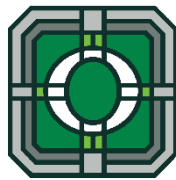


# SELF GUIDED

## Stellwagen Farm Walking Tour



Stellwagen Farm  
17701 S. 108<sup>th</sup> Avenue Orland Park, IL 60467  
708.873.1622

## Hello history lovers!

We hope you enjoy this self-guided tour of the Stellwagen Farm. This farm is special to Orland Park because it is the only farm in the Orland area that is well-preserved and shows what farm life was like over a century ago!

Due to Covid-19, many village, recreation and museum programs were canceled, some postponed, and maximum program numbers have been lowered. We have faced many changes and challenges since March, but that has not stopped us from thinking of creative ways to educate and promote our local history. This self-guided walking tour will allow friends and families to learn about our historic farm and enjoy a day outdoors, all while social distancing!

Feel free to take selfies at the farm and share them on the Orland Park History Museum's Facebook page! Also, be sure to include when you visited the farm and what you liked best about the site!



Stellwagen Farm  
ca. 1925-1935

**\*Note-** These buildings will not be open for public viewing. If you are interested in seeing the inside of these buildings, be sure to register for future Stellwagen programs or special guided tours. These programs and tours will be in the Village of Orland Park's recreation guide.

# Stop 1

Farmhouse  
ca. 1860

Philip Stellagen purchased 80-acres of farmland for his son and daughter-in-law, Mathias and Margaretha, in Orland Township. It is unknown when the land was purchased because the property record was destroyed in the 1871 Chicago Fire. Mathias and Margaretha wed in 1859, and according to family records, Philip Stellwagen purchased the farmland with farmhouse sometime soon after.

The exact year the farmhouse was built is unknown, but we believe it was circa 1860. The original house is the two-story structure that faces 108th Avenue (see picture).



# Stop 2 & 3

Milk House  
ca. 1900-1910

Windmill (Reproduction)  
2007

The small structure that is on site is not the first milk house the Stellwagen family utilized. The building was replaced sometime around 1900. The original milk was equipped with a wooden tank, or vat, that kept the family's milk cans cool. The present tank inside this milk house is cement.

The windmill was used to help circulate cold water, pumped from a hand-dug well, into the milk house. The tank inside the milk house would fill with the cold water, which kept the milk cans cool. A pipe at the back of the milk house led to the cowshed. Cool water was drained from the tank into another, used by the family's horses and cows for water.

The windmill was razed in the 1930s but a reproduction was created, using old family photographs, and installed in 2007.



# Stop 4 & 5

## 2<sup>nd</sup> Milk House ca. 1950s

A more innovative milk house was built as an attached structure to the main barn. Improved refrigeration existed during this time period, and the family needed a better structure that could house and refrigerate milk.

A round tank-like fridge was housed inside this structure. The tank had a funnel strainer to strain the milk when it was poured, and once inside the tank, the milk stayed cold. This new technology also fit the current health standards to ensure the milk stayed fresh and would not spoil.



## Cow Shed ca. 19th century

The cow shed, an open building, allowed for the free-grazing cows to come in and out of a shaded area to eat and drink water. The water used for the tub in the shed came from the milk house.

When this site was an active farm, across the back wall of the cow shed, there were feed bunkers. They are no longer visible today.



# Stop 6

Silo  
ca. 1920s

The first silo on the Stellwagen Farm was constructed out of wood and was located on the east side of the Main Barn. The silo kept silage, or chopped up corn plant, in good condition and provided more storage. This allowed the family to increase their dairy herd because they were able to store enough feed.

The wood silo was razed in the 1920s and the current silo that is visible on the site was constructed. It is made from glazed block and has an aluminum top.

\*Fun Fact: Pieces of the old silo were used to construct one of the buildings on the Stellwagen property! Continue the walking tour to find out which building!



Ring depicting site of original silo,  
located east side of Main Barn



# Stop 7

## Main Barn

ca. 1860s (additions added later to barn; years of additions are unknown)

The lower north side of the barn was used as a shop and for tool storage. Prior to this, tools were stored in the coal shed. Horse stalls were located to the south of the shop. This area housed the horses that worked the farm as well as those used for transportation.

The cows were housed in the south end of the barn. In this section, the cows were fed and milked. At the east end, mother cows delivered their calves. The calves were kept inside the barn until weaned.

The large barn door on the west side of the barn opened for large farm equipment like the rack wagon. The rack wagon was used for hay, which would be stored in the loft of the barn.

\*Fun fact: Duke, Dolly, and Charlie were three of the work horses on the Stellwagen farm in the 1940s!



# Stop 8 & 9

Toolshed  
ca. 1920s

The construction of the tool shed was done using the wood from the old silo. The building was used to house large horse-drawn equipment as well as various farm implements.



Gas Barrel  
ca. 1950s

This large red barrel was used to store gasoline for the farm's tractors. It held about 300 gallons of gas!



# Stop 10 & 11

## Wire Corn Cribs ca. 1975-1985

These wire structures were used for additional corn storage on the farm. Field corn was primarily stored in these structures and helped with the overflow of corn storage from the corn crib.



## Corn Crib ca. 1880s-1900

Field corn on the cob would be picked by hand until the mid-1900s and stored in a corn crib through the winter. The small gaps between the wood siding provided air flow, allowing the corn to dry out. The corn was then used for feed or to sell at market.

The second floor of the corn crib was used to store oats, soybeans or small grains. There are small shoots in the floor that released and poured the stored grains or oats into wagons, and eventually trucks, when it was needed or ready to be sold.



# Stop 12 & 13

Pig Barn  
ca. 1940s

This small barn was used to house the pigs or piglets on the farm. The “mama” pigs were not always careful with their piglets and were known to accidentally roll and suffocate them. The Stellwagen family separated the piglets when necessary to ensure their safety in this building.

Brooder House  
ca. 1940s

The brooder house was used for raising chicks. After eggs hatched, the chicks were placed in this structure and were warmed by a brooder stove, similar to a heat lamp, until the chicks were mature. Chicks were also purchased from a hatchery and arrived to the farm in a box. They were then placed under the heat lamp.

**\*Fun fact:** Both of these structures do not have a foundation. They are on skids, making them mobile and movable by use of a tractor. The concrete on the which these two structures sit upon was poured in the 2010s, allowing the buildings to sit on something more permanent. However, these structures are not permanently attached.



# Stop 14

Coal House  
ca. 1950s

This structure was used for fuel storage for the farmhouse's cook stove and heat. Coal and corn cobs were used for fuel. Radiators and a furnace were later added in the farmhouse. This resulted in a different type of fuel being needed. Oil tanks were placed in the basement and the coal shed was no longer needed for fuel. It was later used for storage.

In the 1980s, the farmhouse acquired liquid propane (LP) gas, which is a more efficient and cleaner fuel. Seen behind the old coal house is the tank. Today, the tank is still used to run the furnace that is in the basement of the house.



# Stop 15

Carriage House  
ca. 1860s

A structure used to store the family's carriage was likely built around the same time as the farmhouse. Eventually, the building was turned into a garage with a garage door to fit the family's car. When the outbuildings were restored by the family 2007-2018, the carriage house was restored to what it would have looked like in the 19<sup>th</sup> century.



Chicken Coop  
ca. 1900

The chicken coop, located to the east and south of the carriage house entrance, housed chickens and laying hens. This structure was added to provide security for the farm's chickens.

# Tour Complete!

Thank you for participating in this self-guided tour. Be sure to check out the Village of Orland Park's recreation guide for programs that will be held at the farm!

If you enjoyed this self-guided tour of the farm, be sure to check out the self-guided walking tour of Old Orland. The guide can be found on the Orland Park History Museum's website!