



Willow House Times

Issue 29

Cuyahoga Heights Historical Committee

February 2015



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Cuyahoga Heights Historical Archives

Kennedy House
4651 E 71st Street
Home of
Historical Committee
&
Boy Scouts



Village Soldiers -WW I



Luigi Trevisani

Our Village Soldiers

This month's WW I soldier is Luigi Trevisani.

Chemical Warfare was first talked about by the British against the Russians during the Crimean War in the 1850s and later during our Civil War by the Union at Petersburg, VA in 1864. World Governments refused to test the ideas until April 22, 1915 when Germany used them against the Allies in WW I during the Battle of Ypres in Belgium. Even though we had not yet joined the Allies the War Department ask the Medical Department to design protective equipment in late 1915. Early in 1917 all agencies were ask to help the War Department because the government knew we would soon be drawn into the war. The Bureau of Mines felt they could help with gases and rescue apparatus because of their experiences with them in the mines. They were the first to research chemical warfare for America. The subcommittee on Noxious Gases was formed under the Military Department. This committee went to universities, institutes and industrial laboratories to research chemicals for warfare. Within six months the program had grow so much they converted a section at Camp Leach, part of American University in Washington, DC to learning techniques on chemical warfare for both officers and enlisted men. By the fall of 1917 the Allies were giving us information on toxics, chemical munitions and protective equipment. The Medical Department also started working on chemical warfare in late 1917. A year after we joined the war the Bureau of Mines, Medical Department, Ordnance Department, Signal Corps, Corps of Engineers and the AEF were all into chemical warfare so the War Department created the Gas Service of the Army. Within six months the name was change to Chemical Warfare Service in the National Army. After looking at the way France filled their shells where they had high casualty rates, Captain Chance decided our milk, beer and carbonated liquid bottling system was better. Edgewood Arsenal now part of Aberdeen Proving Ground was primarily rural agricultural areas until the early 20th century. World War I brought an urgent need for chemical warfare research, testing and manufacturing, and a suitable location was sought. After an act of congress on October 20, 1917, the U.S. Government took possession of the Gunpower Neck and Bush Neck peninsula areas. Even before congress acted the War Department started building the first shell filling plant at Edgewood, MD in September 1917. It was run by the ordnance Department with help from the Medical Department. Edgewood consisted of four filling buildings radiating from a central powerhouse at 90-degree angles to each other. Each building was a complete unit in itself, with individual gas handling rooms, mixing rooms, washing towers, and ventilating equipment. If one building would have to be shut down due to an accident, it would be possible to keep the other three units running. All the units were constructed so the fan discharges were separated by a distance of over 400 feet, a precaution which prevented the accumulation of dangerous concentration of gases during plant operation. This shell filling plant, known as Filling Plant #1 was completed in January 1918. Edgewood manufactured chloropicrin, phosgene, mustard gas, chlorine and sulphur monochloride.

Luigi Trevisani was born January 12, 1890 in Force, Italy. He came to America on the ship Duca Di Genova and arrived in New York, NY March 13, 1909. Luigi was living in Cuyahoga County when he enlisted in the Army March 27, 1918 and was detached to the Edgewood Arsenal, Medical Department on April 3. When he joined he listed his occupation as a fireman. In 1918 while he was at Edgewood he became a naturalized citizen. The record was filed in Cuyahoga County but also list Edgewood. He worked in Power House #1 as water tender for 8-400 horse power water tube boilers, forced draft underfeed stokers and helped the firemen with the fires for the boilers. He was honorably discharged on May 6, 1919. Luigi went back to Italy to marry Mary DiBuo. They returned to Cuyahoga Heights and he went to work as a water tender at the garbage plant where the Service Department, Bacci Park's pond and the baseball field is now. The people that worked at the garbage plant lived in a row of houses owned by the City of Cleveland, on 71st Street south of where the Baptist Church was, where the Toscana Party Center is now. Luigi and his family lived in the fifth house which was an old farm house. The other four homes were the same. The plant workers went on strike for better pay and were forced out of the homes the same day. When the strike was over they moved back in to their homes. Cleveland later offered to sell the homes to the workers. Luigi bought his home at 5002 E 71st. after he went to work for the school he tore down the old house and built a brick home. Luigi and Mary had three children Victor, Yolanda and Delia. When the village started building the school in 1938 they ask Luigi to be in charge of the school's boiler room. He worked for the school until he retire. Luigi died January 4, 1986 and his wife Mary died June 25, 1993. Their son Victor was in the Army Tank Division during WW II and after he returned home he was a village fireman.

Sources:

Delia Trevisani; *Ohio Soldiers in WW I 1917-1918: History of The Chemical Warfare Service*, by the Center of Military History-United State Army Washington DC-1988; *Ancestry.com*



Soldiers at Edgewood during WW I



1



2



3

Pictures:

1 Luigi Trevisani

2 Mary DiBuo Trevisani

3 Luigi standing in his yard the sewer plant is behind him

4 Delia, Victor & Yolanda during WW II

5 Mary & Luigi Trevisani

6 the brick home the Trevisani family built. The white house is one of the four homes that all looked alike. The City of Cleveland rented them to the garbage plant workers. The one in the picture was replaced with a new home a couple of years ago. The Henry house is the only one left and it's deed states it was moved from the corner of Warner & Canal Roads which would have meant all 4 were probably moved from land by the garbage plant.



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Cuyahoga Heights Historical Committee

Barb Bartczak

Mark Chase

Laura Hine

Irma Schab

Sandy Waldemarson

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2015 Meetings

10 AM - Noon

April 4th

May 2nd

May Memorial Day

Open House 9 AM –1PM

August 1st

October 3rd

at

Kennedy House

4561 E. 71st Street

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Willow Times News

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Did You Know?



FEB 6 1961
SURPLUS AIR FORCE TRACTOR has been converted into a snow plow out at Cuyahoga Heights High School. More than a little ingenuity went into the conversion. Phil Secunde, 6493 Evergreen Dr., head school mechanic (left), had the plow frame and hydraulic lift made in the high school foundry and machine shop. Secunde is shown here with custodian Gene Guelker, 4900 E. 71st St. The tractor was bought for \$50 and the total cost of the plow is figured at \$500. Appropriately enough, the snow plow is painted red and gray—the school colors.

The picture & article are from the Cleveland Press. Thanks to Judy Casavecchia's post on our committee's Facebook page telling everyone that eBay had a number of village press photos and old atlas maps of the village up for sale. A village resident bought them & the Historical Committee now has these items in our archives. We now have 229 members on our Facebook page. It is called Cuyahoga Heights Memories Page. If you went to Cuyahoga Hts. school or lived in Cuyahoga Hts., Brooklyn Hts. or Valley View you are welcome to join our Facebook page.

Committee News

Our meeting dates for next year are listed to the left. Everyone is welcome to attend the meetings, Memorial Day Open House & look at the displays. You can also schedule a time to visit by contacting any committee member or calling the village hall. We will e-mail or call you to set up a time.