

Celebrate Wheaton Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow

***Help kick-off a yearlong celebration
of the past 150 years of Wheaton
on July 4th, 2008!***

The City of Wheaton will be celebrating the 150th anniversary of its incorporation as a village on February 24, 2009. A yearlong celebration, beginning on July 4, 2008 and concluding July 4th, 2009, is planned.

The theme for Wheaton's sesquicentennial is ***Celebrate Wheaton: Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow***. It is the goal for the entire Wheaton community to be involved in celebrating the 150 years of tremendous history while looking forward to an even brighter tomorrow by enveloping the theme into their events throughout the year.

We encourage participants in the Jaycees 4th of July parade to envelope the theme into their floats and costumes. The focus during the 2008 parade will be on the past, the "Yesterday" of the Sesquicentennial theme; the possibilities are endless!

Please join the city in celebrating our past in the Jaycee's July 4th parade in 2008 and look towards the future in 2009 as we celebrate "tomorrow".

A glimpse into Wheaton's history begins with its founders: Erastus Gary, Jesse Wheaton and Warren Wheaton. The trio traveled west from New England and claimed hundreds of acres of land in northeastern Illinois in 1837 and 1838. There, they began to lay important cornerstones for what would become the City of Wheaton.

In a strategic move, they offered the budding railroad several miles of free right-of-way through the growing area. Rail workers posted a sign, "Wheaton Depot," giving the community its name. The founders gave away land surrounding the station to those who were willing to build immediately.

The region began to prosper, and Wheaton incorporated as a village in 1859 with Warren Wheaton serving as its first president. He donated a parcel of land to the Illinois Institute, which was renamed Wheaton College in his honor. The historic campus of this nationally accredited college remains an important community fixture nearly 150 years later.

In 1867, the Wheaton brothers led a successful campaign to move the DuPage County government seat from Naperville to Wheaton. A referendum vote approved the move by a narrow margin of 1,686 to 1,635. In present-day Wheaton, the complex on the west side of town acts as the central hub for DuPage County government.

Many landmarks from Wheaton's past still exist today as reminders of its distinctive history and culture. Wheaton's roots can be seen in the presence of the railroad, former county courthouse and Wheaton College, which remain integral parts of the community.

Visit or call the Wheaton Center for History for more ideas and fun facts at 630-871-6601 or e-mail for more historical information at info@wheatonhistory.com.