

Social Life in the Village



*1917 Chapek's Grove Clambake with
Dance Hall and Wagon Shed in Background*

Village Hall Drama Club Production

(left to right) Helen Baur, unknown, Mary Bacci, Lou Zupancic, Kenny Farrar,
Harry Blue, Irene Blue, Dorothy Kruzel and Martha Prah



1936 Dance Review

(left to right) Patti Bloam, Luella Bloam, Sylvia Casavecchia, Jennie Billi,
Julia Bohdan, Doris Vana, Felicia Evans and Marion Gallitz

Social Life in the Village

by Laura Hine

Cuyahoga Heights was no different from any small community in the early days. Social life revolved around square dances, picnics, clambakes, dances organized around the latest music and skating on the ponds during the winter months. The village boasted of its own dance hall where popular Saturday night get-togethers were held. The men of the village participated in a variety of sporting events including fishing, turtle catching, fox hunts, hunting and baseball.

The local halls and later the town hall were popular spots for the dance crowds. Ted Lang, the robust drummer and his wife tickled the ivories in the musical era.

During the years of the Great Depression in the 1930s, the local dramatic club, "Ruralites," produced many interesting programs. The teenagers and young adults produced plays and variety shows. The talented group included Helen Baur DeSantis, Dorothy Kruzel Bartczak, Esther Chase Keys, Harry and Irene Blue, Marian Humphrey, Alvena Gallitz, Mary Bacci and John Hanousek.

Hunting

In the early days, men participated in mushroom picking safaris. Each year turtle soup was a delight on the menu of refreshments at the men's stag parties and at the Home Day celebration. Prominent chefs were Police Chief Bill Baur and Dan Marek, who guarded their recipes with the professional pride of gourmet cooks. The fall of the year was a favorite time for the mushroom pickers. Chapek, the popular tavern keeper in the old Willow House, was an expert at recognizing the varieties of the field mushrooms and passed his skill to the other men.

Rabbits, pheasants, squirrels, ducks and smaller game were plentiful in the wooded ravines that surrounded the village. The predatory fox was the subject of Sunday morning hunts of large groups of the sportsmen. After the hunt, a brunch of hot chili or turtle soup rounded out the day of fun. In friendly competition, the men would record their biggest turtle or largest mushroom picked during a single season.

Activities, Clubs, Sports and the Pool

Many holiday activities were provided including the annual Christmas visit by Santa; the VFW Post Easter Egg Hunt; trips to the Cleveland Stadium to see big league baseball—the Cleveland Indians; Halloween parties; Saturday movies at the town hall and back-to-school parties. Some of these programs have been a continuous treat for the village youngsters for more than 60 years.

Another traditional event was Home Days in August of each year. It gave the residents, past and present, a chance to socialize and recall the good old days. The Fourth of July water show at the pool and fireworks at the high school football field were enjoyed by young and old.

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Over the years, there were many clubs and activities provided for residents. Men's Club, Women's Club, Homemakers and plenty of organized events and sports for the youth of the village as well.

In addition to the men's fast pitch softball team, horseshoe pitching and bocce ball were popular among the men. Regulation horseshoe pits spotted the village at several locations including the Weidner homestead on Marcelline Court. The contests during the late summer evenings were popular. The winners were treated to the finest home brew since Prohibition was in effect.

When the village hall was built, a bowling alley provided both men and women an opportunity to participate in league competition and weekend open bowling.

In 1938, the Cuyahoga Heights Athletic Club was formed and entered a team in the Newburgh Heights Fast Pitch Softball League. American Steel and Wire leased the East 49th Street play field to the village for one dollar per year.

Chapek's Grove was used for dances and picnics. The Willow House and Hillside Tavern were entertainment venues for the adults—see the *Historic Homes and Properties* section of this book for all buildings mentioned in this paragraph. Playground activities were organized at Chapek's Grove and the village hall area. In 1945, these activities were taken over by the village.

In January 1956, council authorized construction of a swimming pool estimated at \$165,000. The pool was to be built adjacent to the village hall where the baseball field was located and was later named after the former mayor, William R. Gerdon.

Baseball

The game of baseball, produced an active life in the village. In 1953, Little League fever among young boys hit the community and Lloyd Wey assisted by several young men, organized a team. The league competition included the communities of Brooklyn Heights, Cuyahoga Heights, Independence, Newburgh Heights, Seven Hills and Valley View. The opening day each season was a festive event. Mayor Bill Gerdon tossed out the first ball. There was a band, presentation of the colors by the VFW Post and Auxiliary and all the fanfare associated with a big-league opener. The managers, coaches, umpires and scorekeepers were all volunteers. It made possible the wholesome sport activity for the young boys that continues today.

The ladies of the community were not overlooked as they organized a Pigtail team for the girls. The high school provided team sports in football, basketball, baseball and other sports for its students.

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Tomato Derby

Another popular event was the first ripe tomato derby each season. Early planting and guarding against late spring frosts was the secret of the gardeners. Many have shared in the coveted title of tomato derby competition including Bill Baur, Frank Bartczak, Jack Klima, Marcel “Bus” Golene, Vince Wesley and others.

Other Community Events

As time rolled on, new events have cropped up. The Annual Corn Roast in October is a fun filled event that attracts hundreds of residents and area school district friends. It also provides an opportunity for high school students to acquire community service hours and their clubs to earn money.

Arbor Day grew (no pun intended) into an opportunity to memorialize those family members who have passed on. Interested persons may buy and plant a tree in their memory. This biennial event has created a lovely landscape at Bacci Park.

Health is always important. Every fall, the Flu Shot Program is a time for a hearty breakfast served by Mayor Jack Bacci, CFO Angel Meriwether, Lee Ann Schoeffler, Police Chief Brian Sturgill, Fire Chief Michael Suhy and Service Director Dave Sammons along with other staff members. It’s a hit for our seniors and a great time to catch up with neighbors.

Cuyahoga Heights Seniors Club Then and Now

The Cuyahoga Heights Senior Citizens Club was organized in 1974 by longtime Council member Eleanor Koran. Mrs. Mae Austin, her mother, was elected to serve as the organization’s first president. Decades later the club is still going strong and very active.

From 1968 to 1973 Villagers Got the Right to Strike!

Cuyahoga Heights Mayor Louis Bacci figured if President Nixon can have a bowling alley in the White House, we can have one in the village hall. Bacci has reopened the village’s four lanes which have been closed to the public since 1962. Since then only children in Cuyahoga Heights schools used the alleys. Now residents and their guests will be able to bowl in the village hall Saturday and Sunday afternoons. The charge will be 25 cents a line. When the alleys were built by the WPA in 1936 they shared the room in the village hall basement with two table tennis tables. “In 1947, they took out the tables and put in two more lanes. Then in 1962, we put in semi-automatic pin setters. When I was younger they were open every day,” the mayor said. “We want to see what the demand will be now.”

Drama Club

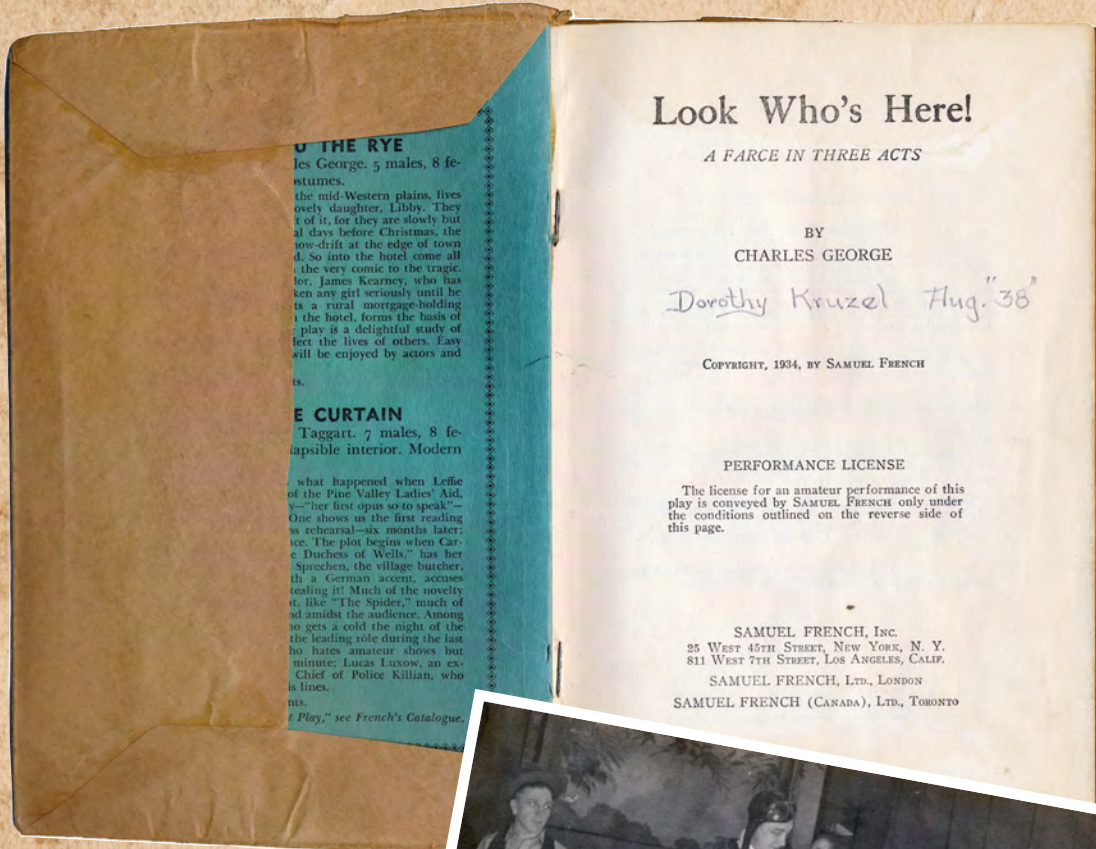


Village Hall Celebration

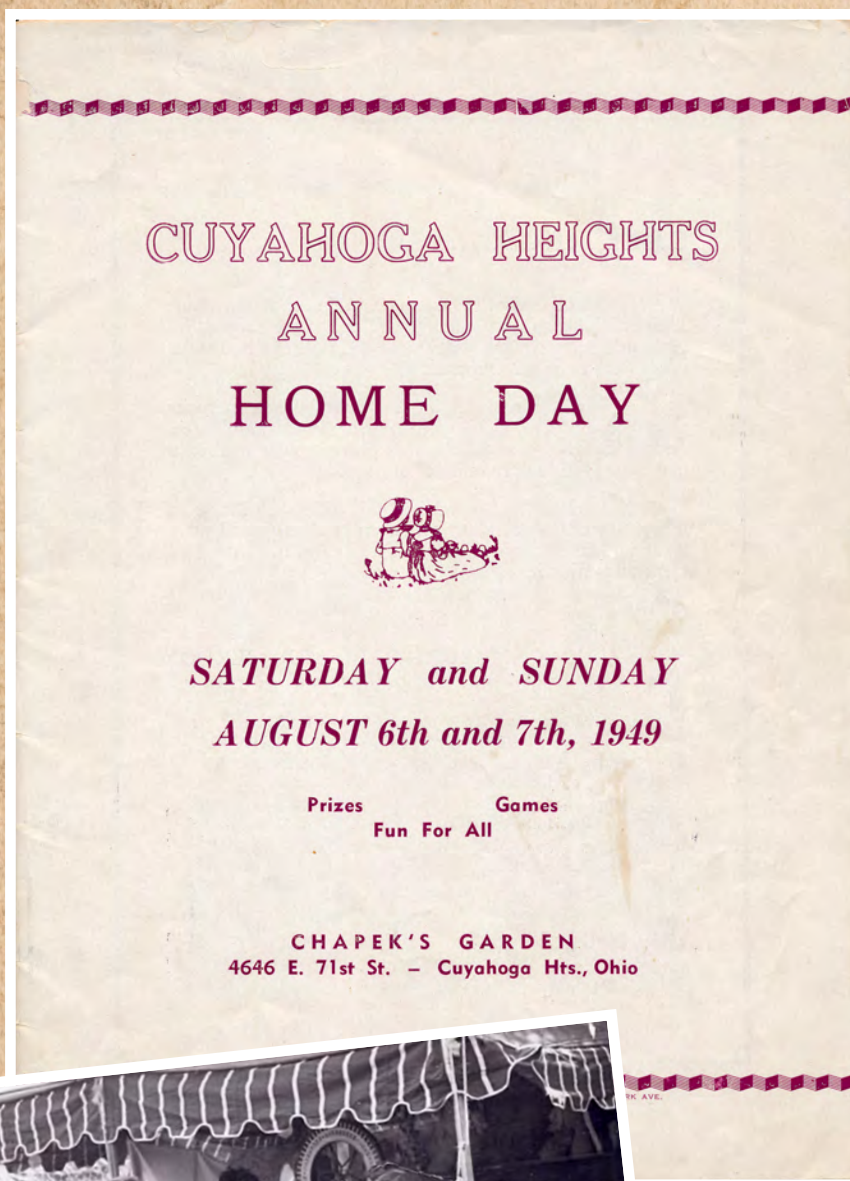


Toscana Association Picnic — August 20, 1939

Cuyahoga Heights 2018 Centennial



Village Hall Drama Club Productions



1940 Home Days "Game of Chance"

(Left to Right) Walter Kaczmarek, Eleanor Koran, Louise Hanousek, Lena Cash and Helen Kosicki

Cuyahoga Heights 2018 Centennial

GREETINGS.....

Home Day has become a tradition in Cuyahoga Heights. Through the splendid support of the cooperating clubs and groups, we hope to make the 1949 Home Day an event long to be remembered.

We wish to thank the donors for their generosity, the subscribers of our souvenir program booklet and to our friends, neighbors and village employees, who worked to make the affair entertaining to all.

On behalf of the officials and members of the committee, I wish to extend an invitation to all the residents to come and take part in the festivities. It's your Home Day, come and enjoy it.

Sincerely,

MAYOR WILLIAM R. GERDON
Chairman

Ladies' Auxiliary Post 6566
Pres. Geraldine Schuman

VPW Post 6566
Commander John Hanousek

Toscana Club
President

Civic Club
Pres. Harvey Bloam

Women's Club
Pres. Emma Farrar

4 H Club

Eleanor Koran, Sponsor

Baseball Club
Pres. Chester Luck

Fire Department
Chief William J. Saunders

Police Department
Chief William Baur

Annual Home Day Program

Chapek's Garden | Saturday, August 6th and Sunday, August 7th | 1949

4646 East 71st Street, Cuyahoga Heights, Ohio

Cuyahoga Heights 2018 Centennial

PROGRAM

Saturday, August 6th

2 P.M.

Races and Games - Buddy Wallace in charge. Valuable Prizes and Cash Awards.

8 to 9 P.M.

Showagon Revue with Mrs. Hodges

9 to 12 P.M.

Gene Beecher's Band

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#### Sunday, August 7th

2:30 to 5 P.M.

Free Dancing

8 to 9 P.M.

One Hour Vaudeville - All Star Show  
Featuring New York Stage Stars - Dell  
O'Dell, World's Greatest Woman Magi-  
cian; Charles Carrer, Master Juggler and  
Balancer; and many other Stars.

9 to 12 P.M.

Johnny Gower's Cleveland Indian Clown  
Band.

10:30 P.M.

Grand Drawing

11 P.M.

Fireworks

Hourly Drawings for Valuable Prizes start at 4 P.M. Re-  
gister upon arrival.

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The free T-B X-Ray Mobile Unit will be available from
4 to 8 P.M. Every one is urged to take advantage of this
free health service.

Annual Home Day Program

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4646 East 71st Street, Cuyahoga Heights, Ohio

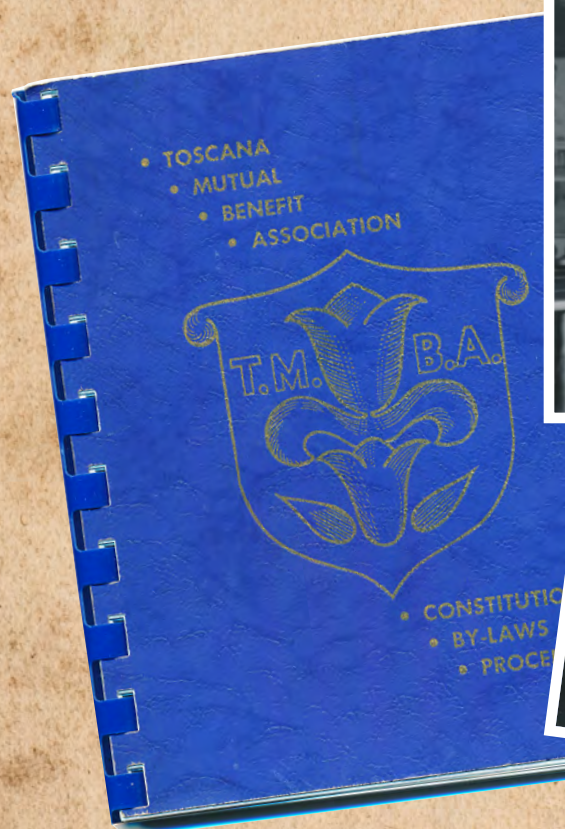


*Vintage
Home Day
Posters*



Note the Klima's Grove and Klima Gardens location names

Toscana Club Activities in 1952



Irma Billi and her father, Lino Billi, with his hand raised



(Left to Right) Antonette Billi and daughters Rita and Irma at Toscana Club



(left/front to back) Lottie Kaczmarek, Ann Wallace, Alice Bloam, Dorothy Bartczak, Francis Boing
(right/front to back) Alvina Mantell, Antonette Billi, Margaret Bloam, Marie Crombine, Regina Flowers
We don't know the identity of the smiling man in the white hat. Do you?

Cricket Tavern and Hillside Tavern

Over the years, there were only two places in the village folks could go for food and drink, unless you were a veteran and could grab a beer at VFW Post 6566. This was after Kaminski's bar was torn down at East 71st Street and Grant Avenue. There was a small bar on East 49th Street, the Cricket Tavern, which had a couple upstairs apartments. This bar still operates today as the 49th Street Tavern.

The more well-known establishment, Hillside Tavern, had a party center. Hillside's owner, Rayno "Skinny" Antognozzi, lived in the village. Irma Schab kept a copy of the early Hillside menu, probably from the 50s or 60s especially since her mother, Antonette Billi, worked many long hours here, cooking, cleaning and tending bar. Mayor Lou Bacci hosted his football re-election parties here and his wife Lillian, hosted charitable fund-raisers here as well. Many locals held their wedding receptions at Hillside long after the Toscana Club burned and was razed.

HILLSIDE TAVERN



*"The Place Where The
Family Likes To Eat"*



4617 EAST 71st STREET

(JUST 1 MILE FROM THE WILLOW CLOVERLEAF)

CUYAHOGA HEIGHTS, OHIO

Michigan 1-9854

Hillside Tavern Menu (note the phone number)

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APPETIZERS

Antipasto75	Orange Juice15
Tomato Juice15	Radishes, Celery, Olives40
Shrimp Cocktail50		

SOUP

Cup10	Bowl15
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SEA FOODS

Includes Bread, Butter, Potatoes

Lobster Tail	2.30	Fish Dinner95
Frog Legs	2.30	French Fried Shrimp	1.25

SPAGHETTI

With Tomato Sauce .....	.80	With Mushrooms	1.10
With Meat Balls .....	.90	Meatballs and Mushrooms	1.30

14 Home Made Ravioli

1.25

Salad30 Extra

Half Orders For Children Only

SALADS

Italian Style Salad .....	.30	Combination with Anchovies .....	.75
Potato Salad .....	.25	Chef Salad .....	.75
Head Lettuce French Dressing ....	.25	Cole Slaw .....	.20

ENTREES

Half Broiled Chicken	1.50	Hamburg Steak	1.20
Steak	2.50	Broiled Pork Chops Dinner	1.25
Lamb Chops (2)		Breaded Pork Chops Dinner	1.25
Veal Cutlet	1.30		

Entree Includes Bread, Butter, Potatoes or Spaghetti

Roast Beef or Pork Dinner, Potatoes and Vegetable	1.25
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MEALS SERVED FROM 11:00 A.M. TO 1:30
MONDAY THROUGH SATURDAY

Hillside Tavern Menu

Cuyahoga Heights 2018 Centennial

SPECIAL DINNERS

Half Broiled Chicken	2.25	Veal Cutlet	2.00
Steak	3.25	Broiled Pork Chops	2.00
Lamb Chops (2)			

Includes Celery and Olives, Soup, Side Dish of Spaghetti or Potatoes,
Salad, Dessert and Coffee, Tea or Milk

Mushrooms .25 Extra

Fried Onions .25

EGGS

Omelette (Plain) .....	.75	With Cheese .....	.80
With Mushrooms .....	.80	Omelette with Ham .....	.80
With Onions .....	.80	Ham or Bacon and Eggs .....	.75

Includes Bread, Butter and French Fried Potatoes

SANDWICHES

(Special) Steak Sandwich	1.25	Hamburger .....	.35
Includes Celery, Tomato, Radishes and Olives (French Fries)		With Sauce .....	.50
Club Sandwich	1.00	Egg Sandwich .....	.30
Ham Sandwich .....	.40	Salami (Imported) .....	.45
Cheese Sandwich .....	.30	Hot Beef with Potatoes .....	.85
Bacon, Lettuce and Tomato .....	.45	Hot Pork with Potatoes .....	.85
Comb. Ham and Cheese .....	.50	Grilled Cheese .....	.35
Cheeseburger .....	.40	Tunafish Sandwich .....	.45
Toast .....	.05 Extra	Fish Sandwich .....	.45

DESSERTS

Ice Cream10 and .20	Pie15
Spumoni20	Pie Ala Mode25

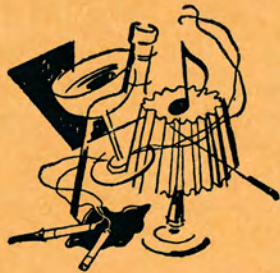
BEVERAGES

Coffee and Tea10	Milk and Ice Tea15
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SPECIAL Room Available for Private Parties—Seating 250

Weddings — Private Parking

Hillside Tavern Menu



WE SERVE THE FINEST

COCKTAILS

Manhattan .....	.55	Alexander .....	.60
Dry Martini .....	.55	Pink Lady .....	.55
Old Fasioned .....	.55	Tom Collins .....	.55
Whiskey Sour .....	.55	Darquiri .....	.60
Bacardi .....	.55	Slow Gin Fizz .....	.55

AFTER DINNER DRINKS

Apricot Brandy .....	.35	Brandy Domestic .....	.35
Blackberry Brandy .....	.35	Brandy Imported .....	.55
Cherry Brandy .....	.35	Cherry Herring .....	.55
Peach Brandy .....	.35	Drambuie .....	.55
Benedictine .....	.60	Southern Comfort .....	.55
B & B .....	.60	Stinger .....	.55
Creme De Menthe .....	.35	Grasshopper .....	.65
Creme De Menthe Froppe55	Creme De Cacao55

Italian Wines To Satisfy Every Taste

Hillside Tavern Menu

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Chapek's Grove Gang circa 1955 to 1960

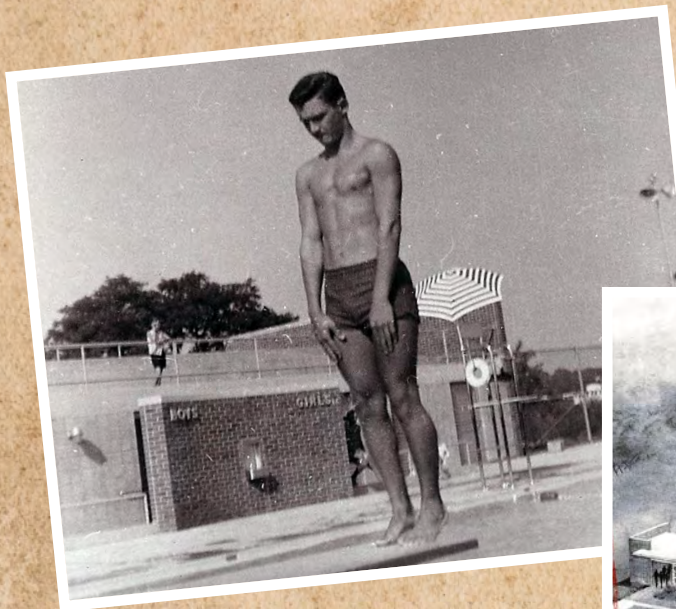
(back row) Unknown, Bea Guidotti, Virginia Milicia, Patti Ezzo, Frank Kaczmarek, Joe Blue
(middle row) Gloria Chase, Jennie Billi, Harriett Koren, (small child) Dolly Smith,
Delma Traffis, Cheryl Koren, (girl hidden) Sherri Traffis, Mrs. Gallitz, Deb Schuman (on lap),
Mrs. Knowlton, Ray and Luella Ryan, Billy Ryan (baby), Robert Ryan
(front row) Tim Fontana, Patty Domzalski Crooks, Linda Crooks, Laura Bacci, Male Kaczmarek,
Louis "Gigi" Bacci, Jack Ryan, Unkown Talani (Kennedy House in background)

Chapek's Grove Memories

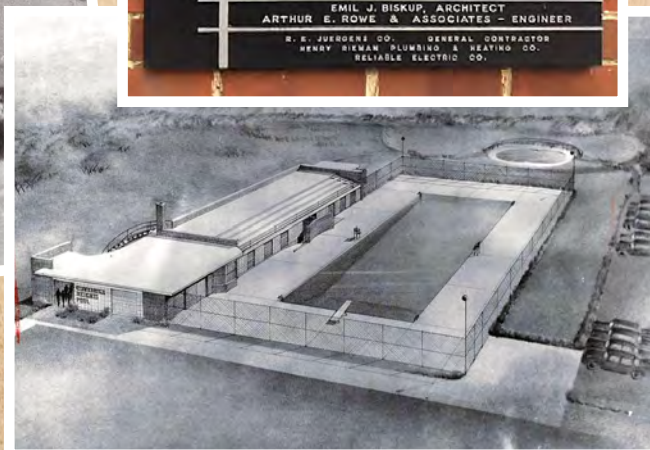


Cecelia Crooks (center) with her two children, Linda and Jimmy in 1952

Swim Team from the 1970s

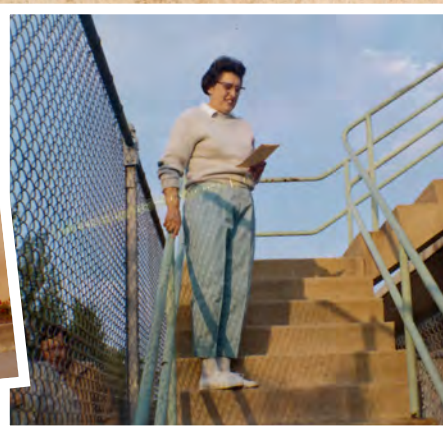


1959 photo of Earl Bloam, father of current councilman Todd Bloam, getting ready to dive off the board





Fun at the pool in the 1960s



(left) Janet Malek, Judy Casavecchia Marik, Karen Aguzzi Weigand, Cheryl Billi Harris
(right) Bella Radway McCandless worked with our synchronized swimmers

Summer Nights at the Drive-In

The Canal Road All-Weather Drive-In opened July 25, 1963 and was on the site where the Southerly Sewage Treatment Plant is located today. The single screen drive-in also had two indoor theatres.

Opening Tonight

The Beautiful
NEW Canal Rd. DRIVE-IN THEATRE

**CLEVELAND'S
NEWEST
INDOOR-OUTDOOR
THEATRE**

ON CANAL RD. at EAST 49th STREET
(In Cuyahoga Heights—Just off Willow Freeway—Rts. 21 & 17)

TONIGHT—2 BIG HITS

**JACK LEMMON
and LEE REMICK**
**"DAYS OF WINE
AND ROSES"**
A MARTIN MARLAGE Production

**"WHAT EVER
HAPPENED TO
BABY JANE?"**

JACK LEMMON • LEE REMICK

PHONE: DI 1-1551

The beautiful and ultra-modern CONCESSION building (shown above) occupies a 10,000-square-foot area. It includes the two separate year-round air-conditioned auditoriums.



Cuyahoga Heights 2018 Centennial

Village Hall Bowling Alley

(left to right) Ed Koran, Bill Elmy, Hank Nobili, Ted Koren, Ron Hess, Ben Austin

The pin boys can be seen in the background!



(left to right)(top) Vic Trevisani, Ted Umerly, John Bohdan

(front) Vic Duber, Ray Smosarski, Ed Merreck

Cuyahoga Heights 2018 Centennial

Looking north at the old baseball field next to Village Hall where the pool is now.
4833 East 71st Street is in the background to the left.



Play Ball!



Men's Team



Women's Softball Team (left to right)

Back: Delma Traffis, Grace Pallini, Gloria Chase, Lois Davis, Edna Wencke, Jean Bloam, Dorothy Boing,
Unkown, Unknown. Front: Anne Bohdan Lynch, Jennie Billi, Stella Bohdan, Harriett Koren,
Ed Guilfoyle, Jan Adams Guilfoyle

Cuyahoga Heights 2018 Centennial



1959 Little League Team at Chapek's Grove (left to right)

Back: Wayne Arndt, Stan Derbin, Ray Wasky, Dave Domzalski, Jim Domzalski, Dale Andrews, Bill Gallitz, Joe Andrews. Middle: Pete Humphrey, Ronnie Tomczak, Jim Crooks, Marty Malek, Tommy Humphrey. Front: Jerry Humphrey

1982 Charity Softball Game
(right)



1980s Little League Team
(below)



Senior Club Activities



Members of the 1979 Cuyahoga Heights Senior Citizens Club pose for photo during a break from their annual Christmas Party at the City Hall's third floor recreation area.

CUYAHOGA HEIGHTS SENIOR CLUB

In March 1974, a group of 18 people met at the Village Hall in response to a flyer sent out to the residents announcing the formation of a Senior Citizens Club. The newly formed club held its first election in June of that year with Mae Austin elected as its first president. A set of bylaws were drawn up for the club, and a charter was officially recognized by the state of Ohio. 18 years later and the club is still going strong with 63 official members.

The club features a variety of activities for its members which include: parties, picnics, bus trips and speakers. The club meets twice a month on the second and fourth Tuesday. Guest speakers attend the meetings to bring the club up to date on a variety of subjects that include health, banking, police protection and hospitalization plus many more. Any village resident over the age of 60 is invited to join the Senior Club.

—ELEANOR KORAN, Councilwoman

Cuyahoga Heights 2018 Centennial



Senior Club Activities

(top) One of many Senior Christmas Parties

(bottom) Seniors in front of Village Hall at the 1976 Bicentennial Celebration

