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# CHAPTER 6. SHEFFIELD PROGRESSES

## —COMMERCIAL, RESIDENTIAL, AND GOVERNMENTAL DEVELOPMENT

### HISTORY OF SHEFFIELD'S BRIDGES

When one thinks of the number of bridges over the Black River in Sheffield, the number two comes to mind—Detroit Road and East 31<sup>st</sup> Street. How about those two railroad bridges plus all those along the Black River Reservation bikeway? With the new segment of the Metro Parks bikeway opening this spring that extends north to Colorado Avenue, there will be a total of nine bridges that span the river in Sheffield. Let's take a look at the history of a few of these.

The first highway bridges to cross the Black River were located near the present locations of SR 254 (Detroit Road) and East 31<sup>st</sup> Street. Rather than the high viaducts that now span the entire river valley, they were low bridges that simply crossed the main river channel. The abandoned abutments of these bridges that were built in the 19<sup>th</sup> century are still visible today. Next came the railroad bridges, constructed primarily to carry West Virginia coal to the steel mills and to transport finished pipe to distant markets. Then came another generation or two of highway bridges and finally the popular pedestrian and bikeway bridges.

**Garfield Bridge.** Perhaps the most impressive bridge is the one that connects Sheffield Village and Sheffield Township along North Ridge. The current bridge, completed in 2003, is the third in a series of bridges that crossed the Black River here. The 1851 Lorain County Tax Map indicates either a bridge or a ford at this location, whereas the 1874 map shows a definite bridge at the bottom of the valley. Locally known as Gas House Hill Bridge, this structure had become old and rickety by the early 1930s and plans were made to replace it with a viaduct.

Garfield Bridge (originally known as the Black River Viaduct) was built in 1936 on SR 254. Viaducts are long bridge-like structures, typically constructed in a succession of arches, which carry roads or railroads across a valley or other low ground. In service for 67 years, Garfield Bridge consisted of a series of continuous steel deck girders on high steel bents (a framework transverse to the length of the bridge designed to carry lateral as well as vertical loads), with a concrete roadway slab and concrete railings. Spanning the full width of the river valley, the viaduct was 1,470 feet long, 90 feet above the riverbed, and had a roadway width of 30 feet between sidewalks. It was built at a cost of \$258,840.

The 1936 viaduct replaced the dangerously weak steel-truss bridge that had been condemned as unsafe for loads of more than 4 tons, and eliminated a particularly poor alignment, involving several abrupt turns in the roadway, and steep grades. The length and height of the viaduct necessitated careful study in its design, in order that cost might be held to a practical minimum during

the Depression years. Few of the many travelers who crossed the viaduct during its years of faithful service realized that it was supported by an unusual and elaborate system of structural steel bents. Eventually the steel framework of the viaduct succumbed to corrosion and metal fatigue. In 2003, the original Garfield Bridge was dismantled to make way for an elegant concrete-pier viaduct carrying 4 lanes of traffic. The new bridge, also known as Garfield Bridge, proudly displays a bronze name plaque that commemorates the two Garfield Bridges. The Historical Society is pleased to acknowledge and thank Lorain County Engineer Ken Carney for his efforts to place the new plaque on the east approach to the bridge.

**East 31<sup>st</sup> Street Bridge.** The first bridge to cross the Black River in Sheffield was most likely an iron truss structure in the vicinity of the Day grist and saw mills, about 1,000 feet upstream of the current East 31<sup>st</sup> Street Bridge. A river crossing at this location is indicated on both the 1851 and 1874 maps of Sheffield Township. The road leading to and from the bridge was unpaved and climbed steep banks of the Black River on both sides of the bridge.

As early as 1904, the local newspapers mention the need for a new bridge and by 1906 farmers and merchants from South Lorain and Sheffield began to express their desire for a high-level bridge to the Lorain County Commissioners. In 1911 the County Commissioners were presented with a petition signed by 896 property owners requesting that a new bridge be built. The president of the Lorain Chamber of Commerce, W. N. Little, was the principal promoter of the bridge project and encouraged the Commissioners to place a \$68,000 bond issue before the voters.

Oberlin and Wellington were opposed to the project, and the Elyria Council went so far as to pass a resolution asking their voters to vote against the measure, noting that the bridge would cost Elyrians some \$14,000. Despite these opponents, a county wide referendum for the bridge passed with a 686-vote majority, Lorain voting 6 to 1 in favor of the new bridge. Grateful farmers and merchants presented Mr. Little with huge baskets of fruits and vegetables.

The contract to construct the bridge was awarded to the Pittsburgh Bridge Company for \$62,000. The viaduct-style bridge consisted of a series of graceful steel arches spanning a 370-foot wide ravine flanked by steep shale bluffs. The bridge roadway was paved with hexagonal wooden blocks and creosoted planks were installed to form sidewalks. Additional contracts were let to vacate the old truss bridge and to place a cut-stone retention wall along the steep, 800-foot-long causeway-like approach on

the Sheffield side of the bridge. Opened in November 1913, the bridge was in service for 64 years. In 1977 it was replaced with a more modern, 4-lane, concrete pillar bridge. Although the 1913 bridge is gone now, the magnificent stonework on the Sheffield approach is still visible on the south side of the causeway to one adventurous enough to scale the wall. Three steel-reinforced, concrete pillars from the old Lake Shore Electric Railway bridge over the Black River can also be explored just south stone wall.



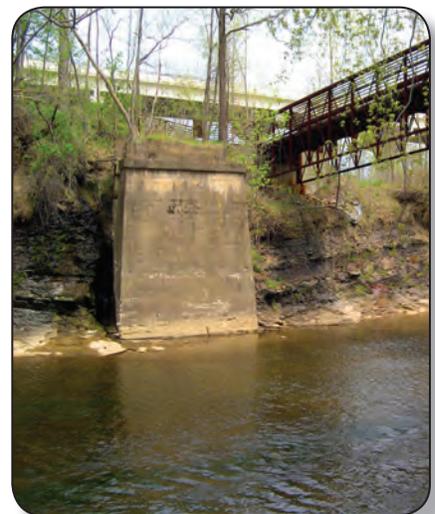
*Old North Ridge steel-truss bridge over the Black River in 1908 (Ohio Department of Transportation).*



*Original North Ridge bridge (~1880s) over the Black River (Doug Ondercin).*



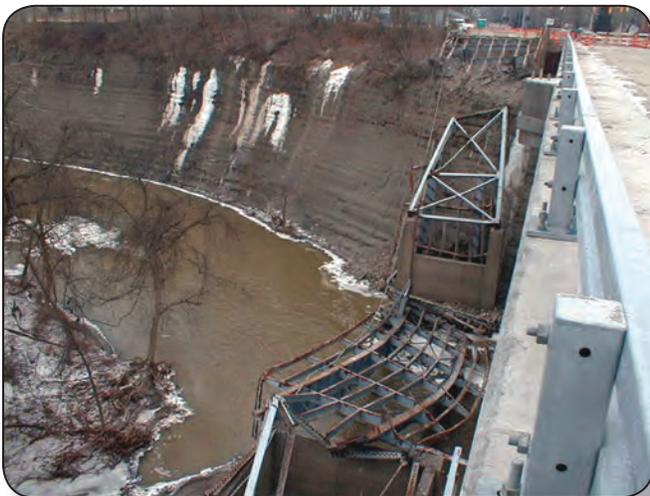
*First Garfield Bridge viaduct (SR 254) over the Black River, built in 1936 (Ohio Department of Transportation).*



*Abutment for old North Ridge bridge as it appeared in April 2008. Lorain County Metro Parks' Bridgeway Trail bridge at left and new Garfield Bridge viaduct in the distance.*



Concrete pillars for construction of new Garfield Bridge in 2000 with original Garfield Bridge in the background (Thomas Hoerrle).



The original Garfield Bridge being demolished by blasting in January 2003.



Abandoned Lorain & West Virginia Railroad trestle from Metro Parks' Bridgeway Trail.



New Garfield Bridge over the Black River from river level (2005).



1,000-foot-long Bridgeway Trail double bridge over the Black River in Sheffield. Photograph taken from the upstream span of the bridge.



Profile view of Days Dam steel-truss bridge (~1910) over the Black River. Avon Beach & Southern electric railway trestle at far left side of photograph (Black River Historical Society).



South abutment to Days Dam steel-truss bridge (~1910). The Black River flows under the bridge here, but has since abandoned this meander channel (Black River Historical Society).



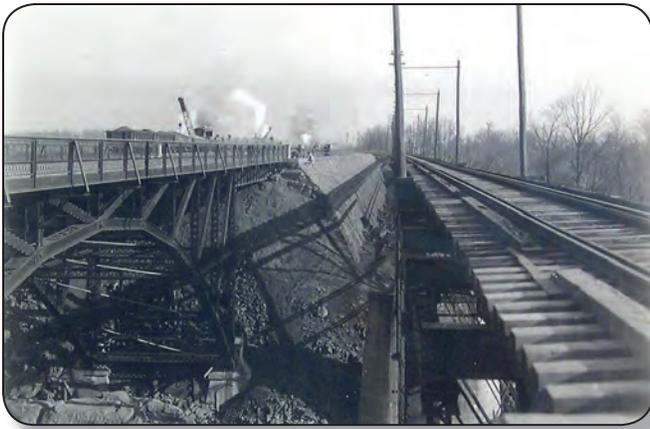
Center section of Days Dam bridge (~1910) over the Black River showing the roadway passing under the Avon Beach & Southern electric railway trestle (Black River Historical Society).



Abandoned south approach to Days Dam bridge as it appeared in April 2008.



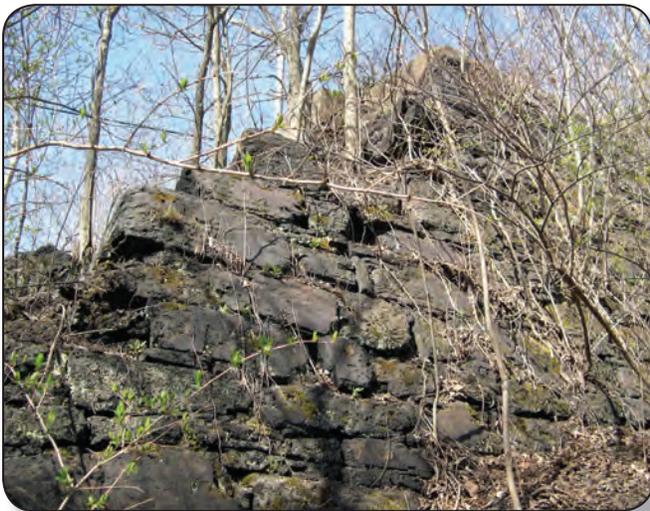
Completed East 31<sup>st</sup> Street Bridge over the Black River ~1913 (Gladys Wisnieski).



*Causeway under construction leading to the steel girders portion of the first East 31<sup>st</sup> Street Bridge in 1913. Photograph taken from Avon Beach & Southern electric railway trestle, built in 1905, toward the east. Note impressive stonework for the causeway's retention wall (Black River Historical Society).*



*New East 31<sup>st</sup> Street Bridge built in 1977 to replace the 1913 structure. Note the abandoned concrete pillar from the 1905 Avon Beach & Southern electric railway trestle.*



*Abandoned causeway's retention wall as it appeared in April 2008.*



*Lake Terminal Railroad bridge, built about one-quarter-mile downstream (north) of the East 31<sup>st</sup> Street Bridge to service the US Steel plant.*



*Abandoned concrete pillar of the 1905 Avon Beach & Southern electric railway trestle over the Black River at East 31<sup>st</sup> Street as it appeared in April 2008.*



*Lorain County Metro Parks' new 40-foot-high Steel Mill Trail bridge over the Black River about one-quarter-mile downstream of the East 31<sup>st</sup> Street bridge.*

### Sheffield's Dairy Industry

The family name of Mackert is synonymous with the dairy industry in Sheffield Village. From 1931 to 1954 the Mackert family owned and operated a dairy on Abbe Road that serviced much of northern Lorain and northwestern Cuyahoga Counties. From a humble single-truck beginning, the dairy grew over the years to a fleet of over twenty delivery trucks. The author had a pleasant conversation with Gladys Mackert about the dairy and Mackert family. Gladys, who now lives in Avon, was married to the late Lester Mackert who was the son the dairy's founder, Ed Mackert. For ten years she worked on the family farm while Lester worked in the dairy. The author thanks Gladys for sharing her recollections and Mackert family research.

**The Mackert Family Immigrates to Sheffield.** Joseph Ignatius [Ignatz] Mackert (1820-1883) was the patriarch of the Sheffield branch of the family, having emigrated from Ettlingen, Baden, a region along the Rhine River in southwestern Germany, in the early 1840s. Ettlingen had its origin as a Roman settlement and was chartered as a town in 1227. Before Ignatz was born, waterpower was used at Ettlingen for milling and was the basis for industrial development in the late 1700s. An 18<sup>th</sup> century castle and town hall still exist in the town that now has a population of over 35,000 residents.

Ignatz and his wife (Mary Walburga Sonz) first planned to settle on the west bank of the Cuyahoga River—near today's West Side Market—where Ignatz had been promised 40 acres of land if he cleared 80 acres of dense forest. Mary, wanting to live near her family, convinced Ignatz to continue on west to Sheffield where her brother had a farm. Mary's father, a Baden nobleman, had disowned her for marrying Ignatz, a poor but well-educated young man who had once studied for the Priesthood. To escape his wrath, the couple had come to America. Mary, being accustomed to the easy life enjoyed by a lady of wealth, found the hardships of pioneer life unbearable. The couple lost one baby after another, which Mary believed was caused by the curse her father had put on her, only 7

of 12 survived. She became mentally ill and died in December 1865. Their first child, Frank (1843-1913), who was only one and a half years old when they came to America, distinguished himself by serving in the Grand Army of the Republic (GAR) during the Civil War.

In the spring following Mary's death, Ignatz married Mary Francis Schwartz



Ignatz Mackert gravestone, St. Teresa Cemetery.

(1845-1909) of nearby Avon and she bore him three sons and a daughter who survived infancy. Francis, as she was known, was a large, hard-working woman who was kind to all the children of Ignatz's first wife. The family lived on Bennet Road (an early name for Abbe Road). Ignatz had a business besides being a farmer—traveling throughout northern Lorain County by horse and buggy, he sold First Communion paraphernalia, rosaries, and religious books. He was a deeply religious man, often stopping his work to recite his office. Ignatz had a hard life and died at the age of 63 on December 13, 1883. He is buried in St. Teresa Cemetery in the eighth row south of the northern edge of the cemetery (approximately 22 graves sites west of St. Teresa Church) with "Ignatz Mackert" on a white marble gravestone that is badly weathered. Francis died on October 19, 1909 and is buried in the first row of the cemetery, in line with Ignatz's grave, with "Mary F. Mackert" on a gray granite marker. Regarding Ignatz's first wife, church records indicate that a "Walburga Mackert" is also buried in the old section of St. Teresa Cemetery, but no legible grave marker has been located for her.

After his father's passing, John T. Mackert (1867-1935), the eldest son of Ignatz and Francis, operated the farm



John and Margaret Mackert Family (circa 1900); children (left to right Albert, Edward, Leona and Genevieve (Gladys Mackert)).



Wedding photograph of Peter and Margaret Schueller (circa 1876), parents of Bertha [Schueller] Mackert (Gladys Mackert).

with his wife Margaret [Maier or Mayer], 1869-1917). They had five children Edward, Albert, Genevieve, Leona, and Lucille. John's younger brother Andrew's daughter, Alice (Mrs. Charles DeChant, born 1927) was the subject of an earlier article on pages 112-114 of this book.

In turn, John's eldest son, Edward ("Ed") A. Mackert (1893-1959), took over the family farm with his wife Bertha [Schueller], 1887-1993), which included her family's adjoining farm and home just south of the Norfolk Southern Railway crossing on Abbe Road, totaling about 70 acres. The home of Bertha's parents, Peter (1848-1927) and Margaret [Kelling] Schueller (1855-1936), still stands on the west side of Abbe Road. Ed Mackert farmed and worked at the National Tube Company's steel mill in South Lorain. In 1928 he opened a small dairy on the farm, selling 16 quarts of milk the first day he opened for business. In 1931 he was seriously burned in an open-hearth fire at the mill—unable to return to work at the steel plant, Ed decided to go into the dairy business full-time, as well as keeping up the farm.



Wedding photograph of Edward and Bertha [Schueller] Mackert, May 26, 1914 (Gladys Mackert).

**Edward Mackert Starts a Dairy Business.** Starting with a small herd, Ed hand milked the cows and daily delivered non-pasteurized milk to the cottages in Sheffield Lake in the early 1930s. Ed and Bertha had three children, Luella (1914-1992), Harold (1920-1979), and Lester J. (1923-2008), who all worked at the dairy. Luella, who served a secretary for the dairy, married Paul Izold (1914-1983), Harold married Wanda Belevich (1922-1938), and Lester married a neighborhood girl, Gladys Wisnieski (born 1925). While still a student at Brookside High School, Lester had a milk delivery route in one of the dairy's trucks. When he first started to drive, his father had to mount blocks on the pedals so Lester could reach them. During his junior year (1940), Brookside's yearbook *The Leader*, printed the following item on the joke page:

**Judge:** "Why didn't you hold your hand out when you slowed down on that busy street?"

**Lester:** (Who had been driving the milk truck) "Gee, if that driver behind me didn't see my truck, how could he have seen my hand?"

As time went on, Ed's business grew and he had to add more drivers and trucks to the dairy's staff. Soon his herd of about twenty Holstein cows couldn't supply the demand and he contracted with dairy farmers from Avon, North Ridgeville, and Sheffield to bring their raw milk to his plant for processing. By the mid-1940s the operation of the plant required all of his attention and he abandoned the farm's dairy herd, relying exclusively on area farmers to supply raw milk. In 1937, Mackert's Dairy began to pasteurize the raw milk. This gave milk a longer storage life before souring and killed many pathogens, including the bacterium *Mycobacterium tuberculosis*, which is responsible for the pulmonary disease of the same name (formerly known as 'consumption').

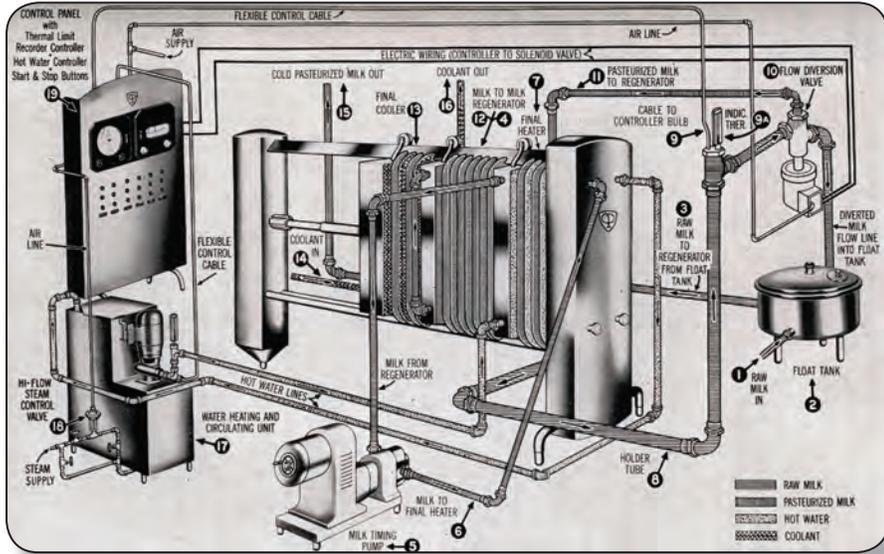
Pasteurization is the process of partial sterilization of milk by heat. To be completely sterilized, milk must be heated to the boiling point (212°F) several times with intervals between to allow any surviving spores to develop and be destroyed by the next heating. The peculiar "cooked taste" of boiled milk that is unpleasant to many people can be avoided if the milk is only heated to 145°F for 30 minutes—this temperature is sufficient to kill those bacteria responsible for the souring of milk as well as many disease germs. The milk is then rapidly cooled to 50°F or below and bottled. This process was devised by Louis Pasteur in 1864 to keep wine and beer from spoiling, but was not applied to milk until 1886. Later, the "flash method" was developed where milk is quickly heated to 160° or slightly higher, and held there for not less than 15 seconds, and then cooled rapidly and bottled. The diagram on page 194 illustrates the type of high-temperature, short-time milk pasteurizers in use in the early 1950s.

In addition to installing pasteurization equipment, Ed Mackert implemented many other innovations to modernize his dairy business. He was way ahead of his time by experimenting with propane as a fuel for his delivery trucks. The trucks were equipped with special heaters to keep the fuel from freezing. By the early 1950s he had over 20 retail delivery trucks and

drivers/salesmen operating in regular routes in Sheffield, Avon, Bay Village, Elyria, and Lorain, as well as four wholesale trucks that made deliveries to schools and retail stores, such as Johnson's Grocery on Detroit Road. From the early 1930s through the late-1940s Mackert's Dairy used distinctive clear glass bottles, some with red lettering, images of grazing cows, and the slogan, *Drink Milk for Health*. In 1949 Ed invested in a new "bottling" system, one of the first dairies in the area to use cartons rather than glass. The new system started with rolls of paperboard to which wax was applied then cut to the appropriate size and formed into a carton. A new building was constructed adjacent to the pasteurization plant to accommodate fabrication of the cartons.



Glass Bottle from Mackert's Dairy (early 1940s). Slogan on backside with grazing cows reads, "Drink Milk for Health."



Flow chart illustrating the passage of milk through a pasteurizer from the early 1950s (Creamery Package Mfg. Co.).



Mackert's Dairy truck (January 1950) that was driven by Kenneth Wisnieski. Kenneth was the brother of Gladys Mackert and husband of Gladys [Jungbluth] Wisnieski (Gladys Mackert).



Mackert's Dairy from the air (circa 1952); from left to right, cow barn, dairy plant with pasteurizers, bottling (carton) plant, Lucille & Paul Izold residence, and Ed & Bertha Mackert residence (Gladys Mackert).



Ed Mackert working on the dairy books in August 1951 (Gladys Mackert).

**Dairymens Milk Company.** Ed Mackert was the kind of individual who liked to do everything himself, even the bookwork. Some say he worked himself to death by only getting three hours of sleep many nights. Above all, he was a kind and generous man. During the Great Depression when times were hard, he never stopped delivering



*Former Mackert's Dairy fleet of Divco delivery trucks (circa 1954) shortly after the dairy was purchased by Dairymens Milk Company of Cleveland, Ohio. Ed Mackert is standing in front next to the first truck, Lester is the next man to the left, and Paul Smith is the seventh driver from the right (Paul Smith).*



*Paul Smith (1927-2015) delivering Milk in Sheffield Lake from a Dairymens Milk Company truck in January 1976 (Paul Smith).*

milk to families with children when the father was out of work and could not pay. Eventually the hard work took its toll and he became ill and he decided to sell the dairy. Ed Mackert died in 1959 at age 66.

In 1954 Dairymens Milk Company of Cleveland, Ohio, founded in 1921, purchased Mackert's Dairy as a substation. Dairymens retained all of Mackert's 21 drivers/salesmen and trucks, only repainting the name on the sides of the trucks. Ed Mackert even stayed on as manager of the substation for the first year. Paul Smith of Sumner Street in Sheffield Village's Day Allotment started working as a driver/salesman at the time of the transfer and continued to work for Dairymens for many years, spending a total 35 years in the dairy industry before retiring. Paul recalled that Dairymens operated the Sheffield substation for 15 years, constructing a new brick building for processing raw milk just north of the old cow barn in the mid-1950s. With increased residential and commercial development on former dairy farmland, Dairymens' supply of raw milk declined and the company decided to close the Sheffield substation in 1969 and the dairy buildings were abandoned. Paul was serving as manager of the substation when it was closed and was transferred to the main plant in Cleveland.



*Former Mackert's Dairy truck drivers (circa 1954) shortly after the dairy was purchased by Dairymens Milk Company of Cleveland, Ohio. Paul Smith, third from the right on the front row, drove 35 years for the dairies. Paul Izold, Luella [Mackert] Izold's husband, is the first standing driver on the right and Al Kelling, father in law of David Mackert, is the second driver from the left in the front row (Gladys Mackert).*

**Gladys Mackert Recalls.** Gladys married her high school sweetheart, Lester Mackert, in 1944 and they raised six children on the farm: David (born 1946), James (born 1948), Jennifer (born 1950), Mary (born 1953), Ellen (born 1955), and Jean (born 1962). They lived in the Schueller house, which was across Abbe Road from the dairy, but still part of the farm. Lester was a driver before World War II; he was drafted into the Army during the war and worked in the dairy plant after the war. When Gladys was asked what it was like to live and work at Mackert's Dairy farm, she answered, "We worked seven days a week for ten years with no days off." Then she quickly added, "It was a wonderful place to raise a family, the children worked



*Mathias Schueller's Farmhouse on Abbe Road, built in the 1860's and later the home of his son's family, Peter and Margaret Schueller (2005). Located across from Mackert's Dairy, Lester and Gladys Mackert made this house their home for 21 years (1948-1969).*



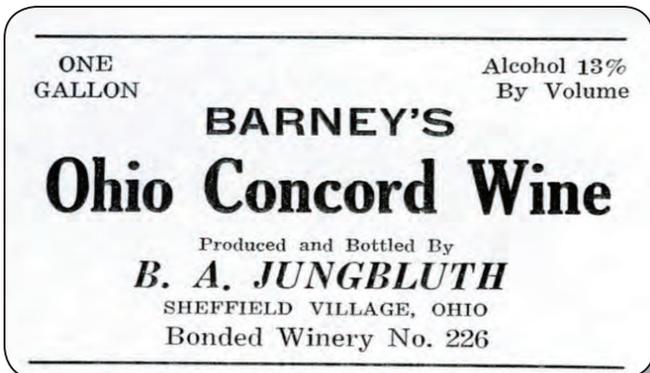
Wedding photograph of Lester and Gladys [Wisnieski] Mackert, September 9, 1944 (Gladys Mackert).



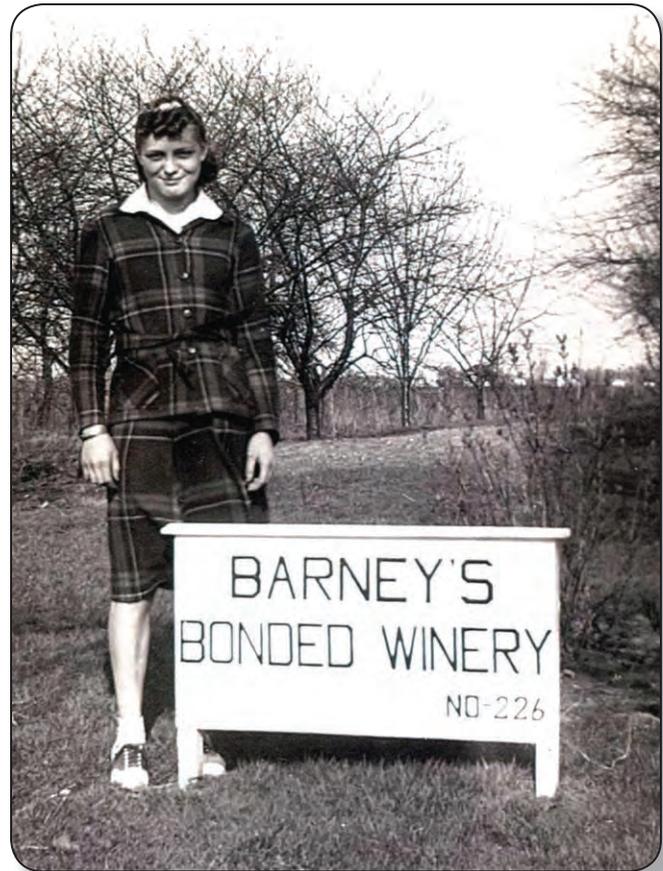
Barney Jungbluth (left) and hired hand "Johnny" Carson alongside Barney's new Ford pick-up truck used to deliver milk and wine, August 1948 (Gladys Wisnieski).

hard in the fields and didn't have time to get into much trouble. It was a good life on the farm, I am so glad the children had the experience of living on a farm." When I asked if the cows had names, she didn't recall, said Ed Mackert's workhorses were "Pat and Pal." Lester is gone, but Gladys is comforted by their 53 children, grandchildren, and great grandchildren.

Barney's auction included 22 head of cattle (milking), 600 bales of alfalfa, a Farmall H. tractor, various implements, and dairy machinery. J. O. Fenstermaker of Homerville served as auctioneer.



**Barney Jungbluth's Dairy.** Mackert's Dairy was not the only early dairy business in Sheffield Village. Barney Jungbluth operated a winery and dairy at his farm near the corner of Abbe and French Creek Roads, delivering milk and wine to Sheffield and the surrounding communities. Gladys [Jungbluth] Wisnieski, Barney's daughter, remembers making deliveries in South Lorain in the late 1930s and early 1940s from the dairy's pick-up truck when she was a teenager. Every night Gladys would dip milk from 10 gallon cans to fill glass bottles for the next morning's delivery. Once pasteurization of milk became a requirement, Barney contracted with East Side Dairy on Colorado Avenue in Lorain to process his raw milk. On January 15, 1955, Barney Jungbluth held an auction sale liquidating his dairy holding, "Due to my son [Allen A. Jungbluth] going in the service..." The



Gladys Jungbluth standing alongside a sign advertising her father's bonded winery in 1942. (Gladys Wisnieski).

### *Johnson Steel Company*

In Lorain County, Tom Johnson is remembered as the man who brought the steel mills to the Black River valley, built a streetcar line between Lorain and Elyria, and created the community of South Lorain out of land annexed from Sheffield Township. He did all of these things in the span of two years, between 1894 and 1896.

Thomas Loftin Johnson was born in Blue Springs, Kentucky on July 18, 1854. Tom's father was a Colonel in the Confederate Army and at the end of the Civil War was bankrupt and living in Staunton, Virginia. As a boy of eleven, Tom's entrepreneurial flare helped his family survive. He convinced the Staunton stationmaster to grant him a monopoly to sell newspapers. The first month he made a profit of \$85, which was very good money for the 1860s. Within a year, the money proved to be enough for his family to move to back to Kentucky and gave Tom his first sweet taste of business success.

Tom attended school in Louisville, but at the age of 15 he left school to take a clerk position with a local rolling mill. Seeing an even better opportunity, in 1869 he accepted an "office boy" position with the Louisville Street Railway Company, owned by the du Pont family, and eventually became the firm's superintendent. While there, he invented numerous devices for street railways, including a see-through glass fare box, which earned him \$30,000. The dropping coins fell through a sequence of shelves before falling on a plate. The trolley driver could thus count the coins and determine if the correct amount had been inserted without pausing to collect the fare. Using the award from this patent, he left the du Pont organization in 1876 and purchased his own railway line in Indianapolis, Indiana. In the next several years he expanded his holdings in other street railway firms in St. Louis, Detroit, New York, and Cleveland.

In the late 1880s Johnson began to diversify his holdings by purchasing an iron and steel company in Johnstown, Pennsylvania. Considerable effort was expended in modernizing the mill to make rails for his street railways. In May 1889 the renovations to the new mill were nearly complete and it was ready for occupancy when the Johnstown flood hit on May 31<sup>st</sup> and in an hour wrought havoc on the city.



*Tom L. Johnson in 1909, while he was Mayor of Cleveland.*

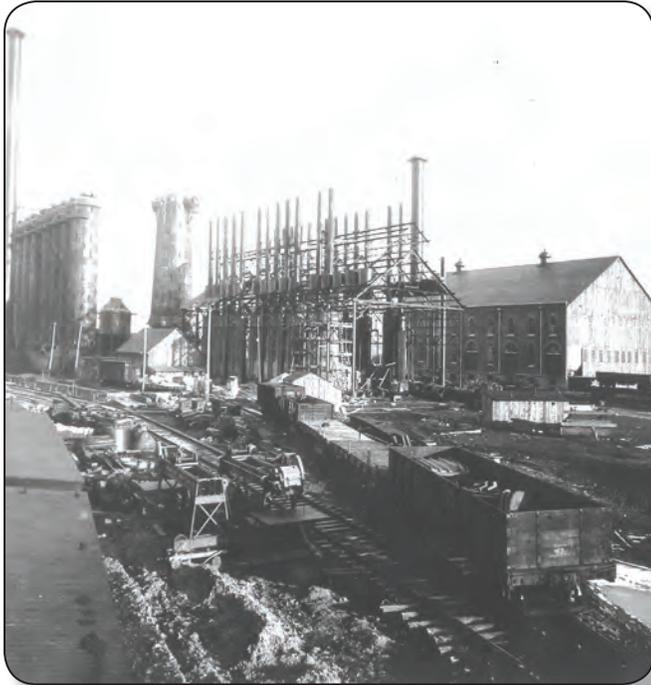
After his Johnstown experience, Tom Johnson began a search for a location to build a new steel rail mill. He was looking for site on Lake Erie that would provide access for lake shipping of iron ore, coal, and limestone, and at the same time, place his rail mill closer to the growing markets in northern Ohio. The deep estuarine waters at the mouth of the Black River proved idea for his plan.

In 1894 Tom Johnson's company acquired 4,000 acres of land along the Black River in Sheffield Township, about two miles downstream from Garfield Bridge, to construct a steelmaking plant. In June of that year hundreds of men began to clear the woods. In nine months, by April 1895, they transformed the area into a steel plant of immense proportions.

As a stipulation for the construction of the steel mill, Lorain was to annex Sheffield Township Lots 77-100 (property acquired by Johnson & Company for a steel plant) and Lots 46-50 & 53-57 (land north of the Black River and west of Root Road). The added population allowed Lorain to be incorporated as a city. The Johnson Steel Company then bought 4,400 acres in the annexed portion of Sheffield Township through its Sheffield Land and Improvement Company. This new section of the city, which came to be known as South Lorain, was laid out in orderly, rectangular city blocks, unlike the "hodge-podge growth" that characterized the northern part of the old town. To transport steelworkers from Elyria to the mill, Tom Johnson constructed the Yellow Line streetcar service via Sheffield Township. The line began operation on September 15, 1894 with a fare of 5¢, including a transfer to the Short Line along the lake in Lorain. The Johnson Steel Company made its first "blow" of steel from the Bessemer furnace on April 1, 1895. The mill employed 1,200 men and Arthur Moxham, Johnson's associate from Johnstown, was chosen as the first operating head of the company. In 1895, the Sheffield Land and Improvement Company, a subsidiary of the Johnson Steel Company, donated Oakwood Park in South Lorain to the city.

In 1898, Tom Johnson sold his plant on the Black River to the Federal Steel Co.

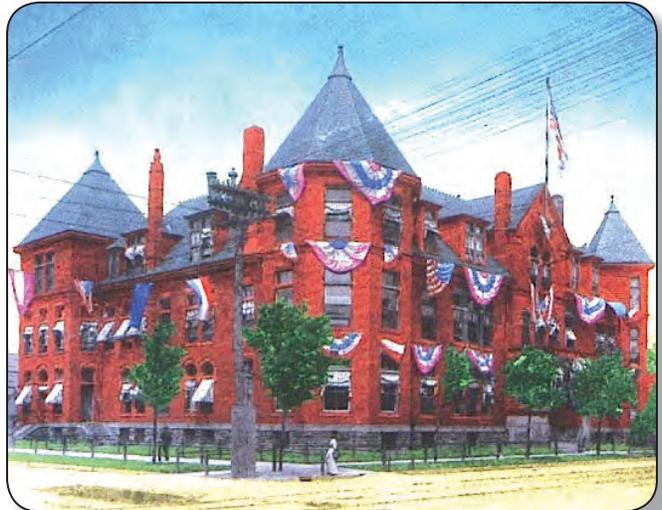
and it operated as a subsidiary under the name Lorain Steel Co. (later to become U.S. Steel's National Tube Company). Under this ownership the plant expanded rapidly to become a fully integrated steel mill with the addition of two blast furnaces and construction of a 2,490-foot dock along the Black River. McMyler hoists were installed to transfer the iron ore from lake freighters to the mills. Coal, coke, and limestone were brought to the plant by rail and interchanged via the Lake Terminal Railroad, with finished products shipped out in the same manner.



Construction of a blast furnace at the Federal Steel Company in 1898.



Construction of the steel mill's Pearl Avenue gate in July 1894.



Johnson Steel Company's office building erected in 1895. This 1913 view shows the building decorated for the Centennial Celebration of Commodore Perry's Victory at The Battle of Lake Erie.



McMyler hoist ore unloader at the steel mill dock on the Black River (circa 1900).

## The History of Lake Breeze

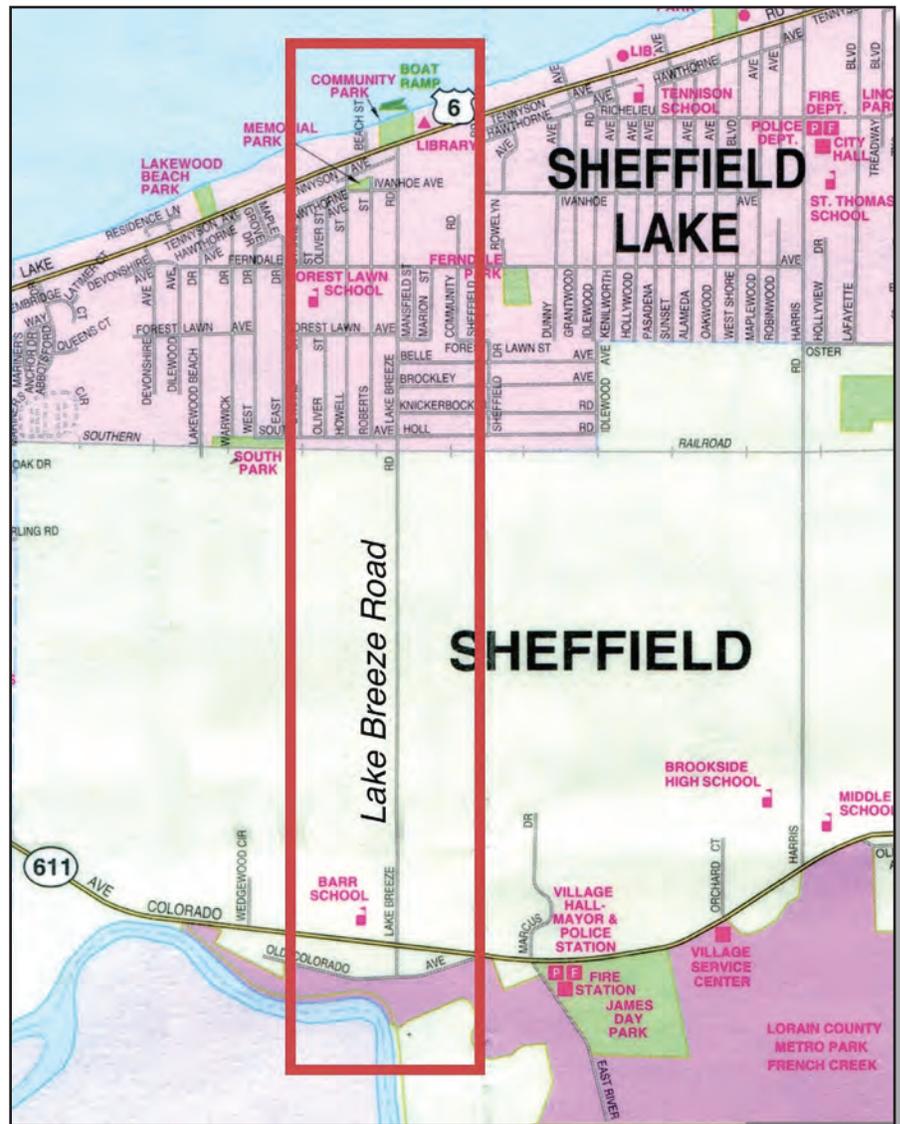
Lake Breeze is a 2-mile-long road that runs from the Lake Erie shore south to the bluff of the Black River at Old Colorado Avenue. Along with Abbe, Harris, and Root Roads, it is one of the early roads that the pioneers cut through the wilderness to connect the lakeshore to the river valley and farms located on North Ridge at the southern edge of Sheffield Township.

Lake Breeze Road was laid out from north to south along the intersections of original Township Lots 42, 30, and 61 on the west side and Lots 41, 29, 28, 62, and 64 on the east side (see Township map on page 71). Today, the northern three-quarters-of-a-mile is located in the City of Sheffield Lake and the remaining mile-and-one-quarter in Sheffield Village.

Variouly called the “Elyria–Sheffield Lake Road” or “Sheffield Lake Road,” it was not until the mid 20<sup>th</sup> century that the name “Lake Breeze Road” was officially adopted. During the 1940s to 1960s, Lake Breeze Road, along with East River Road, was designated as Ohio State Route 301 until construction of the Ford Motor Co. plant resulted in Abbe Road being assigned this route number.

**First Settlement.** Samuel B. Fitch (1794-1861) appears to be the first pioneer to settle on the land that would eventually carry Lake Breeze Road. Having purchased land in Township 7 of Range 17 of the Connecticut Western Reserve (later to be known as Sheffield Township) from the proprietors, Captains Jabez Burrell and John Day, he arrived from New Marlborough, Massachusetts on November 15, 1815. Together with his traveling companion Asher Chapman, and with Capt. Joshua Smith and Smith’s 17-year-old son Douglas who had arrived in Sheffield two days earlier, they built a rude shanty for the winter on Lot 64. In the spring of 1816 Samuel Fitch settled on Lot 61, at the south end of what is now Lake Breeze Road.

Two years later Fitch married Polly J. Smith (1796-1845), also from his native town of New Marlborough, the 22-year-old daughter of Capt. Smith. Polly died on May 4, 1845 and Samuel later married Nancy Willard (1800-1860) of Pawlett, Vermont, who died on November 4, 1860.



*Lake Breeze Road corridor, outlined in red, from Lake Erie south to the Black River, passing through the City of Sheffield Lake and the Village of Sheffield. (Lorain County Engineer, 2012).*

Samuel, a prosperous farmer, established the first distillery in Sheffield in 1825. He was a charter member of the Sheffield Congregational Church, founded in 1818. Samuel lived to the age 67, dying on September 15, 1861. He is buried in Garfield Cemetery on North Ridge between his two wives.

**Samuel Fitch House.** In 1976, as part of Sheffield’s contribution to the Nation’s Bicentennial Celebration, historian Doris Burrell researched the text for a calendar depicting Sheffield’s historic buildings. One of her entries was the Samuel Fitch House. Built in the late 1820s or early 1830s, this was one of the earliest homes in the Township. Located at the foot of



*Samuel Fitch House, on Old Colorado Avenue, located just west of the foot of Lake Breeze Road. Built in the late 1820s or early 1830s and demolished in 1989, it was the home of one of Sheffield’s founding pioneers who arrived here in November 1815 (photographed by Steve Toth, 1976).*

Lake Breeze Road at 4014 Old Colorado Avenue, it was constructed of hand-made brick for Samuel B. Fitch. The house and Lot 61, on which it stood, were transferred to Peter Weaver in 1870 for \$6,345. Peter died in 1884 and his estate was divided between his son Mathew Webber and his daughter Mary, who married Jacob Alten. The Altens lived in the Fitch House until 1940. Matt married Jacob Alten's sister, also named Mary, thus making a double cousinship of the two families, several of whose descendants are still living in the area. The house was considerably altered following tornado damage in 1924. The Lorain Parks Metropolitan Park District acquired the property in the 1970s and announced intentions to restore the building as a museum, but unfortunately a fire caused major damage and the house was demolished in 1989.



*Gravestone of Samuel B. Fitch (1794-1861) in Garfield Cemetery, the first settler on Lake Breeze Road.*

**Bedortha-Traxler House.** Another historic home near Lake Breeze Road, one that is still standing, is known locally as the Traxler House at 3864 Colorado Avenue. Most likely built by Douglas Smith circa 1830 for the Bedortha family, it is located on Lot 60 and faces what is now called Old Colorado Road. The

style of the house is Greek Revival with a two-story front gable and a one-story side wing. This house is the only dwelling in the vicinity of Lake Breeze Road listed on the Ohio Historic Inventory (OHI) that is maintained by the Ohio Historic Preservation Office, although 31 other properties throughout Sheffield are listed on the inventory. The official OHI designation of the Bedortha-Traxler House is LOR-161-9.

Luther and Terza Bedortha settled in Sheffield Township in 1824 where they purchased farmland on Lots 60, 62, and 64 at the southern end of Lake Breeze Road. Their family included four sons—Luther, Hiram, Thomas, and Theodore. The elder Luther died in 1825 and the sons continued to work the land until the early 1860s. When Garfield Cemetery was established on North Ridge in 1851, the sons purchased the Luther Bedortha Family Plot and the remains of their parents were removed from the farm and buried in the new cemetery. The younger Luther married Sarah Strong of Sheffield and moved to Iowa for a brief period before returning to Ohio and acquiring a farm in Russia Township. Sarah died in Joliet, Illinois on February 17, 1853 while

en route back to Ohio. Luther then married Eliza A. Brown of Oberlin, where he died on December 29, 1864.

Hiram Bedortha married Lydia Ann Kellogg and they owned and farmed portions of Lots 62 and 64 on the east side of Lake Breeze Road near the Black River. Their son, Hiram Kellogg Bedortha, was born there on April 29, 1844. The family lived in Sheffield until 1860 when they bought a farm near Oberlin. In Oberlin, 17-year-old Hiram worked on his father's farm, then followed in the footsteps of his older sister, Abby, by entering the Oberlin Preparatory School.

With the Civil War raging and young Hiram reaching the age to be a soldier, he enlisted in Company E of the 60<sup>th</sup> Ohio Volunteer Infantry. He fought at the Battle of the Wilderness in May 1864 and in the trenches at Petersburg, Virginia during the summer of the same year. By early October he was stricken with "camp disease" dysentery and sent to an Army hospital in Beverly, New Jersey. Hiram passed away at the hospital as his mother was on the way to see him. His body was brought back to Oberlin where a funeral was held at the home of his parents on October 29, 1864 followed by burial in



*Bedortha-Traxler House in 2008. The current owner, Peter Rahotina, is the grandson of Henry Traxler, who acquired the house in 1884.*



Painting of the 1864 Civil War Battle of the Wilderness in Virginia by Kutz & Allison. Hiram Kellogg Bedortha fought in this battle and at Petersburg with the Ohio 60<sup>th</sup> Volunteer Infantry. He died of “camp disease” that year in a New Jersey Hospital. He is buried in Garfield Cemetery.

the Family Plot at Sheffield’s Garfield Cemetery.

In about 1860, the Bedortha House was sold to Edward H. Capp and his wife who had recently emigrated from England. The Capp family lived in the house until 1884 when Henry Traxler and his bride Rose [Urig] Traxler bought the property. Their daughter Juanita, and her husband William Rahotina, were next to own the house. Along the way, the homestead along with its red barn and fields, came to be known as “Stormy Acres Farm.” An October 24, 1976 article in the *Lorain Journal* illustrates the numerous Indian artifacts that have been found on the homestead’s “Bluebell Hill,” a jutting point of sloping land along the Black River. The accompanying photograph illustrates some Indian tools and other artifacts in the Traxler collection. Juanita, a long-time member of the Historical

Society passed away in August 2010. Their son Peter Rahotina and his wife Elaine, charter members of the Historical Society, now make their home in the Traxler House.



Indian artifacts found on the Traxler Homestead’s “Bluebell Hill,” a jutting point of sloping land along the Black River; include projectile points, a stone drill, clay and stone carved pipes, celts, scrapers, and a gorget (*Lorain Journal*).



Marker for Civil War Veteran, Hiram Kellogg Bedortha (1844-1864) in Garfield Cemetery.

**John Fox House.** The 1857 Tax Map for Sheffield Township shows a dwelling on the property of John Fox at the northeast corner of Lot 30. This wooden-frame farmhouse of Greek Revival style was likely built soon after John Fox settled at Sheffield in 1846 and had cleared the land. John, born in 1823, was the son of John and Mary Fox of County Roscommon, Ireland where they farmed and reared nine children, two of whom came to Sheffield. The other son to settle in Sheffield was Thomas, born in 1833 and arrived here in 1858. Unlike the 1860s Italianate-style house of Thomas Fox [described later in this article], the John Fox House has typical Greek Revival-style features, including a gable front, wide cornice trim boards, and partial returns of the eaves across the front gable. The elaborate front porch may have been added at a later date. The house is also special in that it still has a slate roof on the main portion of the house. Tax maps indicate that the Fox family owned the property until at least 1915. John Fox died in 1885 and Thomas in 1914; both are buried in St. Teresa Cemetery. Located at 998 Lake Breeze Road, just north of the Norfolk Southern Railway tracks, The John Fox House is the oldest house in Sheffield Lake on Lake Breeze Road. The current owners of the house are Michael and Lucia Bellisario.



*John Fox House, 998 Lake Breeze Road in Sheffield Lake, was built circa 1840s in the Greek Revival Style. John Fox owned and farmed land on both sides of Lake Breeze Road for nearly 40 years. The house is believed to be the oldest homestead still in existence on Lake Breeze Road.*

**Lysander Parks House.** The tax maps for 1857 and 1874 indicate a dwelling on the property of Lysander F. Parks at the northwest corner of original Lot 29. Lysander married Mary E. Knox and they made their home on the 99-acre farm. In 1854 a Sheffield Farmers Club was organized and Lysander was elected treasurer. Lysander was born in 1813 and died in 1883. Mary, born in 1819, survived until 1890. They are buried in Garfield Cemetery on North Ridge under a magnificent monument of fossiliferous limestone carved in the shape of a tree trunk. The

1896 Tax Map shows that William Geminer had acquired the Parks' farm and house. The house is still present on the 1903 USGS Topographic Map, but its final disposition is unknown.



*Lysander Parks Homestead on Lake Breeze Road (Williams Brothers 1879).*

**Burlingame House.** The Burlingame House once stood on Lot 28 about mid-way along Lake Breeze Road. The location is indicated on the 1857 Tax Map.

William Burlingame was born in Massachusetts and came to Sheffield Township in 1836 where he farmed and operated a sawmill. He married Melissa Baker and they raised eight children on the farm. Their oldest son, Henry, also operated a farm on Lake Breeze Road before moving to Wisconsin. His brother, Thomas Corwin, was born in 1846, and worked in the milling trade in Sheffield before entering employment with the Cleveland, Lorain & Wheeling Railroad in Lorain. Melissa died in Sheffield in 1865 and William moved to Ashtabula, Ohio in 1872, where he died in 1892. The 1874 *Atlas of Lorain County, Ohio* indicates that John Fox acquired the Burlingame farms and dwelling. The Burlingame dwelling does not appear on the 1896 Tax Map.

**Edward Karney House.** The 1857 Sheffield Township Tax Map also indicates a dwelling was located on Lot 28 at the 75-acre property of Edward Karney. The accompanying December 1943 photographs of the house indicate that it was constructed in Greek Revival style, a style that was popular during the period 1825-1860. This style is characterized by a gable front and wing, cornice line emphasized with a wide band of trim, and partial return of the eaves across the front gable. All of these features were found in the Karney House. In tracing the ownership of this house, it appears the next owner was William H. Field (1874, 1896, and 1912, Tax Maps), followed by Minnie L. Field (1915 and 1938 Tax Maps). In 1943 the house, a frame barn with shed, and five other sheds were sold to Robert F. Sonderman. At the time of the sale a tenant in the house reported that Minnie Field was the owner. The Karney House is located at 1515 Lake Breeze Road and the current owners are Historical Society members James A. and Joyce A. Toth, who have made extensive improvements to the exterior of the house.



This 1943 winter photograph taken of the Edward Karney House and barns is one of the few that shows the condition of Lake Breeze Road in the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. As State Route 301 it was wide, paved, and maintained free of snow cover (James and Joyce Toth).



Edward Karney House, 1515 Lake Breeze Road in Sheffield Village, was originally constructed in the Greek Revival Style before 1857. This 1943 photograph illustrates the primary features of this style that was popular for farmhouses during the period 1825-1860, such as a wide cornice board and partial return of the eaves across the gable front (James and Joyce Toth).



This recent photograph of the Edward Karney House shows the improvements made by the current owners, James and Joyce Toth. The old wood barn has been replaced with a multiple-bay, concrete-block garage.

**Thomas Fox House.** In 1858 Thomas Fox acquired a portion of James Austin's property on Lot 30 and constructed a log cabin for his bride of that same year, Catherine Coughlin. In less than five years he was able to build a two-story frame house that still stands on Lake Breeze Road in Sheffield Village. In the 1860s, the architectural preference for northern Ohio farmhouses was in transition from Greek Revival style to Italianate style. Unlike his brother John's Greek Revival farmhouse built in the late 1840s, Thomas's house was Italianate, a style popular during the period 1850-1885. Tall, narrow first floor windows that are typically arched with decorative "eyebrows" characterize this style. These features are illustrated in the accompanying photographs. The house remained in the Fox family for several decades, at least until 1915.

The 1938 County Engineer's map shows Catherine Eiden as owner of the former Thomas Fox property. In 1951 Lester E. and Hazel U. Pratt purchased the house from the Eidens and lived there until 1973. One of the Pratt daughters, now Christine



Thomas Fox House, 1238 Lake Breeze Road in Sheffield Village, was constructed in the Italianate Style in the early 1860s. This style was popular for farmhouses in our area during the period 1850-1885. Members of the Fox family owned and farmed the 66-acre farm on Lake Breeze Road until at least 1915.

Neuber of Dexter, Missouri, was kind enough to share some of her recollections of life in the Thomas Fox House with the author. Christine was 12 years old when her family moved into the house and she graduated from Brookside High School in 1957. Christine writes, *"The previous owners were named Eiden. It had been a wheat farm. My parents bought 5 acres that had pear trees on the south side. It had two barns, two cisterns and a sandstone watering trough that had been hewn out of one large block of stone. Both cisterns had hand hewn sandstone covers with a square hole in the center [possibly former grindstones]. One cistern serviced the barns and the other the house. There were cedar hitching posts, also. My sister said there was a natural gas well at the back of the house. I don't remember*



*Christine Pratt and her date, Carl Neuber, at the 1957 Brookside High School Senior Prom. Chris' family lived in the Thomas Fox House from 1951 to 1973.*

*that, but I do remember that the pipes for gas lights were still in the walls of each room, even though there was a bare light bulb wired into each ceiling. There was a notation written on the wall of an upstairs bedroom, 'It was a cold July—Sunday July 25, 1863.' The three upstairs bedrooms were not prepared then—just plaster and lathe walls."*

*"There was a large coal burning furnace in the basement that had a register at the foot of the stairs in the dining room. There was a stairway from the kitchen to the basement and one from the outside. The upstairs steps went up between the lower basement and living room. The house had a slate roof when my parents bought it. The walls were plaster with lathe. Our water came from the cistern at the south end of the house; it collected water from the house roof. Many times we had to buy water. When the cistern was nearly dry we went down in it and scrubbed the wall down and cleaned it out good before we bought water to put in it. There was no bathroom all the years I lived there; just an outhouse and running water in the kitchen. My parents put a hot water heater in."* [During the 1940s and 1950s Elmer O'Neil of 4296 East River Road operated a part-time business of delivering water to Sheffield residences. He had an ~800 gallon steel tank that he could mount on his stake-bed truck with a hoist lift. Elmer would drive into South Lorain and stop at the small fire station at the corner of 31<sup>st</sup> Street and Palm Avenue. He would borrow a spanner wrench from the firemen, hook up a fire hose to a nearby hydrant, use the wrench to open the hydrant, and fill his tank. As a young boy, the author had the pleasure of riding along with Elmer on his delivery runs, but never learned what arrangement Elmer had to pay for the water].

*Christine sent along some photographs, "These pictures are the only ones I could find. I was the only one with a camera and wasn't interested in taking pictures of a house at that time. Notice*



*View of the Thomas Fox House in the early 1950s with Hazel Pratt in the front yard. Note the elongated lower windows, characteristic of the Italianate Style of the mid 1800s (Christine [Pratt] Neuber).*

the long windows in the living room; the rest of the rooms had smaller windows.” The Thomas Fox House is located at 1238 Lake Breeze Road in Sheffield Village and the current owners are James W. and Edna L. Burress.

**Mathew Webber House.** As discussed earlier under the Samuel Fitch House, Peter Weaver purchased the Fitch property in 1870. When Peter died in 1884, his estate was divided between his son Mathew (1864-1919) and his daughter Mary (1865-1947), who married Jacob Alten (1865-1949). The Altens lived in the Fitch House until 1940. Mathew, who preferred to use the original form of the name “Webber” rather than “Weaver,” married Jacob Alten’s sister, also named Mary (1867-1927), and presumably built the Mathew Webber House on Lot 61 in the 1880s, which first appears on the 1896 Tax Map. This large Folk Vernacular-style farmhouse has five bedrooms and an original fireplace. The Webber family continued to live there into the 1920s. The 1938 County Engineer’s Map shows the ownership as Michael J. and Rosella L. Bruder. The Bruders operated a dairy farm into the 1950s and supplied raw milk to Mackert’s Dairy on Abbe Road. Historical Society members Denny Davis and Kenny Nehls, who grew up on Roberts Street one block west of Lake Breeze Road in Sheffield Lake, recall a particularly severe winter in the early 1950s when snow drifts blocked traffic on Lake Breeze Road for several days. Their families were in need of milk, so the boys towed a sled on foot all the way down to the Bruder Farm and back with the precious cargo for the families. The current owner of the house is Rosemary Boothe. Although it faces Lake Breeze Road at the intersection with Old Colorado Avenue, it carries the address 4055 Colorado Avenue.



*Mathew Webber House, 4055 Colorado Avenue, is the last house on the southern extension of Lake Breeze Road. This large Folk Vernacular-style farmhouse, built in the 1880s, has five bedrooms and an original fireplace.*

**Leslie Hooper House.** Starting in the 1920s, and particularly following the abandonment of the Interurban right-of-way (Lake Shore Electric Railway) in the late 1930s, the Lake Breeze Allotment was developed several blocks east of Lake Breeze Road on original Lot 42 that was owned by Norman Day in the early 1800s. Parcels in the allotment with about 40 feet of frontage and up to 125 feet deep were advertised at prices ranging from \$400 to \$800. Leslie Hooper, an electrician with the National Tube Co., purchased a lot at 4061 Tennyson Avenue from his father, whose home was immediately to the west. Leslie’s father came from England about 1920 and bought two lots on Tennyson Avenue, just north of the Interurban right-of-way and just east of Lake Breeze Road. The father, who worked at Halle Bros. department store in downtown Cleveland, would take the Interurban to and from work each day. Leslie and his wife Selma built a Sears, Roebuck & Co. catalog house in 1940 with the model name “Sunlight.” The Hooper family lived in the house until 1999 when it was purchased by Historical Society member Vivian McCullough.



*Leslie Hooper House, at 4061 Tennyson Avenue, is a Sears, Roebuck & Co. catalog house built in 1940. This particular model had the name “Sunlight.” The older homes along this avenue were built adjacent to the Interurban trolley line for easy access to Cleveland-Lorain passenger transportation.*



*Interurban trolley car on the Lake Shore Electric Railroad near Stop 86 at Lake Breeze Road. The trolley line offered passenger service between Cleveland and Lorain on a frequent schedule (Dennis Lamont).*

**Edward Herdendorf House.** Built in the late 1920s, this house was the home of the Herdendorf family from 1928 to 1972. As a two-story wood frame house, it is unusual in its half-hip, gabled roof design as shown on the accompanying photographs. Architecturally, the house can be classified as Eclectic Tudor style based on the emphasis placed on high-pitched gabled roofs, the use of cross-gables, and tall, narrow windows in multiple groups. Though not common, this style was used in northern Ohio until about 1940.

Originally from the Buffalo, New York area, Edward Herdendorf and his family moved to Lorain, Ohio in 1920. After working as a welder at the Lorain shipyard for a few years he opened the Standard Welding Co. on Broadway and 13<sup>th</sup> Street. In 1928 Edward bought the house on Lake Breeze Road and moved his family to Sheffield Lake. In the 1940s he moved his



*This illustration from the Sears, Roebuck & Co. 1926 House Catalog depicts "The Hathaway," the style selected by Edward Herdendorf, Sr. for his home at 846 Lake Breeze Road. The 1926 cost of this house, unassembled, was \$1,805. The accompanying 1943 photograph of him and his family shows the open front porch at the upper right, while the recent colored photograph shows that the porch has since been enclosed. Other than this change, the exterior of the house is strikingly similar to the catalog illustration.*



*Edward Herdendorf House at 846 Lake Breeze Road, was built circa 1928 for this Lorain businessman who wished to raise his family away from the congestion of the Lorain. The house design with beveled gable roofs is based on English cottage homes.*

welding business to 28<sup>th</sup> Street in South Lorain, across from the steel mills. During World War II and after, much of the welding shop's work centered on repairs to National Tube Co. vehicles and equipment.

Other than enclosing the porch and replacing the shingle siding the exterior is essentially unchanged since the house was built. Located at 846 Lake Breeze Road this house is now owned by J. E. Morrow.



*The family of Edward Herdendorf, Sr. in 1943 at his home on Lake Breeze Road, Sheffield Lake, Ohio (left to right) Edward, Jr., Edward, Sr., Eddie, III, Gerturde, MaBell, and LaBerta.*

**Emil Kardos House.** This Craftsman-style bungalow is typical of the houses being built in Sheffield Lake during the 1920s and 1930s. The one-and-a-half story house features a side-gabled roof with an large front dormer and a low sweeping roof that covers a porch that extends across the entire front of the house. Located at 780 Lake Breeze Road, this was the home of the Emil & Pauline Kardos family during the 1930s to 1960s where they raised their children David and Judy. As did many of the residents along Lake Breeze Road, Emil worked at the National Tube Co. steel mills in South Lorain. His daughter still fondly remembers the family's first automobile—a 1936 Terraplane. Manufactured by the Hudson Motor Car Company from 1932–1938, famous aviator Amelia Earhart helped introduce the Terraplane to the public and Orville Wright bought one of the first ones because this affordable vehicle “was a small, but very powerful, car with a steel frame, built to exacting standards.” Judy also remembers running down the road barefoot on the hot sticky asphalt to see if there were “white caps” on the lake. If there were, the kids would grab their inner tubs to ride those huge waves. Judy's boyfriend,

Denny Davis, lived a block away on Roberts Street. The couple married in 1964 and currently they live in Middleburg Heights. They are charter members of the Historical Society.



*Emil Kardos House, at 780 Lake Breeze Road, is believed to have been built before the Great Depression. This Craftsman-style bungalow is typical of the houses being built in Sheffield Lake during the 1920s.*



*Emil Karodos' 1936 Terraplane automobile at his home on Lake Breeze Road in 1940. The children are David and Judy Kardos with their cousin Gary Mainette in the center (Judy Davis).*



*Judy [Kardos] Davis and her 1963 Chevy Corvair on Lake Breeze Road (Judy Davis).*

**Cleveland Beach.** In 1953, the *Lorain Journal* reported that because of the sandy beaches and the Cleveland Beach Dance Hall, the community known as Lake Breeze became a summer resort before the Great Depression years. By the early 1950s, many of the cottages had been remodeled into “comfortable” year-round homes and a new school, Tennyson Elementary, had been erected where the dance hall once stood. Also, only a few of the sandy beaches remained because of record-high water levels in Lake Erie. Beaches were much more prevalent in the 1930s because lake levels were at record lows during the “Dust Bowl” years.

In the early 1930s the old Cleveland Beach Dance Hall, where Tennyson School now stands, was purchased by Nick Kelling, dismantled, moved to his farm at the northeast corner of Abbe and French Creek Roads, and rebuilt as a barn. By 1955 the farm was operated by his son, Cyril Kelling. On May 5<sup>th</sup> of that year the barn caught on fire. The fire was small and the barn could have been saved from destruction by the Sheffield Village Fire Department, if it hadn't been for a spectator who threw a rock through a window. Brisk westerly winds whisked in the hole and fanned the embers inside into a roaring blaze that quickly consumed the building.



*White caps on Lake Erie east of Lake Breeze Road. The children along Lake Breeze Road in the 1940s and 1950s would relish stormy days like this so they could ride their inner tubes on the crests of the waves.*



*The lakeshore was a focal point for the community of Lake Breeze in the years before the Great Depression. This beach is now operated by the Mizpah Association. A Mizpah Memorial plaque, dated July 2, 1939, is located on a piling at the beach.*

**Lake Breeze House.** In 1863 Jay Terrell (1827-1904) and his wife, Etna Elizabeth [Park] Terrell (1807-1880), purchased 55 acres of property on the Lake Erie shore from Daniel Gawn and began to construct a hotel. Jay Terrell was born in Ridgeville Township and his wife in Avon Township. In 1873 they opened the *Lake Breeze House*, Sheffield's first hotel. The hotel, situated on Lot 40, was described as "...upon the bank of, and overlooking the blue waters of Lake Erie." In connection with the hotel, the proprietors operated a number of cottages and kept pleasure boats for use of guests.



*Lake Breeze House in 1873.*

An article in the July 14, 1875 issue of *The Elyria Independent Democrat* described the hotel in this way, "Mr. Jay Terrell's *Lake Breeze House on the Lake Shore*, is fast becoming a favorite summer resort for foreign visitors. He is a man who knows just how to please his guests, and all who visit this delightful retreat are sure to go again. This is one of the pleasantest places on the beach, to pass away a day or a week, and we advise those who have not already visited the *Lake Breeze House* to make a trip there."

Jay and Etna Terrell had seven children, one of whom was noteworthy architect Elah Terrell (1851-1884) who designed several important buildings in Sheffield and other communities in Lorain County, as well as in Columbus, Ohio, where he passed away. Locally, he was the architect for the Italianate-style William Day House (built 1879) on East River Road and the Queen Anne-style Sheffield Village Hall on Detroit Road. It is not known if he assisted his father in the construction of the *Lake Breeze House*, but based on his age it is likely that Elah was involved.

Jay Terrell was an avid fossil collector and scoured the shale banks in the vicinity of the hotel for prehistoric marine life. In the late 1860s he discovered armor plates of an ancient fish in the lake's shale cliffs. The fish lived 375 million years ago in the

Devonian Sea that once covered Ohio. He presented the specimens to Dr. John Newberry of the Ohio Geological Survey. In 1874, Dr. Newberry published a monograph on the fossils, naming this new species of fish in the discoverer's honor, *Dinichthys terrelli*. Years later the genus name was changed to *Dunkelosteus*, but the species name remains *terrelli*. This primitive, armored fish belongs to a group known as placoderms.

As an eight-years-old boy, Peter Bungart (1876-1949) would tag along with Jay Terrell in search of fossils. Peter was born on a farm not far from the foot of Lake Breeze Road on the Black River.

This experience so impressed Peter that he knew geology was his calling. While working at the Lorain shipyards he made a hobby of collecting fossils and studying rock formations. He eventually turned his hobby into a profession and was hired as paleontologist in 1923 with the newly formed Cleveland Museum of Natural History (see page 372). His crowning achievement was the successful reconstruction of the armored head shield of *Dunkelosteus terrelli* from flat specimens of shale—demonstrating that this fish was huge, over 20 feet in length. A full-sized model of the reconstruction is on permanent exhibit in the Sheffield Lake City Hall.

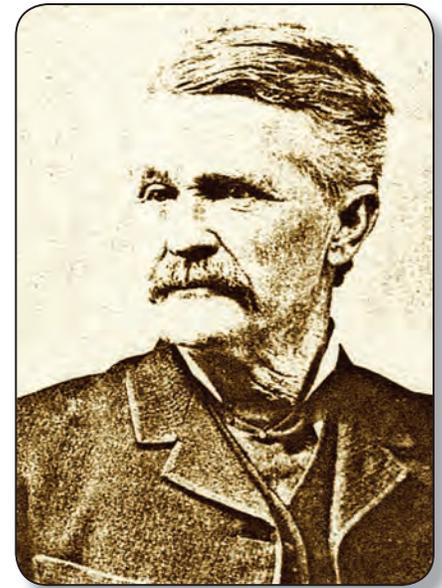
In the early 1880s *Lake Breeze House* was acquired by Mark Z. Lampman. *The Elyria Republican* carried this note in the June 18, 1885 issue, "We are informed that the season at *Lake Breeze House* will open on June 20<sup>th</sup>; on and after which date M. Z. Lampman, proprietor, will be ready to receive his old friends, and make new acquaintances. *Lake Breeze* is a cool, delightful place; good bathing, boating, fishing and hunting [the property also included nearly 70 acres of undeveloped land south of the lake for hunting], and is becoming justly popular amongst a nice class of summer pleasure seekers."



*Jay Terrell, an avid fossil hunter, was the first to discover this 375 million-year-old placoderm fish, *Dunkelosteus terrelli*, that was named in his honor. He was mentor to young Peter Bungart, who grew up on a farm at Bungart Island west of Lake Breeze Road (see map on page 37). Years later Peter was the first to reconstruct the armored head plates of this fish, as shown here at the Cleveland Museum of Natural History.*



Front view of the Lake Breeze House, built in the early 1870s. Built and first operated by Jay Terrell, it soon became a popular lakeside resort for local and foreign visitors (Drew Penfield).



Mark Z. Lampman, acquired the Lake Breeze House in the early 1880s and successfully operated the resort until 1888 (Drew Penfield).



On the 70-acre property at the Lake Breeze House resort, Jay Terrell also built a number of cottages for his guests. A large tract of land south of Lake Road was also reserved for game hunting (Drew Penfield).

The *Elyria Academy Times* of October 11, 1881 reported on a "Class of 1882 Geological Expedition to Lake Breeze." The light-hearted article gives a glimpse of what it was like to visit Lake Breeze House about 130 years ago. "After considerable delay in getting the horses, the load started at 10:30 in a drizzling rain and the sky overcast with clouds, with no signs of clearing up. The boys seemed to have a very great interest in the fruit crop of this season, and in consequence of this feature, the orchards along the way suffered severely. A charming feature of the ride was the numerous hills along the route, especially when the class had to get out and climb them. At last, after a ride of two hours in the rain, the rock seekers arrive, wet and hungry at the Lake Breeze House. Immediately preparations for dinner were commenced. While this was going on, Supt. H. M. Parker, with his wife, arrived upon the scene in a single rig."

"The dinner was a success, at least the boys thought so, if appearances are any judge. After dinner, as it was still raining, the dining-room was cleared and dancing begun. After an hour of this delightful exercise had been indulged in, and it having stopped raining, the whole party proceeded down to the beach to examine the rocks, and other interesting features. While here, they tried to break a huge limestone rock but without success. Then it began to rain, and they again made for the shelter. The boys could not resist the temptation to take a bath, and so they indulged to their hearts content but when they returned they looked as blue as whetstones. After a few games had been played, the baskets were re-packed, and they started for home and they reached this welcome place at nine o'clock, having enjoyed themselves hugely."



Lakeshore bathers from the Garfield-Root family in the late 1800s.

Dr. B. W. Donaldson, in his 1951 book, *Thoughts on Lorain, Ohio*, describes an event he witnessed at Lake Breeze House in 1900: "A niece of Mr. Arthur J. Moxham [President of Johnson Steel Company], Miss Kate D. Moxham from Louisville, Kentucky, swam straight out from shore at Lake Breeze until she was completely out of sight from those watching from the bank. Finally she reappeared and swam in; I have never seen this fete performed by anyone else, and neither have I heard of anyone doing such a stunt, either man or woman. The young girl probably did not know of the danger of swimming alone and in the colder waters of Lake Erie. We all thought she would be drowned."

In 1884 Mark Lampman published this advertisement:

## LAKE BREEZE HOUSE.

SEASON OF 1884.

This pleasant Summer Resort is situated on the shore of Lake Erie, directly north of Elyria eight miles, twenty-two miles from Cleveland west. Parties desiring to visit this pleasant resort, can take the Nickel Plate from Cleveland, the C. L. & W. R. R. from the south, and connect with the Nickel Plate at Lorain for Lake Breeze Station, where there will be a carriage in waiting to convey them to the House, three-quarter mile distant. No expense has been spared to make it one of the pleasantest and most home-like summer resorts situated upon the shore of old Erie, whose waters present at all times an even changing panorama of vessels and steamboats mirrored upon its placid bosom, conveying hither and yon the life and commerce of a Nation.

The buildings stand upon an elevation of twenty-eight feet above the water; an abundance of shade, beautiful surroundings, an easy decline to the sand beach, where are boats for those whose delight is to pull the oar, and gently receding beach admirably adapted for bathing. The buildings are specially designed for the convenience of families. In the main building the rooms are large, airy and arranged in suits for the convenience and comfort of families. The cottages are of different sizes, planned for large and small families. The buildings are all within seventy-five feet of the bank of the lake.

The tables are supplied with fresh milk, cream butter, fruit and vegetables, in all their freshness from the farm, as well as wholesome food and such luxuries as the season affords.

Large and spacious box stalls, ample accommodation for horses.

To families seeking health, comfort and pleasure, we think we can now offer this as one of the most attractive and desirable summer resorts on the lake. Much more could be said of this beautiful place. Thousands have felt the need of a place where for a few weeks at least they could throw off the cares and restraints of their every-day life, and rest. To such we can truly say, Lake Breeze will meet your wants. Good fishing in its season. Boats are kept for the special use of guests. The many beautiful drives to this resort from Cleveland, Elyria, Wellington, Oberlin and many other places, I shall open for driving parties June 10th, and for parties wishing to stay, June 20th, 1884.

**\$2.00 per day. \$10.00 per week. Children under 10, Half Price.**

Children under 10 occupying seats at the first table will be charged full rates, except by special arrangement.

**M. Z. LAMPMAN,**  
Owner and Proprietor,  
Post Office Address, Lake Breeze, Lorain County, Ohio.

Mark Lampman died in 1888 and the Lake Breeze House continued to operate for at least 15 more years. The Tax Map of 1896 shows D. D. Lewis as owner of the property. The November 6, 1903 issue of *The Elyria Chronicle-Telegram* contained this notice, "LAKE BREEZE SOLD. The Redington Realty Co. has bought the Lake Breeze hotel property with 70 acres of land for \$18,000." The ultimate fate of the Lake Breeze House is unknown.

### *The History of Day Allotment*

In 2015, the Village of Sheffield has 15 separate housing subdivisions. But back in the 1920s the idea of housing developments was just getting started and only two were in existence: (1) Acre Farms on East River Road along Arbor and Walnut Avenues and (2) Day Allotment off French Creek Road near East River Road. The Farm Realty Company acquired 108 acres land in 1921 with the idea of subdividing the land into several-acre plots (Acre Farms) for dwellers that would like to operate small farms. A description of the Ferguson House (1926), one of the first to be built in the Acre Farms Subdivision, can be found on page 127. At about the same time, Sumner William Day was creating his own subdivision, one offering smaller plots that took advantage of the relatively new "Catalog Homes" concept being promoted by Sears, Roebuck & Company—houses that could be built inexpensively.

Sumner William Day (1899-1983) was the great great grandson of Capt. John Day (1774-1827), founder of Sheffield Village. Sumner's grandfather, William Augustus Day (1835-1910), built in 1879 the grand Italianate-style home that still stands at 2837 East River Road. This is where Sumner dwelled and where his daughter, Carol [Day] Minda, now lives. The property where the house sits, as well as the land to the southeast that now comprises Day Allotment, were part of the plot settled by Capt. John Day in 1816. In the early 1920s, Sumner's father, William Steele Day (1863-1941), gave him the 25-acre plot on which to develop an allotment.

Day Allotment originally had only one east-west street, Day Street. To get to Day Street, a short connecting way, Wright Avenue, was constructed in a northerly direction from French Creek Road, just a few hundred feet east of the East River Road intersection. The origin of the name Day Street is obvious, but Wright Avenue takes more speculation. As it turns out, William Augustus Day had a sister, Huldah Maria Day (1833-1899), who married prominent Oberlin College Professor, Rev. G. Frederick Wright (1838-1921). Professor Wright was a veteran of the Civil War, served as a glacial geologist for the U.S. Geological Survey (1884-1892), and was president of the Ohio Archaeological and Historical Society (1907-1919). He also authored *A Standard History of Lorain County, Ohio* (1916), in which Sheffield was prominently featured. Being a favorite great uncle who passed away the same year Sumner was planning his allotment, Wright Avenue was named as a way to honor Professor Wright.

In 1929 when the Suchey family moved to Day Allotment only half a dozen or so homes were located on Day Street. Historical Society member, Elizabeth "Betty" (Suchey) Naso, was only three years old when her parents, Michael and Elizabeth, and her two-year-old brother Mike moved into the tiny house Michael had built. The Great Depression permeated the country and money was scarce for the family. Fortunately, Betty's grandparents, Stephen and Mary Toth, had given her parents enough land next to their home to build their house (see accompanying photographs on page 212). The little house had no bathroom, only an outhouse. Michael repaired shoes for a living and operated "Mike's Shoe Shop" on 28<sup>th</sup> Street in South



*Aerial view of Day Allotment and Linda Lane in 1964 (Lorain County Engineer).*

Lorain. The family didn't have an automobile in the early years, so Michael walked to his shop and the whole family walked to St. Ladislaus Church on 29<sup>th</sup> Street on Sundays, a distance of several miles.

Stephen and Mary Toth's son, Stephen Toth, Jr. and his wife Mary bought a house from Rocky and Lillian Zicarelli in the early 1940s on the south side of Day Street directly across from the house of his sister, Elizabeth [Toth] Suchey. Their daughter, Mary Ann [Toth] Nemeth, grew up there and recalls good times with the



*Day Allotment children in 1946, (left to right) Mary Ann Toth, Joan Toth, Carol Day, Elaine Zicarelli, Rosemary Zicarelli, and Sumner Wayne "Sonny" Day.*



*Brookside High School varsity cheerleaders (~1953) from Day Allotment, (left to right) Elaine Zicarelli, Connie Stewart, and Mary Ann Toth, seated on the back steps of the Zicarelli House.*



Elizabeth "Betty" [Suchey] Naso holds a photograph of her and her bother Mike taken in the 1930s, a few years after her family moved to Day Allotment. Both Betty and Mike graduated from Brookside High School after attending all 12 grades there.

other children living there and playing games on a vacant lot next door. Her family had a large garden on two other vacant lots for years. She remembers doing a lot of weeding and guesses that's why she still loves to weed now! There was house-to-house delivery in those days and Mary Ann mentioned the milk truck, the bakery truck, and even the beer truck coming to the house. An iceman would also bring ice for the icebox; Mary Ann still calls refrigerators "iceboxes." At Brookside High School, Mary Ann and two friends from Day Allotment (Connie Stewart and Elaine Zicarelli) were varsity cheerleaders. Her closing comment says a lot about the Allotment, "I don't know about you, but I had a happy, great time growing up in Sheffield Village!"

In the 1930s, a few houses were added to the Allotment along French Creek Road, and in the 1940s homes were built along Day Allotment's second east-west street, Sumner Street, except for the Revta House, which had been built on the corner of Wright Avenue and Sumner Street in the late 1920s. Paul Smith recalled moving into one of several new houses built by Alfred Wharton on the north side of Sumner Street in 1948. Paul passed away in 2015, but up until then he considered himself to have the most longevity of any



The tiny house on the right was built by Michael Suchey in 1929 on Day Street. The house on the left belonged to Betty Suchey's grandparents, Stephen, Sr. and Mary Toth (Betty Naso).



Mike and Betty Suchey at the front portico of their grandparents home (Stephen & Mary Toth) on Day Street in 1929 (Betty Naso).



Suchey House on Day Street in 1935 with the Suchey children seated in the front yard.



Suchey House, 4547 Day Street, has undergone considerable changes over the years. This 2011 photograph shows the expansions that have taken place.

of the other Day Allotment residents. Paul also recalled that both Day and Sumner Streets once had fairly steep hills along the roadway that have long since been graded flat.

In the 1950s, Sheffield Village Mayor Paul Poor, acquired property to the north of Day Allotment and initiated his own development on a road four times longer than Day Street. He called it Linda Lane for his eldest daughter and connected it to the north end of Wright Avenue. As time went on the old Wright Avenue sign disappeared and most people now think of Linda Lane as connecting directly to French Creek Road. Even the Lorain County Engineers' map erroneously shows it this way.

In 1956, Aloysius "Butch" and Elaine [Roth] Klingshirn built their home at 4531 Day Street, one of the few early homes on the street that was not a Sears kit house. Shortly after the house was completed, Butch was drafted into the U.S. Army and stationed in Germany. The couple had an \$8,000 mortgage on the house and Elaine was pregnant with their first son. If Elaine hadn't been able to get a job to make the \$50/month mortgage payment they would have lost the house. The Klingshirns raised their family of three sons and two daughters: Glen, Ray, Gene, Barb, and Sue here on Day Street.



*Construction of Butch and Elaine Klingshirn's home at 4531 Day Street in 1956. Butch (right) and his brother Dub are shown attaching siding. The cellarway in the second view did not pass a code inspection because it was too close to the septic tank and had to be abandoned. The third view shows the house nearing completion in October 1956 (Bruce and Sue [Klingshirn] DiVaccaro).*



*Kitchen of the Klingshirn House (October 1956).*



*Elaine Klingshirn (1934-2011) and her daughter, Sue DiVaccaro, attending a 2008 piano recital given by Sue's daughter, Stephany.*



*Klingshirn house at 4531 Day Street (2011).*



Day Allotment girls in 1953, (left to right standing) Cathy Alteri, Connie Stewart, Andrea Minda, Jean Fields, Elaine Zicarelli, Mary Ann Toth, and Sandra Belu; (kneeling) Nancy & Lois Nemeth (Elaine's Lorain cousins) and Loretta Schwartz.

Today, Day Allotment has some 40 homes: 15 on Day Street, 16 on Summer Street, 7 on French Creek Road, and 2 on Wright Avenue. Linda Lane, excluding those on Wright Avenue, has 48 homes. At least seven Sears Catalog Homes are still in existence in Day Allotment dating from the 1920s and 1930s. One of these is the Stephen & Mary Toth house—Betty Naso's grandparents paid \$3,000 for the kit and to have it built in 1927.

### Sears Catalog Houses of Day Allotment



Kelling/Day House, 4513 Day Street, a Sears house—The Dundee, was built ~1925 and demolished in 2007.



Zicarelli House, 4542 Day Street, a Sears house—The Dundee, was built by Rocky Zicarelli in the late 1920s.



Diosy House, 4553 Day Street, a Sears house—The Winona, was built by Louis Diosy ~1925.



King House, 4587 French Creek Road, a Sears house—The Berwyn, was built by Maxwell and Helen (Day) King ~1935.



Wharton House, 4507 Day Street—a Sears house, The Claremont, was built by John Wharton ~1925.



Zicarelli House, 4508 Day Street, a Sears house—The Parkridge, was built by Samuel Zicarelli ~1925.



Toth House, 4537 Day Street, has retained much of its original character. A Sears house—The Berwyn, was built by Stephen Toth, Sr. ~1927.



Gude House, 4519 Day Street, a Sears house—The Rochelle, was built ~1925.



Revta House, 4481 Sumner Street, a Sears house—The Maplewood, was built by John Revta in the early 1930s.

## History of Knickerbocker Knolls

By Jock Rader

The 324 homes in Knickerbocker Knolls were built in the middle 1950s by the Land & Development Company (L&D). The Great Lakes Realty Company was responsible for all sales. The president of both was John Rader operating out of offices on Euclid Blvd. just south of the railroad tracks on the east side of Lorain. Circa 1950, L&D was building houses on either side of Euclid Avenue and struggling to stay afloat. The company was owned by the Shaw family of Akron whose main business was the Leroy Jewelry stores and the Yale's men's clothing stores. John Rader was a general contractor in Akron and the Shaw family hired him in 1950 to take over the home construction operations in Lorain. John commuted from Akron for six months, living in the Antlers Hotel in downtown Lorain during the week. In June of 1951 he moved his family to Lorain, including this writer, his eleven year old son Jock.

The land for Knickerbocker Knolls was purchased, circa late 1953, from Padley Farms. The purchase did not include any land on the north side of Lake Road. When no development plans were announced right away, one of the local papers speculated that the land would be for building submarines or testing rubber bands because the parcel was so long and narrow. The property was about 96 acres, extending from Lake Road all the way to Oster Road. From *Google Earth* the dimensions can be estimated as 800 feet by 5,000 feet. The name, Knickerbocker Knolls, was suggested by Katy Kretchman in keeping with the early American theme for the homes.

The first homes built were three model homes on Lake Road. After the foundations were in, these homes were erected in less than three weeks with skilled workmen putting in very long hours. In the first aerial we have a view looking northeast. In the upper left we see the three completed model houses facing Lake Road but no other Knickerbocker Knolls houses have been started. Slanting down toward the lower right we can make out that six of the crossroads and Irving Park Boulevard have been roughed in.

Then there is a woods followed by more farmland. Oster Road is obscured by the tree line at the southern boundary of the property.

Construction on the main body of the homes got going in the summer of 1954 (a pretty good year for the Cleveland Indians). The houses were available in a couple of floor plans and ranged in price from \$14,500 to \$17,285. The model homes were fully



*Aerial photograph from 1955 showing the start of construction on the Knickerbocker Knolls subdivision. View is toward the north with Lake Erie in the background.*



*Aerial photograph from 1956 showing the nearly completed Knickerbocker Knolls subdivision. View is toward the south from the Lake Erie shore. Irving Park Boulevard is the main subdivision street, running south from Lake Road at the left of the photograph. The Rader home is the last house to the right on the south side of Lake Road. The old Joseph Hiram Padley House, built in 1860, is the large home on the north side and near to Lake Road.*

decorated at a cost of \$7,000, showing the possibilities to buyers and helping to sell them. Marie Rader, John's wife, was the chief designer and buyer of the furnishings for the model homes. (Later on she became a secretary at Brookside School). For veterans there was a no-down payment plan, needing only \$475 in closing costs to move in. This very favorable financing was arranged through Second Federal and Loan Association of Cleveland.

The original intent was to start with a build of thirty houses, see how they sold, then tweak the designs and build additional groups. However, in the first three weekends of open house for the model homes, 200 contracts were signed by buyers, many of whom were adamant that they wanted the same design as the models. This made it an easy decision to proceed with the original floor plans. The second aerial view coming from the north (see page 215) shows approximately twelve blocks of houses nearly completed. Note that the woodlot has been replaced by several rows of houses. A fourth house has been built to the east of the original three. The third aerial (see page 217) flying from the south reveals more detail of the stages of construction. You can see houses with bare slabs, or with just the walls erected, or with ceiling joists up, or with rafters erected, or with the roofing on, and so forth; a primer on the stages of construction.

The General Superintendent of Construction was William Kretchman, the author's uncle and also a member of the Sheffield Village Historical Society. Bill graciously supplied the historic photographs and other documents used in the article from his personal files. The plan was to complete ten houses a week but Ohio's weather created some challenges. I remember some horrible mud problems. Bill remembers that on Halloween of 1954 a freak lake-effect storm dumped eight inches of snow mostly within a mile of the lake, for some miles along the lakeshore, pretty much blanketing Padley Farms. The land had been cleared but storm sewers weren't yet in and the snow of course melted, soaking the land. The normal rains of late fall just made it worse. Trucks were forever getting stuck and bulldozers

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We wish to extend our thanks to the Lorain County Building and Construction Trades Council.

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*The Great Lakes Realty Co. took a full-page advertisement in the Lorain Journal (July 30, 1955) to thank the company's staff members, personnel of Land & Development Company, sub-contractors and suppliers, and Sheffield Lake Village public officials for their part in the Knickerbocker Knolls project.*

of Gilgenbach Excavating were required to free them. I was working as a surveyor's assistant one weekend when our truck sank in the mud up to the running board. No bulldozers were working on the weekend so we had to walk back to Lake Road, well over half a mile, while carrying the surveying equipment while the mud tried to pull our boots off with every step. I did step out of my boot at one point and ended up with one foot in the mud over my ankle. There was no way to put down the surveyor's transit so somehow I got a very muddy foot and sock back into its boot.

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