he replied in a friendly, gentlemanly manner.

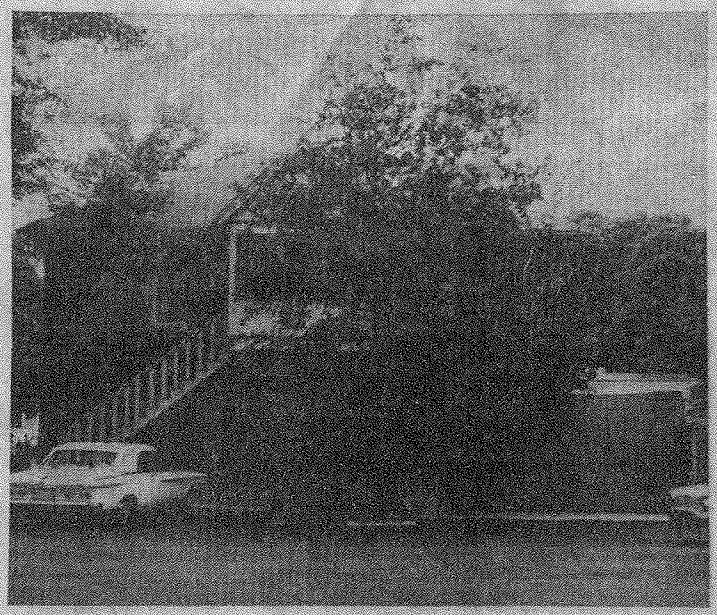
discovered what was believed to be an Underground Railroad hiding place--a dug out kind of space with benches for sleeping?

The crowd after lunch were the regulars who stayed most of the day, the drop-ins to catch a few innings, and before the days of drive-tru, people who dashed in for a six pack, cigarettes or any bits of news that might be circulating.

Suppertime brought out the factory workers there to unwind and pick up supplies, the regulars who welcomed them, and the beginnings of the evening crowd who had a regular destination to meet with friends and have some fun.

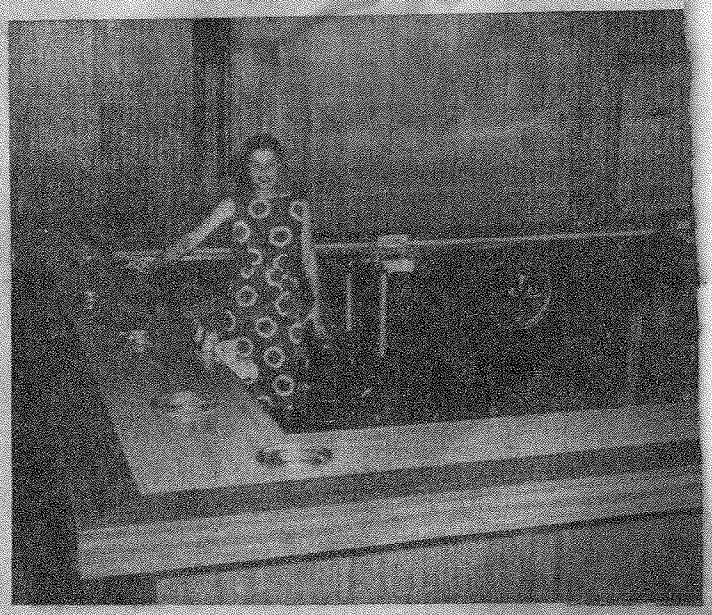
At one point Vi Kallman was brought in by Florence to pep-up the food service. Vi went on to open her own bar after this "apprenticeship". Walter Hoeltje started behind the bar after Tweet passed on. He went on to extend his bartending career to be a manager at Ray's Evergreen.

Nice Looking Outside



THE NEW "OASIS" at 211 Indiana Ave. was formerly the carriage house of the Gates home. Mr. and Mrs. Harold Arteberry are the proprietors of the new establishment.

Nice Looking Inside



MAHOGANY WALL PANELING and a large "U" shaped mahogany and walnut bar are proudly displayed by Mrs. Harold Arteberry.

Grand Opening of New Oasis Tavern On Friday & Sat.

Mr. and Mrs. Harold Arteberry announce the Grand Opening of their new tavern at 211 Indiana Avenue for Friday and Saturday of this week. They have moved their business from its location on south Second Street to the former carriage house of their home at Walnut and Illinois Streets. The second street building is to be razed for a parking lot.

The new lounge has a large corner blacktopped parking area surrounded by a very old wrought iron fence. Near the entrance is a beautiful mountain ash with its bright red berries. During the winter this tree will bi lighted with Italian lanterns. The building itself is of buff colored brick with soft green frame trim.

There is an entrance from the parking lot and also from Indiana Avenue. The interior decor is in shades of brown, beige and white with a "U" shaped bar in walnut and mahogony formica. The stools are bronze with white seats.

The walls have been finished with mahogony wood panelling, and draperies to harmonize. Accoustical ceilings and a beige tile floor complete the decor. In an adjacent room there is a beige and white kitchen from which sandwiches will be served for the time being. Steaks and other delicacies may be added later. There is also carry-out liquor service.

Mr. and Mrs. Arteberry and Mrs. Arteberry's father, Stephen Sharkin live in the home which was built in 1904 for the parents of John Gates. The Sharkins owned the property for 20 years.

Thirty years ago Stephan and Thelma Sharkin opened "The Oasis" at the Second Street address and operated it until 2 years ago when their daughter and son-in-law took over. Mrs. Sharkin passed away in May.

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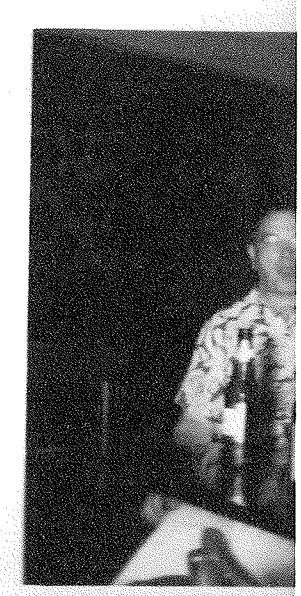
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