

Wilmette History Trivia Quiz

Just as there's a lot of Wilmette history, there's a lot of Wilmette history trivia. How much of this trivia do you know? Here's a quiz to help you get started.

1. Hugh Krampe of Wilmette went to Hollywood, changed his name, and starred in what TV western?
 - a) *Wagon Train*
 - b) *The Rebel*
 - c) *Wyatt Earp*

2. Which of the following was not invented in Wilmette?
 - a) White-Out correction fluid
 - b) Christmas tree Bubble Lights
 - c) Girl Scout cookies

3. What notorious criminal built a Queen Anne mansion on 11th St. between Lake and Central?
 - a) "Baby Face" Nelson
 - b) H. H. Holmes
 - c) Tony "Big Tuna" Accardo

4. C. J. Arthur's was formerly known as
 - a) Marie's
 - b) Weeks Dining Room
 - c) Bob's Restaurant

5. The basement of the 1896 building at 609 Ridge Road that now houses the Wilmette Historical Museum was once used as
 - a) a jail
 - b) an upholstery shop
 - c) a bowling alley

6. Mike Loutsch owned the last working farm in Wilmette. Since the 1970s the area once occupied by that farm has been part of

- a) Roemer Park
- b) Centennial Park
- c) Edens Plaza

7. On St. Patrick's Day in 1978, an explosion on Cleveland Avenue destroyed one house, damaged 50 others, and shattered 160 window panes at Harper School. The explosion was caused by

- a) a gas leak from an untended barbecue grill
- b) an illegal fireworks factory in somebody's basement
- c) stockpiles of fuel oil stored near a faulty furnace

8. Work on the Baha'i House of Worship, designed by architect Louis Bourgeois, continued from 1921 until its completion

- a) in 1953
- b) in 1981
- c) any day now

9. During the Great Depression of the 1930s, the Works Progress Administration hired unemployed men to work in Wilmette at

- a) turning all the paving bricks upside-down
- b) dredging out the Sanitary Canal and the harbor
- c) playing in the Wilmette Community Band

10. Between 1899 and 1955, the North Shore Line trolley service ran cars down the middle of this Wilmette street:

- a) Central Avenue
- b) Lake Avenue
- c) Greenleaf Avenue

11. This Wilmette landmark opened on June 14, 1953, with ceremonies attended by Chicago celebrity “Whispering Joe” Wilson.

- a) Edens Plaza
- b) Walker Brothers Original Pancake House
- c) Roemer Park

12. The very first Weber Grill in America was sold at

- a) Chalet Nursery
- b) Millen’s Hardware
- c) de Giulio Kitchen Design

13. One of the following did **not** work for the Teatro del Lago movie theatre:

- a) Charlton Heston
- b) Rock Hudson
- c) Ann-Margret

If this has whetted your appetite for more, definitely check out the mother lode of local history: the Wilmette Historical Museum at 609 Ridge Road. We’re open Sunday through Thursday afternoons from 1 p.m. to 4:30 p.m., so drop by and browse to your heart’s content through our exhibit galleries and research room.

ANSWERS TO HISTORY TRIVIA QUIZ

1. c) As “Hugh O’Brian,” Krampe starred in “The Life and Legend of Wyatt Earp,” which ran on ABC from 1957 to 1961.
2. a) White-Out correction fluid. (Which, incidentally, was invented by the mother of Mike Nesmith of The Monkees!) Bubble Lights were invented and marketed by local inventor Carl Otis in the 1950s. Girl Scout cookies, made at Wilson’s Bakery at 1162 Wilmette Avenue (later Ann’s Bakery, with a mold made by Sweet’s Tin Shop (which is still on 12th St.), first appeared in the early 1930s.
3. b) H. H. Holmes, the serial killer portrayed in the 2003 book by Erik Larson, *The Devil in the White City*. The house was torn down in 1996 to make way for condos. Baby-Face Nelson did, however, breathe his last in Wilmette, in 1934, at 1627 Walnut.
4. c) Bob’s Restaurant. Bob’s occupied that spot at 1168 Wilmette Ave. for almost thirty years, from 1960 until 1989, when the space was acquired by Art and Cindy Falzer.
5. b) a jail. There were originally four cells. One has been restored, and another is decked out with an exhibit about crime and policing in Old Wilmette and Gross Point.
6. b) Centennial Park. Mike Loutsch sold the 16.6-acre farm at Wilmette and Crawford to the Park District in 1969, but by agreement continued to live there until his death in 1978.
7. b) George Murray Yule’s basement at 1221 Cleveland was packed with illegal fireworks, which ignited as he was cutting fuses.
8. a) 1953
9. a) Turning over all the bricks so that the unworn sides were facing up – one big reason our brick streets have lasted so long!
10. c) Greenleaf Avenue. The line ran from Chicago north to 4th and Linden, then west on Greenleaf, where it turned north at Poplar and paralleled the Metra tracks north to Milwaukee. These tracks, which have since been removed, explain why Greenleaf is so much wider than other Wilmette streets.
11. c) Roemer Park. Whispering Joe was the first TV announcer for the Cubs, having earned his nickname as sportscaster for television’s “Championship Bowling.”
12. a) Chalet Nursery. George Stephen, the grill’s inventor, also conducted demonstrations at the Thalmann family’s nursery in the 1950s.
13. c) Ann-Margret. There is no truth to the rumor that Ann-Margret Olson, who lived at 1315 Wilmette Ave., worked at the theatre’s candy counter. She did, however, make her professional singing debut there in a radio broadcast. Heston and Hudson both worked as doormen and ushers at the Teatro when they were students at New Trier High School. The legendary theatre, built in 1928 at what is now Plaza del Lago, closed in 1966.