

Collected Memories



Family life in the 1950s

Robert Mantell, Joseph Mantell, James Mantell and Alvena Gallitz Mantell

A Centennial Oral History Video



We captured bits of our collective community history with *(starting left of the flowers)* former Clerk Norbert Chase, Harriett Koren, Delia Trevisani and former Mayor Ralph Contipelli. To the left side of the table are facilitator Laura Bacci Merhaut with Robyn and Jim Nobili.

The video can be viewed online at the following YouTube link:
<https://youtu.be/k1PxJ9JuvVk>

Collected Memories

by Laura Bacci Merhaut

Comments and Memories from Near and Far

•

Robert “Bob” Mantell | Stow, Ohio

“Growing up in the village” on East 49th Street, I remember industry working around the clock. No one had air conditioning, so windows were open from April to October. You fell asleep and were awakened by the sounds of the American Steel and Wire operations, trains coming across the trestle all hours of the night with the rumble echoing through the valley, and Sohio trucks going up and down the street nonstop.

I have memories of: playing around the railroad trestle when our mothers said, “Don’t go near the railroad tracks;” sled riding with my brother, Jim, and friend, Wayne Anielski, in the valleys behind both the east and west sides of East 49th Street; and hunting along the Ohio Canal and Cuyahoga River all the way to Harvard Avenue.

Christmas get-togethers with the cousins, aunts and uncles of the Gallitz and Humphrey families were a wonderful tradition. It was a great place to grow up as a kid. The pace of life was a whole lot different than today. God bless my parents for the life they gave us.

Charlotte Bacci Waskielis | Bellevue, Ohio

What do I remember? I remember growing up in a safe village, where people cared about each other. I remember Home Days where neighbors would gather and visit.

I remember sunny pool and playground days filled with suntans.

I recall Christmas stockings delivered to each child. When I was young, you could play outside ’til dark and if you were lucky you would get a treat from the ice cream man.

Cuyahoga Heights Schools nurtured us, teaching us to respect each other and work hard to become good citizens. Our village was a community of blended people who were proud of their homes and their relationships with others.

We celebrated Memorial Day, and still do. I remember a village where each person mattered to all.

Cuyahoga Heights 2018 Centennial

Patsy Hazel Klir | Fort Jennings, Ohio

How exciting to be planning the 100th Anniversary. I have such fond memories of growing up in Cuyahoga Heights. My grandparents lived and had a saloon on the corner of Grant Avenue and East 71st Street. When my grandfather died, my grandmother built and moved into the four family home at 7008 Grant Avenue. I was born in the top front apartment. We later moved to the downstairs rear apartment. The phone was attached to the wall at chair level and the number was Diamond 1-7943.

I remember the outings for children planned by Mayor Bill Gerdon. We would get picked up by a bus and go to the circus. There would be movie days at the village hall and parties for every holiday. In the summer, Mr. Gerdon and his wife would have parties at their home for the children. The village baseball team played in the space that is now the pool.

Every summer there would be playground activities led by an adult leader. Frank Heinz was there for several summers until he became a priest. The playground activities were first at the village hall area and then moved to Chapek's Grove. The dance hall was still there as well as other buildings—perfect for hide and seek. The baseball diamond was moved to Chapek's and the buildings started coming down.

Playground was also scheduled two days at the East 49th Street playground. The school baseball team played in a field across the street from the playground on East 49th Street. There were plenty of activities to keep the kids out of trouble. Santa came to visit us at our homes so we knew that he knew where we lived. What a treat!

My grandmother passed away in 1955. We built a house at 4566 East 49th Street and moved in the summer of 1956. The Klir family moved in two doors down that same summer. What a coincidence! Joey Klir and I were married in 1966.

The sunsets looking over the sand pit in my back yard were beautiful with the railroad trestle and houses lighting up across the ravine. Cuyahoga Heights School had the best teachers and a great education.

Dale Andrews | Solana Beach, California

The Joseph 'Joe' and Dortha 'Dot' Andrews Family

When my father settled our family in THE Village of Cuyahoga Heights in 1946, we did not realize what an important family life journey the move would be! We lived in a double house at 4708 East 71 Street next to St. Mary's Cemetery.

The Village of Cuyahoga Heights was where my dad worked for 38 years at Harris Company; where he deeply cared about serving the Cuyahoga Heights residents as a councilman; where he was active with his VFW brothers (he was a World War II Air Force Veteran) and where he found so much joy and fun golfing with his cronies in the Cuyahoga Heights Men's Club.

The village is where my mother worked her entire career; first, at Cuyahoga Heights Schools and later at Standard Oil's Cuyahoga Heights village offices. Our house at 4590 East 49th Street that my mother meticulously cared for was built by skilled men who all lived in the village. My mother always felt safe, protected and supported by the village police, fire and maintenance departments!

Cuyahoga Heights 2018 Centennial

For me, the village provided an excellent school education with teachers who really cared and disciplined students. I had great friends and teammates from kindergarten through grade 12. The village also provided me summer jobs to earn some money, as well as, a community pool and parks in which to hang out and keep busy to stay out of trouble or, at least, not get into too much trouble!

My family move to Solana Beach, California was because my body prefers warm weather and my mind and heart like the surf and sand lifestyle...however, my spirit will always be a Buckeye; a Redskin from Cuyahoga Heights Schools; and proud that I was raised in THE Village of Cuyahoga Heights! Readers can see a young Dale Andrews in the *Social Life* chapter of this book in a 1959 Little League photograph.

Both my parents were laid to rest in the village at St. Mary's Cemetery.

Jim Masek | San Francisco Bay Area, California

What I remember most about growing up in Cuyahoga Heights in the 1950s and 1960s were the summers. If we weren't hanging out at the swimming pool, there were the pick-up baseball games. Almost daily, kids would show up at Chapek's, which is now Klima Gardens. We'd choose up sides and it was game on.

The usual participants beside myself were the Domzalski brothers, Jimmy Crooks, Alan Yarmesch, Ron Tomczyk, Tom Chase, Eddie Gaida, Marty Malek and George Jackson. We had our own set of ground rules (i.e. fly balls that hit the trees were home runs). We kept score but never kept track of innings. We just played until we ran out of gas... life was good!

Hopefully I'll get to see some of those guys at the Centennial Celebration this August.

Carl Casavecchia, Jr. | Chardon, Ohio

2017 NAI Conference Program – Award Recipient – Master Interpretive Manager

In preparation for Cleveland Metroparks Centennial in 2017, we were asked to publish a book regarding Cleveland Metroparks' history. My charge was to lead the internal team that would produce this tabletop gem. For over a year, we compiled photos, interviewed people, designed, wrote, edited and finally published in late 2016, the award-winning, *The 100 Year Trail: A Centennial Celebration of Cleveland Metroparks*. Truly a proud moment for our team's first go at creating and publishing something like this.

As the Centennial and my gratifying career with Cleveland Metroparks was coming to a close in 2017, I was able to join many of my professional colleagues in Spokane, Washington for the 2017 National Association for Interpretation (NAI) National Conference. At this event, it was my humble pleasure to have my career capped off by accepting not only two awards for the Centennial Book, but also being awarded the NAI National Master Interpretive Manager of the Year Award. This award is presented annually to two managers from nature centers, history centers, museums, aquariums, local, state, or national parklands throughout the United States and Canada. It was a fitting testament for all the people and teams I've had the pleasure to work with over the years.

Cuyahoga Heights 2018 Centennial

Comments by Ray Novotny, Outdoor Education Manager at Mill Creek MetroParks

For 35 years, Carl Casavecchia has been a fixture with the Cleveland Metroparks. Starting out as a frontline interpreter, Carl rose up the ranks to become manager of the Garfield Park Nature Center and was responsible for programming at Bedford Reservation. There, he mentored over 60 aspiring interpreters, many of whom went on to leadership positions in agencies around the country. For many years he has served on the Guest Service Training Team responsible for training over 600 full-time and 150 part-time employees. As the current Special Projects Manager, Carl chaired the 100th anniversary celebration. This was a staggering undertaking and involved capital projects, a Centennial tree project, exhibits, school programs, bus tours, and a documentary. Most impressive was his leadership in researching, writing and publishing the 244-page hardcover book titled *The 100 Year Trail: A Centennial Celebration of Cleveland Metroparks*.

Memories of a Little Round Ball by Carl Casavecchia Jr.

My first year of little league (baseball) was 1966 when our village team won the championship. What a beginning it was. I loved this game played with a little round ball that you played catch with and hit. Knowing that I had such an interest in baseball, dad took me to my first Cleveland Indians game on Sunday, August 6, 1967 at Cleveland Municipal Stadium. It was a doubleheader against the Detroit Tigers. From that point on I couldn't get enough of baseball in the neighborhood with my friends, Pete Humphrey and John Traffis. Others would join in pick-up games on the school playground. Later, through the years, we would take in an Indians game whenever we had the chance and eventually worked at the ballpark in the commissaries.

In between that time, there was a lot of little league and high school games...even being part of the 1976 Class A State Runner-up team. Combine this with listening to games on the old transistor radio and talking baseball with my maternal grandfather, it was just part of life.

Following college at The Ohio State University, the next 35 years would find me with Cleveland Metroparks working as a naturalist, nature center manager, and eventually coordinator of the 2017 Cleveland Metroparks Centennial. I also raised a family during this time and, of course, took them to their first games as youngsters. Caitlin can remember trying to get to sleep upstairs in our house in 1995 while hearing dad cheer on another come-from-behind victory for the Tribe during their World Series run. I'll never forget rocking my son, Joey, in my arms standing in front of the TV when Jim Thome caught the last out to win our first Central Division championship in 1995. For years, I would do my best to get Caitlin, Joey, and Sarah to a game in July with dad to celebrate their birthdays. I also had the honor of coaching my son's little league teams in Chardon, Ohio. What a joy to pass along my love of the sport to these kids!

Fast forward to 2017, August 6 to be exact. This Sunday date was the 50th Anniversary of attending my first Cleveland Indians game with my dad as mentioned above. Months earlier I had purchased eight tickets to the game versus the New York Yankees. My plan was to go with my kids and wife, Diane. The group consisted of Joey and his girlfriend, Emma; Sarah and her husband, Kainen; Diane and I; and since Caitlin was already teaching in Florida and couldn't make it, neighborhood friends: John Traffis and Larry

Cuyahoga Heights 2018 Centennial

Shimerka joined us. It was a wonderful day, just sitting back enjoying family, friends, and Cleveland Indians baseball.

The day ended up holding more importance than just celebrating a wonderful memory of my deceased dad. Unbeknownst to me, Diane had contacted the Indians about this special day. One of the ambassador supervisors, Rik, came up to talk with me and deliver some nice gifts from the Indians. As the wonderful visit was drawing to a close, Diane said, "You know, he's retiring at the end of the year with 35 years of guest service experience." Rik said, "Here's my card and my manager's name." Six months later, after a set of interviews during the winter of 2018, I was hired as a service ambassador.

On April 6, 2018, this retiree became a member of the Cleveland Indians organization at a cold opening day. My job...to make sure fans are having a great time at the ballpark. Talk about a dream come true! Throughout the season, I met so many wonderful fans who had stories of their own. I witnessed one couple, that I helped weeks before at a game, get engaged at the ballpark. I met a gentleman who was witnessing his last game due to poor health. I smiled with a young teen, (as we caught up on his favorite players), who was undergoing surgery the next day for a health condition. I have cheered with and high fived hundreds of fans throughout the season after walk-offs. I remembered all the games my friend, Pete and I would go to discussing the ins and outs of the game.

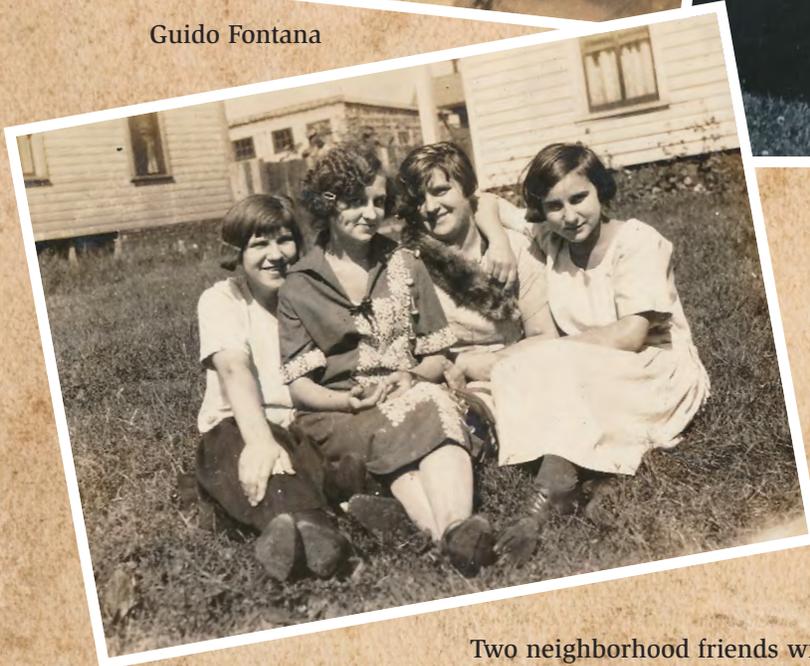
My kids and I always came around to chatting about the Indians over the miles that now separate us. I treasure that Caitlin's classrooms in Honduras, Brazil and Florida all had/have baseball and Cleveland Indians themes. I give credit to my wife, Diane, for me being part of the team at the ballpark now...she knew my heart's desire. And I thank my mom for all the memories of the Indians she shared from her youth. This, coupled with my dad's willingness to take his son to his first ballgame so many years ago, set a course for a lifetime of bringing people together around a game...a game with a little round ball and a million memories.

Cuyahoga Heights 2018 Centennial

Lisa Parse
Michelle Socausky Hurst
April Hunter Wojtyszyn



Guido Fontana



Ida and Jeanette Nobili in 1947

Two neighborhood friends with Josephine Contipelli
(2nd from right) and Florence Davis (right)

Cuyahoga Heights 2018 Centennial



4933 East 72nd Place Summer Memories

The Fontana Store



Tereza Panizzutti



Farrell and Mavis Snoddy in 2000

Ron Henry and his Amazing Lamp



When Ron Henry was about 10 years old, he remembers taking the bus to East 55th Street and Broadway Avenue with his friend Bob Weitz, son of Fonda Weitz. While shopping, he discovered a lovely lamp in the shape of a boat he just knew his mom, Tillie Huy Henry, would love as a Christmas gift. He had just enough money for the purchase, but there would be nothing left for his transportation home. After weighing the two, he decided to walk all the way home from East 55th Street to East 71st Street. Ron still has the lamp.



The Boys of Summer!

1980s backyard party with (left to right) Frank Trusso Jr., Renato Contipelli, Doug Amari, Klem Derbin

Cuyahoga Heights 2018 Centennial

Memorable Tidbits from our Facebook page and parts Elsewhere

The Bowling Alleys

Earl Bloam

I remember the bowling alleys in the basement of the town hall. They were all manual, no automatics, and I used to get 10 cents a line for setting pins as a teenager. Many of our residents spent a lot of time bowling there.

John Traffis

I remember working at the bowling alley. We also had bowling in gym class over at the town hall.

Janet Wey Gebacz

My entire family worked at the bowling alley. I remember my dad's initials in the wall dated 1955. So of course, mine went next to his. I loved those times.

Raymond Wasky

I used to set pins in the bowling alley around 1959 to 1960 when I was only 15 to 16 years old. Yep, 10 cents a line which was double that if you set two lanes during bowling league games. Great memories!

Sue Pellini

I learned to bowl and keep score in the town hall bowling alley. Between dad taking my sister and me on those cold winter Saturday afternoons and Miss Koehler in gym class. I remember the big wood bench seats. It was a great place to spend time with the other kids. Unfortunately, the two lanes weren't quite regulation length. I guess that's why we scored so high!

Cuyahoga Heights 2018 Centennial

Roaming the Woods

Donna Magalski

I remember the Zmija fort over the hill. Donna, David and I also had our fair share of them, but nothing like the Zmija fort. It was two floors!

Raymond Wasky

My dad built me a two-floor lookout tower in a tree in the gully behind our house on East 71st Street, plus I had a fort in our backyard. The Domzalski brothers had a fort, as I recall, behind their house across the street on the west side of East 71st Street.

Sue Pellini

I played with the Korans and Roylene Gutfranski in the gully or down the hill or over the hill. We had marked paths and secret short cuts, bridges, vines you had to swing on to get to certain spots, or a trail, secret passwords, but I don't recall a club name. At the top of the hill we also went from Koran's backyard at the end of Dressler Court, to my backyard using the little strip of land behind the baby pool.

Keep going behind Bacci's, my uncle's, and Hanousek's and you were at Roylene's.

It was quite convenient and faster and sneakier then using the sidewalks.

Although Mr. Hanousek wasn't happy about it when he'd catch us.

Janet Wey Gebacz

My brother and his friend built a fort in the woods next to the Bacci house.

Jackie Bacci and Glenn Snoddy got stuck in it. We had to tear it down.

•

Ice Skating and Sled Riding

Janet Wey Gebacz

"I remember the skating rink that was made by blocking drains behind the Town Hall. There was a basketball court there. I also remember the sled riding hill behind Koran's house. That's where my brother Ricky broke his leg riding his dirt bike down the hill."

Sue Pellini

I remember there was an ice rink on East 49th Street at the basketball court.

There was a playground there too. I also remember the skating pond on Canal where the village service center building sits. It's not the current pond in Bacci Park.

Someone sold Christmas trees there every year, too.

Cuyahoga Heights 2018 Centennial

Raymond Wasky

My dad used to skate and play ice hockey with his buddies on the canal and on Sunny Pond located at the bottom of the hill below East 72nd Place. He said there used to be wooden stairs leading from the gully up to Bletch and Marcelline Courts. That would have been somewhere in the 1920 to 1930 timeframe. He also said the police would sometimes come to the canal and shoot a revolver into the ice to see if it was safe to skate on.

•

“East 49th Street Kids” by Laura Bacci Merhaut

As a Bacci kid, I remember growing up on East 49th Street—with a gang of kids! We spent hours outside as soon as the weather broke, running through the woods, down into what was known as the sandpit. We built forts and campfires. We swam in a mud puddle dubbed Hubba-Hubba pond and as young biologists reached out to capture tadpoles as they matured into frogs. We raced through the fields of summer tracking down butterflies and at dusk—capturing those magical fire flies.

There were Fontana, Gallitz, Hazel, Borowy, Nobili, Adorni, Kosicki, Mantell, Stawicki, Faragone, Bohdan, Schuschu, Schuman kids and many more. We built forts and stayed outdoors as long as we could every day. We loved the summer playground programs—playing capture the flag and the special ‘bike’ hikes that were the highlight of every summer.

When weather turned frigid—we layered up and spent hours on a sled riding run behind Shireen Borowy Patterson Mitchell’s current home. Inevitably, with all those clothes on, one needed to hit the bathroom. At the bottom of the tree-riddled run, there were times we broke ice over the creek and got wet. When it was cold enough, the Village Service Department flooded the basketball courts for ice skating—and we became Peggy Fleming and Wayne Gretzky wanna-be skaters.

There were campouts with tents collapsing in the middle of the night...theatrical presentations in the Adorni garage and if the boys did something—the girls tried to do the same, not always successfully... life was full and we were busy. And, yes—we rang doorbells and made crank phone calls when our parents were away for the evening—annoying our neighbors—all in good fun.

Of course, the Easter egg hunt was a riot—I remember winning live baby chicks that had been dyed pastel colors—they were quickly dispatched to a farm for raising elsewhere. And, Santa visiting every home that had a kid—WOW! At Christmas—we understood that a family with some kids needed a boost—although we were young, we gave back, caroling door to door bent on raising money to use for a family less fortunate than we were...we took those precious dollars, went to the grocery store and retail establishment to purchase food, socks, mittens and the like to provide presents and a good meal.

This little village has been a great place in which to grow up, spread our wings and for some, return home again—yes—HOME! And like this quote: “We didn’t realize we were making memories, we just knew we were having fun.”

Cuyahoga Heights 2018 Centennial

Recollections of Family by Mrs. Jan Guilfoyle

4530 East 49th Street

As a young Irishman Edmund Albert Guilfoyle came to this area in the early 1900s to find work as they were dredging the Ohio and Erie Canals. He was rooming at the Old Stage House in Brecksville where he met and fell in love with niece of manager, Pearl L. Black. She was a waitress serving his table each night. It was during the Depression and the dollar he would leave her might be called a tip but to Marie and Ed, it was a sign of affection...they soon married and in 1929 had a set of twins—Edmund Daniel and Edith Marie. The family lived in Brecksville until Edmund Albert got a job with American Steel and Wire as a crane operator. When Ed and Edie were in the 4th grade, the family moved to Cuyahoga Heights where they rented the third floor of a big home on Bletch Court. Having no car, they would walk or take a ten cent street car ride a far as Broadway for provisions.

In 1941, they bought a piece of land from the Schuschu family on East 49th Street and built a small block home close enough for Edmund Albert to walk to work at the slag crusher plant of American Steel and Wire. Daughter Edith married and lived in Valley View.

Son, Edmund Daniel, was an 11th/12th grade MVP on the Cuyahoga Heights basketball team. He served in Germany during the Vietnam war in the 5th Engineers Division 1951 to 1953. He married Jan, Marilyn Janelle Adams, in 1953 and rented a home at 4365 East 49th Street. Eventually, he was appointed to the Cuyahoga Heights Fire Department where he worked for 32 years until retirement in 1992. The couple had two boys: Edmund C. and Robert B.

After Ed's parents passed away, he and Jan were able to buy the family home at 4530 East 49th Street. Both sons are graduates of CHS. Eddie is in private practice as a Psychologist in Houston, Texas. Robert retired from the Northeast Ohio Regional Sewer District in 2015 and worked part-time for the village service department.

Family and Public Service by Lois Marek Henley

4888 East 49th Street

My mother, Anna Kornowski, lived on the corner of Marcelline Court and East 71st Street. It was a single-family home. She lived with her father, two sisters, and three brothers. Anna's mother died when her sister Clara was two years old. Anna and her eldest brother took care of the home and family. Paul, the oldest brother, was a fireman in the Village of Cuyahoga Heights. Clara married Jack Klima and Edward married Eleanor Koran. They turned the house into a double-family home where Clara and Edward lived side by side. Anna married Daniel Marek and had three children: Bob, Beryl and I was the youngest. Clara had two children, Joyce and Gail. Clara was diagnosed with cancer and my mom and Paul took care of her until she passed away. Joyce came to live with me, Gail, and Eleanor and Edward Koran. Edward became a Cuyahoga Heights fireman and then was also later diagnosed with cancer. Anna took the day shift at the hospital to take care of him. He passed away and Anna lost the two siblings she raised. Edward and Paul changed their last name to Koran. Eleanor's eldest son, Jim, also became a fireman.

Cuyahoga Heights 2018 Centennial

Our family home was on East 49th Street. It was built in 1910 and was a Sears Roebuck pre-made home. We remodeled several times and I still live there today. Daniel died from cancer when I was only twenty-one years old. I married Jim Henley and we stayed in the house with our five children and my mother, Anna. Jim Henley was the mechanic for the village. He served as the president of the men's club for twenty years. We both coached boys and girls baseball. My father, Daniel, served as a councilman for a short amount of time. I ran for council and once elected, I served for more than twenty years. I also ran for mayor during that time and lost, but learned that my purpose was serving on council. Mayor Bacci was quoted in the *Cleveland Magazine* saying, 'If anyone could beat me, it would be her.'

While on council, I started the recreation board and organized *Summerfest* with a thousand people in attendance. These were among many other projects started, but *Memory Lane* at Bacci Park is one of my proudest accomplishments. Many of my beloved friends are there with their memories being preserved by having a tree planted in their name/memory. I loved the work I did as a councilwoman and also for our village's senior citizens. I was diagnosed with cancer while in office, as well as suffering from a heart attack, but I am a survivor. I am still here—God has other plans for me. The last election, I ran and lost by a flip of a coin. It was a very hard way to lose. I love the village.

Members of the Kornowski family have served at the Cuyahoga Heights Fire Department for almost a hundred years. This legacy started with Paul Koran in 1928, who finished his career with the department as Chief. Following Paul was Edward Koran, Jim Koran (who served as Assistant Chief) Patrick Koran, Howard Selig, and lastly, James Henley Jr. This will be a milestone when James retires because continually more than one hundred years, my mother's family has served the Village of Cuyahoga Heights and its residents via the Fire Department.

My love for Cuyahoga Heights is so deep.

Corradi, Billi and Schab Family Roots by Lee Ann Schab Schoeffler

My grandpa, Lino Billi, was born on July 9, 1909 in Lucca, Toscana, Italy. Grandma, Antonette Corradi, was born on December 1, 1915 in Forest City, Pennsylvania. And so the story begins...I was told that my grandpa was the oldest son, and back in those days in the old country—it meant the oldest son had to become a priest. Unfortunately, my grandpa was by no means "priest material" and so he left Italy and his immediate family behind and came to America where other relatives, Nobili and Billi families were settling down—namely, Cuyahoga Heights.

The stories heard over the years were that my grandma's mother and father were born in Italy and came to America sometime in the early 1900s. Unfortunately, my grandma's mother died when she was very young, and she and her three siblings were placed in an orphanage because at that time her father was unable to take care of his young children.

I'm not sure when and how my grandmother came to Ohio, but I do know that she was 16 years of age and living in Garfield Heights at the time with her father, siblings and stepmother. During this time, she met my grandpa and soon after they were married and settled down at 7122 Bletch Court (an apartment in the Nobili home). They had three children: Rita was born in June, 1934; my Mom Irma in December, 1936

Cuyahoga Heights 2018 Centennial

and Lee in July, 1945. As their family grew, they moved to one of the apartments at 4963 East 71st Street (the Fontana store) and from there to the house behind the old post office at 4967 East 71st Street.

My mom's family was poor and my grandma worked very hard doing odd jobs from sewing to cleaning, but found her calling with her unbelievable talents in the kitchen cooking. Grandpa worked in the brickhouse and later was a cement laborer. My grandma could cook anything and make it taste amazing. Mom told me they used to set traps in the backyard for the crows and my grandma used the meat for her spaghetti sauce.

Grandma and grandpa ran the old Toscana Club for several years—I'd guess the 1940s or 1950s. Grandma cooked, cleaned, and bartended. My mom and Aunt Rita also worked alongside their parents at the club because this was the way of life. Mom said everyone had their parties and weddings at Toscana Club. It was a tight community and people from the surrounding areas, including Garfield Heights and Maple Heights, would also be at Toscana Club.

As a result of my grandmother's perseverance, hard work and saving her money, she was finally able to purchase the home of her dreams at 4912 East 71st Street, when it came on the market sometime in the 1950s.

Since mom, Irma, is not here to help me with dates, I am unclear when it was that grandma got a job at Hillside where again she worked as a barmaid and waitress in addition to helping Skinny Antognozzi cook in the kitchen. This is another fond memory I have of growing up in the village. As a special treat, my parents would take my brother and me to Hillside on Friday evenings for dinner. When you walked in—the restaurant was to the right and the bar was to the left. Children were never allowed in the bar area because that was forbidden—however we would sneak over and play in the telephone booth to see what was going on in the bar—older people drinking and smoking and listening to the juke box.

Although the time frame is unknown, my mom met my father, Stanley Schab, who was from the city and lived on Claasen Avenue. She was 100% Italian and he was 100% Polish. His mother and father were born in Poland, but my father was born in 1934 in Cleveland on Classen and stayed in that house all his life until he married my mom. They married in April, 1961 and began building their home at 4886 East 49th Street. This is where my brother and I grew up. After my father passed away, my mom moved back into the family home at 4912 East 71st Street with her sister, Rita.

I have fond memories of grandmother's house as a child. Before the elementary school expanded its classrooms and playground there was a lot of property behind my grandmother's house. I remember going back to the fields with my dad exploring and picking fruit, there were apple and cherry trees; strawberry, blackberry and my favorite of all—gooseberry bushes.

Then there is my memory of the front cellar in the basement at grandma's—she used it to store meat for cooking, I remember the time I opened the door and saw a deer and squirrel hanging in the cellar—I never went back into the cellar until I was older. The cellar is still there today and looks pretty much like it did when I was a kid.

Going over to my grandma's house on Sunday was always an enjoyable experience. Sunday was a day spent with family: you went to church and then visited your grandparents. Grandma would get up early on Sunday morning and make a feast for dinner which was served precisely at 1:00 p.m. and always included

Cuyahoga Heights 2018 Centennial

her homemade spaghetti with sauce, some type of meat, vegetables, bread...you name it, and of course, homemade vino. Every Sunday felt like a holiday at grandma's. When I reminisce, I can still see her in the kitchen, taste and smell her delicious food.

An interesting fact is that when my grandfather, Lino, came to America, he didn't enter the country through proper channels and he was deported back to Italy sometime between 1950 to 1952. If he wanted to return and stay in the United States, he had to do things the right way. Eventually he did and came back to Cuyahoga Heights to be with his family the legal way, and ultimately became an American citizen.

My mother, for some reason, was always interested in local politics. She was the village treasurer from 1980 to 1989 and was elected to council from 2000 to 2005 and again in 2008 to 2009. During the years she wasn't in an elected position she worked at the police department as a custodian. She loved Cuyahoga Heights and was always involved in village activities in some way from coaching the Girls Pigtail team to serving on the historical committee to becoming a member of the senior citizens club.

As I reflect upon my family's journey, the struggles, the hard work, the joy and sadness, I think my grandparents would be happy and proud to know that their great grandson (my son), and fourth generation of our family now resides in the ancestral home in Cuyahoga Heights. Michael recently purchased their home at 4912 East 71st Street...so the tradition continues.

“Mom” by Janet Wey-Gebacz and Patty Wey-Sapp, Daughters of Katharina Wey

Coming to the United States and living in Cuyahoga Heights for over 58 years.

Our mother was born and raised in Heidelberg, Germany. She endured many hardships during World War II as a young child. Mom met our father, Robert Wey, in Germany around 1959—while he was stationed there, serving in the Army. Mom then came to the United States with my father around 1961 at the age of 26. When she arrived here and was introduced to one of our father's friends as Katharina, the man said “Oh, hello, Kitty Kat”. So the name KITTY was now her's—and that is what everyone called her.

They made their home in Cuyahoga Heights because this is where Robert was born and raised. Robert's father, Lloyd Wey (Wojciechowski) was also born and raised in Cuyahoga Heights along with his 11 siblings. Our grandmother, Concetta (Casavecchia) Wey was raised as well in Cuyahoga Heights along with her many siblings. Lloyd lived in Cuyahoga Heights until his death and Concetta remained in Cuyahoga Heights until the age of 91 or thereabouts.

By 1966, Kitty and Robert had five children. Michael, the oldest, was from Kitty's first marriage, then together had Janet, Richard and Patricia—baby Janet, survived only three months. Mom and dad enjoyed living in Cuyahoga Heights since it was close to Robert's family and in one of the best communities in which to raise a family. We, as children, enjoyed the village as we felt safe and there were many activities to keep us busy. Everyone knew just about everyone—most of the time you were even related to many of them.

While her children were young, our mother worked nights cleaning a trucking company in Newburgh Heights for over 20 years. Later, she worked in the high school cafeteria and did many other jobs. She washed the sports uniforms and even made curtains for the library. During the summer months, mom would work at the village pool.

Cuyahoga Heights 2018 Centennial

Mom could make anything, from sewing to needlework to building things out of nothing. Often neighbors and family would knock on her door asking her to make things for them from blankets to wedding dresses. Mom would never say no—no matter the project or the time frame she was given.

After her retirement from the school, mom studied astrology and became an astrologist. She even went on to teach at seminars with her expertise. Mind you, when mom came to the United States at the age of 26—she couldn't speak any English. Our mother learned how to speak English by watching TV.

She loved living in the village with family close by and the village made life easy. Just about anything you needed was provided if they could, from lending chairs and tables to giving you a dumpster if you had a house fire—such as our mom did in 2007. During a storm, the house was struck by lightning and caught fire. It was a total loss and took nearly 12 months to rebuild. The firemen were there as well as many other companies. Thank you so much! She never wanted to leave her home and only left because she passed away, January 2018. We thank everyone who made mom's and our lives memorable. We all loved our time in Cuyahoga Heights. Congratulations on 100 Years.

Cuyahoga Height Stories by Gail Klima Knaus

One of my favorite Cuyahoga Heights political campaign year stories came from Bill Gerdon, the larger than life beloved mayor of many terms. There was a time many years ago when there were Cuyahoga Heights families struggling financially. Quite often members of these financially-strapped families would come to see the mayor at the town hall and ask for employment by the village to help get their families through the tough times. The history of our village always showed that the administration looked after the village families and residents and employed the residents whenever possible. So following what must have been a particularly needy year, Mayor Bill Gerdon decided that his campaign slogan for the coming election would be: 'No family in Cuyahoga Heights will ever go hungry—even if I have to paint the fire hydrants a different color every week.' And, of course, Mayor Gerdon was re-elected! I can remember that as a child I was always curious as to why the recently painted fire hydrants were again being painted yet another color.

Another funny political story came from my grandfather, Paul Kornowski. Kornowski is the origin of all of the Korans who came through Cuyahoga Heights. They moved to "the country", Newburgh Township, from "the city" on Gertrude Avenue in Cleveland in 1917. As a widower, he wanted to raise his six children ages 2 to 17 years old in the relative safety and purity of this new community. He purchased the home at 4929 East 71st Street when the Bletch family built their new home next door and moved into it. So here in grandpa's house all the children grew up, and, eventually married and went off to establish their own homes in Cuyahoga Heights. The last occupants were Eddie and Eleanor Koran and their two sons, Jim and Bruce, in the back and Jack and Clara Kornowski Klima and their two daughters, Gail and Joyce, in the front. When the last of his children, the two youngest, Eddie and Clara, moved out, Grandpa Kornowski decided to sell the old homestead and moved in with Jack and Clara and their family.

Grandpa Kornowski was an integral part of our family for years. He was a very intelligent man with a great knowledge and appreciation of history—starting from 'the old country' in Europe from where he had immigrated. I can vividly remember that as a child he would often talk to me about the Czar and the plight

Cuyahoga Heights 2018 Centennial

of the poor people in Europe from where he came. How I wish that I had paid more and closer attention to all that he told! But, I was a child with no particular interest in the politics of Europe.

Grandpa was keenly aware of politics. Needless to say, my grandfather was often the unaware recipient of my father's jokes and prodding questions—especially those regarding politics. And, angered about some current political dilemma, grandpa quite often would say: "I am going to live to see the day when there is a politician hanging from every lamp post!" And dad would come back every time and say: "But pa, you are forgetting that I am a politician!", to which my grandfather would always reply: "Yes...and there is a great big high one reserved for you on the main street!" They loved the verbal sparring. My father always ended up laughing very hard and my grandfather usually ended up with an angry face, disposition and shaking his head in disbelief and frustration. Grandpa often told me that his across-the-street neighbor Del Davis, Lester's father, was one of his favorite political sparring companions. Del would come across Marcelline Court and sit and argue politics for hours with my grandfather.

Last Christmas, I was at a family gathering and had a chance to talk with cousin, Patrick Koran, who is presently a fireman in Cuyahoga Heights. We were discussing family history when Patrick told me an astounding fact: the Cuyahoga Heights Fire Department will soon celebrate 100 years since it was established. Since its inception, there has always been a Kornowski descendant on the force—starting with Paul Koran who was one of the first fireman appointed, along with Walter Kaczmarek and Walter O'Malley. Other Kornowski descendants who became fireman were Eddie Koran, Jim Koran, Patrick Koran, Howard Selig and Jimmy Henley. Paul Koran eventually became chief and then retired. We wonder how many more years will the Kornowski descendants be represented on the roster of Cuyahoga Heights firefighters.

Growing Up in Cuyahoga Heights by Gail Klima Knaus

I don't think that my memories of childhood and growing up in the 1940s and 1950s in the very ideal Village of Cuyahoga Heights will ever dim—at least not the good memories. Maybe there were unpleasant memories which have dimmed and vanished with the decades of time—but I don't think the good ones will. There were so many children back then.

There were always friends bursting out of their houses ready to engage in any form of play suggested. We were all quite proficient at playing soccer, tag, hide-and-seek, hop scotch or any other suggested mischief that we could get into. We played in everyone's backyard. In those days, there was no such thing as someone's property being "off limits." I'm not certain that every homeowner joyously received our presence, but we were nonetheless always welcome and, in those days, the children never did any harm to property.

Even though the outdoors and the neighborhood yards were the choice place of playtime, it was certainly not the only place. We all settled in on porches or living room floors with a game board on rainy days. There were times when a game of Monopoly lasted up to three weeks. We were fiercely competitive. We all loved to explore down in the gully. It was kind of mysterious, a bit frightening and sometimes forbidden place to go. As teenagers, we often had plans to clean up Sunny Pond and enhance it to resemble something similar to a national park. Of course, those plans never materialized. I like to remember them fondly as the dreams and fantasies of childhood. We loved to play softball and were lucky enough to always have enough

Cuyahoga Heights 2018 Centennial

kids to make up two mediocre teams and a well-maintained baseball field near home. In the summer, the girl's team became legitimate and played against some pretty tough city teams. We were good and had some excellent athletes, and usually won. But we were simple and innocent and not hardened by city life and learned some awful swear words from those city kids. Boy, did our ears get red. And we knew enough not to ever use those horrible words. We really were good kids.

Yet another wonderful activity offered to us children was the 4-H club. All of us kids were members and learned needed skills and crafts. I remember that my first lesson and project was *How to Hem a Tea Towel*. That was a very hard project for a fumbling first-grade student. Each year we would proudly take our finished projects to the county fair in Berea. We usually came home with many blue and red ribbons. I recently donated my pins recognizing six years of service to our 4-H Club to the Historical Committee of Cuyahoga Heights. The volunteer adults who established and ran the 4-H Club were building the characters of all of those children who were members and lucky enough to receive the tutoring and education. Again, we were so fortunate back then.

The winter brought us a new playground. The firemen would flood the basketball courts behind the town hall and create a good imitation ice rink. It may not have been professionally finished or even smooth, but it represented yet another excellent playground for winter. It was another childhood fun spot where we sometimes stayed skating until way after dark—our usual time to be reporting home. Can you remember the fervent praying we did for a “snow day?” When one became official, how we celebrated with glee. Then we all dressed up in ten layers of winter clothing—to please our mothers—and then headed outdoors to meet our similarly dressed friends. We could hardly move, but we managed to build a fort and an igloo and any other structure which came into the minds of a six or seven-year-old. There was always something to do, and always plenty of friends to do it with. How lucky we were to have experienced such a wonderful childhood growing up in Cuyahoga Heights.

And how blessed we were, even though we did not realize it at the time, to have the watchful eyes of a whole village of mothers to make certain we were behaving. You could be sure that if you were misbehaving that your parents would know about it even before you got home that evening. Cuyahoga Heights' parents were the perfect example of ‘It takes a village to raise a child’ philosophy. We were fortunate to have had so many caring parents to help supervise our growing up years and to make certain that we were always behaving.

Just as fortunate to have had so many friends living within earshot, who were always ready for a game of hide-and-seek. Most of our childhood friends became classmates in school and then lifelong friends into adulthood. Lastly, but most importantly, how lucky we were to have the safe and friendly streets of our Village of Cuyahoga Heights as our forever playground.

Cuyahoga Heights 2018 Centennial



April 10, 1938 at Blue's home

Fun times with friends



Standing: (left to right) Harriet Kruzell, Alvena Gallitz Mantell, Irma Fontana Pallini,
Margaret Guidotti and Jenny Marek (woman kneeling)
Front Row: (left to right) Gloria Pallini Chase, Marion Gallitz Humphrey and Luella Gallitz

Cuyahoga Heights 2018 Centennial



The Trevisani family in front of 5005 and 5015 East 71st Street around 1928. Sue Eliason's house is on the left and the old Hillside Tavern is on the right.



Everyday life in the Village

(left) Irene Blue Masek getting the mail looking south on East 71st Street in the 1930s

(right) Billi and Irma Schab family all dressed up in 1946

Cuyahoga Heights 2018 Centennial



(top left) Irma Billi Schab and Sandy Fontana Waldemarson in 1948 *(top right)* Lena Santini Cash
(bottom left and right) Looking east from 5002 East 71st Street showing 5005 East 71st Street
and 5015 East 71st Street, the Hillside Tavern, in the background

Cuyahoga Heights 2018 Centennial



(left) Delia Trevisani with her mother, Maria, in their field across the street from the Hillside Tavern at 5015 East 71st Street *(right)* Rena Billi Doskey in April 1942

The Old Neighborhood



(left) The old neighborhood gang
(right) Ralph, Corrine and Delma Contipelli with Bletch Court in the background

Cuyahoga Heights 2018 Centennial

Excerpted Interview with Delia Trevisani | Lifelong Resident of Cuyahoga Heights
by Laura Bacci Merhaut | May 9, 2018 | Transcribed by Nancy Molnar

•

Her Father's Work in the Army in World War I

Delia Trevisani:

So anyway, they (the Army) needed someone to fire boilers and my dad stepped forward. And so for the period of time until the war ended, he was stationed there. He didn't go overseas or anything. And I guess he was pretty good at his job that they asked him to stay. He said: "No, he was going back to Italy to get married and bring her, his wife, back to the United States."

Laura Bacci:

There's a fairytale for you—a nice fairytale.

Delia Trevisani:

And so because of that, his commanding officer, the captain, said, "Louie, I'm going to give you this letter (of recommendation)." He said, "This may help you get a job." This is the letter. I have the original.

Laura Bacci:

And you have a copy, right? Excellent. And I'm going to borrow this and have it scanned at the village hall, because I think this is just priceless.

Delia Trevisani:

Yeah, the funny part of it, this is what it looks like now. Yeah. Isn't it funny, 1919. It's from 1919, February 19, 1919.

Laura Bacci:

Yes. The Edgewood Arsenal and it's signed by Captain Alfred Iddles, I-D-D-L-E-S. What's most interesting is this very letter was later used to assist Luigi Trevisani in later gaining employment at the Cuyahoga Heights School, working in boiler maintenance as noted below.

Delia Trevisani:

He was hired as a stationary fireman. He got the job, you know, Mr. Kennedy was our mayor at the time. And he was interviewing people. And at the time my dad was at the garbage plant, which, you know, he wasn't too happy about working there anyway. So when this opportunity came along, my dad went to Mayor Kennedy and interviewed. And I guess he interviewed, you know, other people. And so my brother, now this was told to me, my brother said, "Pa, did you bring that letter?" And he said, "No". Victor said, "Well, you go get that letter and you bring it to him". And, that's how he got the job.

Cuyahoga Heights 2018 Centennial

The Garden

Delia Trevisani:

And because we always had a garden from our property as far as you could see going down the street, it was all level land, so my parents used to farm it. And we had corn, which we sold in front of the house...and tomatoes...and he (my dad, Luigi) was good at putting in potatoes and garlic, zucchini All the good stuff. So anything that a woman would need to cook anything was in the garden. I remember good parsley. That always sticks in my mind.

The Victory Theater

Delia Trevisani:

Other than that, we played at Bletch Court. A lot of the kids would hang out there and we played there. One memory I have is walking to the Victory Theater up in the City of Cleveland. Were you ever aware of the Victory Theater? It's past Harvard, yeah. (Note: The Victory Theater operated as a 780 seat movie theater until the 1950s at 3990 East 71st Street). It was shortly after that. And it's funny, I remembered this, but no one else that I've talked to remembers this. When we saw the movie, we were on our way home, they had a little candy shop right there, too.

Laura Bacci:

Of course, temptation.

Delia Trevisani:

Yeah. We always stopped and we got what was called a "Sidewalk Sundae." And you were given a cone and there was ice cream, it was like in a tube, and there was like, I don't know if it was nuts or something around the outside and then you could pick the flavor you wanted, chocolate or I don't know whether it was cherry or whatever flavor it was, because I always liked chocolate. And then it was in a paper. So you took the paper off, you put it on our cone and we would walk home with it.

Cuyahoga Heights 2018 Centennial

True Neighbors

Delia Trevisani:

I mean, I don't know any other Village other than this one. I was born here, raised here and have lived here all my life, but all I can say is I had wonderful neighbors, the Kaczmareks and the Henrys and then the Panizuttis who ended up living in some of the houses there.

And any time anyone ever needed help, neighbors were there—which my dad did need help at one time. The story is that my dad, when he was living at the Nobili house on Bletch Court, and my sister was just a baby at the time, he got double pneumonia. And the doctor they had said that the medication isn't helping him and you need a specialist. And my mom said, “Well, I don't have the money to be able to, you know, pay for a specialist.” So did you know the Fontanas.

Laura Bacci:

Yes, I knew Irene and I knew Guido Fontana on East 49th Street.

Delia Trevisani:

So, I don't know what relationship this person had with them, but he was a Fontana. He went to the neighbors and asked them for donations so that they could buy—they could hire the specialist to give my father the proper medication he needed. So from just hearing that, I realized this is a special place to live.

Cuyahoga Heights 2018 Centennial



A gathering of the Trevisani family and friends around 1932



(left) An early photo of the Baptist Church on the left which later housed the Toscana Club.
(right) Rena Billi Doskey's bridesmaids in 1945—*(back row, left to right)* Yolanda Trevisani Amari,
Jennie Pallini Billi, unknown, *(front row, left to right)* unknown, Ida Nobili, Delma Billi Traffis.



Harriett and Ted Koren

Cuyahoga Heights 2018 Centennial



Being Family photos from the 1940s

4940 East 71st Street

Cuyahoga Heights 2018 Centennial



Pia Fontana



Quinto Contipelli



(left) Irma Billi Schab in front of the old Kingsbury Hall building at 4963 East 71st Street in 1951



(right) East 71st Street view of the Hirsch Garage and the Hammersley home in the 1920s

Cuyahoga Heights 2018 Centennial

Excerpted Interview with Harriett Koren

by Laura Bacci Merhaut | May 17, 2018 | Transcribed by Nancy Molnar

•

How she and her family fell in love with Cuyahoga Heights

Harriett Koren:

I had two older sisters and I actually grew up in Garfield Heights. When I was eight, my oldest sister got married and she moved here to Cuyahoga Heights. And they lived in her father-in-law's home, 4929 East 71st Street. I can remember their address just like nothing, because I enjoyed being there so much. And I used to spend the summers with my sister and she had the two little boys. And I just loved it. And many times in the evening, my mom and dad would bring me here and I got to know all of the younger people.

We used to get together and do things like play in the sidestreet and go in the—well, I called it the meadow. It was the property behind where the homes on the west side of East 71 Street are now. And we used to roast potatoes in a campfire. And I loved being here.

And ultimately, my mother and dad did buy a lot on Marcelline Court and they had planned on building a home, but my dad got sick and they had to postpone their plans. And then later, they did build their home on Dressler Court.

Laura Bacci:

So your sister that was here, which one was that?

Harriett Koren:

Eleanor Koran.

Laura Bacci:

Right. And so you came here and you fell in love with this neighborhood. And the people here. We're glad you did. And where was your other sister and what was she up to? Did she come here or somewhere else? That's Gert.

Harriett Koren:

Yes. Gertrude Dunne...lived in Garfield Heights until they were able to buy a lot on Dressler Court and they built a home there—so I had my whole family on Dressler Court.

Cuyahoga Heights 2018 Centennial

On meeting her husband

Laura Bacci:

All right. Now, to the good part. How did you meet your husband?

Harriett Koren:

Actually, I met him at my sister Eleanor's home. She had an appendectomy and wasn't able to do too much, so every Saturday I used to go and clean her house.

Laura Bacci:

What a good sister you are.

Harriett Koren:

And my brother-in-law, Ed Koran, was rebuilding a car. He took the chassis from one and put it on the wheels of another. And he would do this on Saturday, because he was a fireman and he didn't always have the time. And through another friend, there were three young men that came to visit him every Saturday. And of course, I was there cleaning and you know what you look like when you clean. Well, Eleanor would invite them for lunch, the three young fellows and Ed and me. And I really had my eye on one of them, because the minute I saw him, I knew he was for me, but I was too young and he was six years older. So he had to wait for me to grow up.

Laura Bacci:

Sounds familiar. So how long was your courtship? Or wait a minute, let's back up. So when did he realize that he was the right guy for you and when did he ask you out, if you remember?

Harriett Koren:

Oh, with my husband? Well, actually I do. In fact, I asked him to go to my senior prom.

Laura Bacci:

You were a woman way ahead of your time.

Harriett Koren:

And he accepted. And Marian Gallitz went with a friend of his and he was very nice doing that, because did you ever hear of a fellow 23 or 24 going to a senior prom?

Cuyahoga Heights 2018 Centennial

Traveling by train to Columbus

Harriett Koren:

In fact, when Anne Bacci was going for her nursing license, she and I took the train. There was a train that went to Columbus. Anne, she was in her early 1920s, I think, and I was about 17. And I stayed with her for the two days and we had a wonderful time. Until she got her nursing license and we came back on the train.

Laura Bacci:

Whoa—that's a unique experience for a young woman. What a neat memory.

Harriett Koren:

Oh, yes. And it was just before the war ended, World War II, and the train was filled with soldiers. And it was really crowded, but the soldiers were such gentlemen, they gave us seats.

Flowers

Harriett Koren:

Well, in your questionnaire you asked about flowers. And boy, I remembered this right away. In the village, there was a man, a family by the name of Joe Hanousek. You know John Hanousek?

Laura Bacci:

Yes, Joe was Jody's husband.

Harriett Koren:

And I think that John and Joe maybe were related in some way. But where Mary Alice used to live after she moved from—when you were talking about her, she moved to the house directly across from the driveway that goes into the high school. Can you picture that in your mind? There weren't any houses next to his, next to that one where Mary Alice used to live. This man planted dahlias.

Laura Bacci:

Oh, I know who you're talking about. Was that Mr. Wesley? I remember—He would bring them to the village hall and they were as big as your face. And he also brought roses, too, I think.

Harriett Koren: They were gorgeous. They would be as big as your head. Well, where Mr. Wesley lived, there were no other houses there, so he used that vacant land to plant these flowers—they were gorgeous.

The full interview with Delia and Harriett can be read under the *files* section on the Cuyahoga Heights Memories Facebook group at <https://www.facebook.com/groups/cuyahogaheightsmemories>.

Cuyahoga Heights 2018 Centennial

“Memory Lane” Snippets from former Mayor Ralph Contipelli

(Notes submitted by Ralph in response to our questionnaire)

The Contipelli family lived in the old Willow Inn, a hotel which was moved to the east side of 71st Street from the land where the school was built. Elia Contipelli, Ralph’s dad, knocked off six of the rooms and bricked the structure in with his friends.

•

Dad, Elia, held several jobs including work in different cities during the Works Progress Administration (WPA); working at the brick yard; running a grocery store; and later becoming a fireman for the village. WPA was the largest and most ambitious American New Deal agency, employing millions of people, mostly unskilled, to carry out public works projects including the construction of public buildings and roads.

•

Ralph’s mom, a Fontana, worked at the Cuyahoga Foundry during WWII and later, when the children were older, worked at American Steel and Wire.

•

Ralph worked at Mrs. Gerdon’s farm on East 49th Street during WWII before Sohio bought the land it now occupies—he recalls lots of farmland on East 49th Street.

•

For fun, Ralph set pins at the bowling alley in the lower level of public hall, played baseball, hunted rabbits in the valley below his home and walked a lot to Cleveland’s Goosetown neighborhood, mainly made up of Polish immigrants, in the Harvard Road and East 71st Street area.

•

Favorite teachers in school: Ralph Adams, Paul Baumgardner, William Myers and Lenny Reichelt.

•

Family members in WWII were his uncle, Guido Fontana, and cousin, Reno Reali.

•

As was the norm, his dad grew lettuce and tomatoes and Ralph carried on that gardening tradition.

•

On serving in elected capacity for the village, Ralph indicated his time in office was ‘...the best experience he ever had...’ He served on council, as clerk and as mayor totaling 36 years.

•

On describing the village, Ralph wrote: “I wouldn’t trade my growing up in Cuyahoga Heights for anywhere else—the village was good to me and my family. It hurt to move, but I had no choice, the house outgrew me.”

Cuyahoga Heights 2018 Centennial



This photograph was taken looking north on East 71st Street. On the left side of the street is the old Brodhead-Garrett Company at or about 4560 East 71st Street. On the right side of the street you can see the original town hall at 4579 East 71st Street. Chery Billi Harris is holding her grandma's hand, Domenica Sestelia Adorni Pallini. Her grandpa, Casimiro Mansueto Pallini, is behind her. The other little girl is their daughter, Joyce.



The Marcelline Court Kids

Cuyahoga Heights 2018 Centennial



Honoring our Troops

(top) Barbara and Carol Bartczak in 1944 at the first war memorial and (bottom) Lee Billi in 1947 near the second war memorial. Both memorials were displayed in front of the town hall.

Cuyahoga Heights 2018 Centennial



The building of Bletch Court

(top) Walter and Lottie Kaczmarek's home being built at 7135 Bletch Court around 1939.

The house next to it, at 7137 Bletch Court, belongs to Robert and Julia Hine.

(bottom) The Nobili home at 7122 Bletch Court was built in 1923.

Cuyahoga Heights 2018 Centennial



Tom Chase and Dale Andrews
all suited up in 1954. The photograph
was taken looking south.
You can see St. Mary's cemetery and
the school in the background.



1950s Birthday Party for Cheryl Billi Harris

Lee Billi, Don Doskey, David Nobili, Ton Tomczyk, Rita Pallini, Gilbert Pallini, Karen Aguzzi,
Cheryl Billi Harris, Kay Gawne, Linda Crooks, Mike Lynch, Jim Nobili, Cheryl Koren and Sherri Traffis



Weddings after the War

(top) Alvena Gallitz and Joseph Mantell wedding party in 1947,
Robert Mantell, Marian Gallitz Humphrey, Alvena Gallitz Mantell, Joseph Mantell
(bottom) Alio and Donna Pellini July 3, 1948 wedding day.

1947 High School Memories



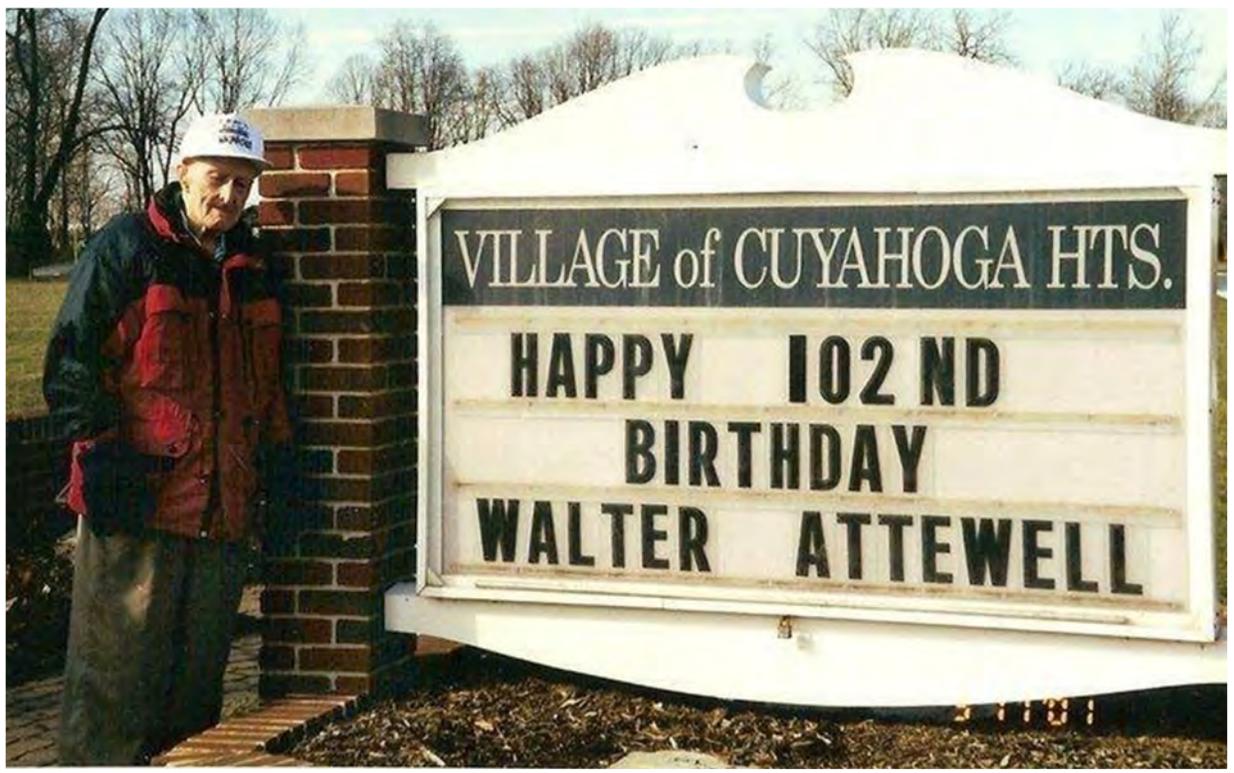
(top left) Delia Trevisani, Anna Marie Guidotti Feuerstein

(top right) Marching Band Members (unidentified)

(top right) Corrine Contipelli Smith, Mary Ruth Cassidy Wilder, Delores Kormorowski, Alice Tanner Foote

(bottom) Marion Young, Mary Speith, Dorthea Chipgus, Joanne Talani and Linda McCandless

A Very Senior Citizen



One of the village's senior citizens celebrating his 102nd birthday in 2001. In 1951, Walter Attewell moved the house shown below from Grant Avenue to it's current location at 4605 East 49th Street.



Cuyahoga Heights 2018 Centennial



Jim Fontana



Clothes on the line at 4967 East 71st Street



James Masek, William Masek, Darlene "Dolly" Smith and Kathy Masek in 1959

Cuyahoga Heights 2018 Centennial

Notes from the Peanut Gallery by Laura Bacci Merhaut | April 12, 2018

As residents **Barbara Bartczak**, **Bea Duber**, **Sue Eliason**, **Jim Fonte** and **Ron Henry** met with **Memory Book Committee** members **Jim and Robyn Nobili** and I, took a stroll down memory lane—a treasure trove of recollections were unearthed. Folks met in the former village hall bowling alley area which is now a community room and chatted for a couple hours about a vast collection of topics including property owned, houses moved or torn down, new homes created, recreational activities, food, and just plain fun. Snippets are recorded below:

Barb Bartczak, who was born and raised in the Village, spoke of her family, both the Bartczaks and the Kruzels having raised eight kids each and each sacrificing a Bartczak and a Kruzel son in the line of duty serving in the military during WWII. She shared a photo of one set of her grandparents to scan for the historical committee's records.

•

Although **Bea Duber**, wife of **Vic Duber** and dear friend of life long resident **Irma Billi Schab**, did not grow up in the village, she recalled Irma detailing village Victory Gardens during the war.

•

Sue Serio Eliason shared the deed to her home at 5005 East 71st Street which included a photograph and plot plan which will be of interest to the historical committee.

•

Jim Fonte, who also was born and raised in Cuyahoga Heights, explained that his dad, **Sam**, had come from Italy to the U.S. He moved to Louisiana for a time, later returned to Italy and then finally came back to the U.S. living at some point with the Dustheimer family. Mom, **Edith Ezzo Fonte**, used to host block parties on East 72nd Place where the family home is located.

•

Ron Henry, retired firefighter and son of **Mathilda Huy Henry** and **Harry Henry**, stated that his mother's family owned the property, a farm on Harvard Avenue where Alcoa/Arconic is now located. He remembered homes that were moved from Canal Road up East 71st Street to where his mom's home and the Kaczmarek home were situated.

•

Ron Henry recalled the ball diamond north of the village hall where the swimming pool now sits, noting that there were morning ball games there as well as afternoon pickup games. **Barb Bartczak** stated that the fathers also played ball there as she remembers her dad being involved in a league.

•

Comments were made that times were simpler when growing up—kids played outside, made up games to entertain themselves and only went home after the street lights came on. **Barb Bartczak** recalled **Eleanor Koran's** ability to blast out a whistle alerting the whole block of kids it was time to go home for the evening.

Cuyahoga Heights 2018 Centennial

Of course, the bowling alleys located in the lower level of village hall were yet another gathering place. Getting to set pins for 10 cents a game was a badge of honor. The coke cooler was a highlight of any evening of sport.

•

Ron Henry recalled that he would hitchhike out to Sleepy Hollow Golf Course to caddy for golfers and make some spending money.

•

Local high school football games were always a draw—but ironically, the younger kids had more fun rolling down the hill near the southern end of the field and cared little for what was happening on the field.

•

Another hub of activity was the Toscana Club located on East 71st Street where bocce ball courts provided local rivalries and lots of excitement.

•

Canteens at the village hall with **Howard Cash** spinning the tunes as DJ provided teenagers with a place to socialize.

•

Barb Bartczak shared playbooks for theatrical presentations her mother had taken part in at the village hall auditorium and stage in the 1930s.

•

Winter ice skating on basketball courts flooded by the service department was always a hit—despite the fact hockey was played by some in boots because not everyone had skates.

•

Jim Fonte reminisced that folks had supper together—no TV—no cell phone interruptions—life was good.

•

The group discussed the Chapek (Capek) Grove as another center of village activities including the structures there—the green wooden concession stand, dance hall/stage for musical performances, beer hall and restroom facilities. Bea remembered the clambakes and how she was taught an assortment of tasks—where everyone had a job—women cleaning the chickens; men scrubbing clams—all done with a sense of community and tasty results.

•

Conversation rolled on with chat about the Civil Defense program, a nautical duck (DUKW) vehicle and the aerial tower locations near the village hall and on Canal Road.

•

Kids enjoyed clubs like the 4-H, Cub Scouts, Boy Scouts and Explorers for those moving beyond Boy Scout ages. According to Ron Henry, there was a Boy Scout Week where the kids could wear their uniform to school and display merit badges earned for any number of tasks.

Cuyahoga Heights 2018 Centennial

Jim Fonte fondly remembers the parades every Memorial Day and how the band, veterans and kids on bikes and in wagons marched down East 71st Street around Bletch and Marcelline Courts. Residents sat on front porches or the street curb waving small flags, eagerly awaiting their arrival and then hurried to follow them to the village hall for services honoring our veterans. A rifle salute sent young boys scampering for used brass shells as a memento. Generally, a picnic followed.

•

Bea Duber noted you had to be at least 21 years of age to vote at that time and, relating to local campaigns, indicated this: there was Bill Gerdon and his crew, and Louie Bacci and his crew. Each threw a party to outdo the other and to win support for their respective campaigns—they were quite lavish for the time.

•

Some of the group recalled Gerdon hosting pony rides and then trips downtown to see the Cleveland Indians play ball.

•

Barb Bartczak recalled election night rumors that a poll supervisor/precinct committee member, **Mrs. Hazel**, would raise a window blind to alert **Bill Gerdon** that he had won the election. Others recalled her coming out to the front steps of village hall and loudly proclaiming the voting results.

•

Food, all that ethnic food, brought back vivid memories—**Jim Fonte's** mom, **Edith**, raised chickens, many residents had rabbits to serve with polenta. Everyone seemed to have fruit trees and gardens.

•

Certainly, no conversation would be complete without mention of wine-making. **Jim Fonte** recalled his dad making wine, but the consensus was every Italian in the village made wine. At times, a truck pulled up to the Santini residence and delivered what seemed like a ton of grapes. Mr. Santini was serious about making wine!

•

It was noted that some of the Italian women of the village made all the pasta for Broglio's Restaurant in Independence. **Sue Eliason** stated that she thought the ladies were **Fallia Casavecchia**, **Francesca Pallini** and **Caterina Santini**.

•

As our journey continued down memory lane, some remembered the small grocery store on East 71st Street was always a hit—first run by **Anna Wencke**, **Tony Wencke's** sister, according to **Ron Henry**, then **Irene Fontana** and later the **Prenzlows**.

•

Ron Henry shared two extraordinary photos of the canal boats upon which his uncle, **Herman Krause**, worked. He also had photos of his uncle to share with the historical committee. His uncle moved in with the family and built a wooden bed out of 4 x 4s in the cellar and later created a shed out back to live in on Ron's mother's property.

What do you like most about
living in

Cuyahoga
Heights?



...a smart 9-year-old indicated that "having the pool for summer fun" ranked high as well.



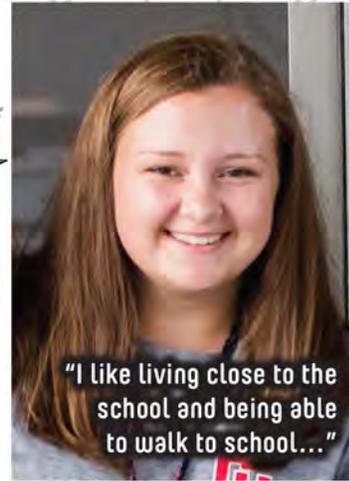
In response to what CHS village students liked most about living in our little town, comments ranged from "amenities," "opportunities," and "activities" to "atmosphere," "...great schools," "...services" and "...feeling that the neighborhood was safe..."

One 12-year-old's opinion, who's 10 months new to the village was:
"...it is home—everyone has been so nice and welcoming since we moved in—we never want to leave!"



"There's no place quite like Cuyahoga Heights - You'll never find a community as close as ours..." - age 17

What Makes Cuyahoga Heights An Awesome Place To Live?



"I like living close to the school and being able to walk to school..."

Cassandra Bloam, age 15



"(It's) a good community, safe place to live and good school system!"

Jayden Hunter, age 12

"Living near Grandpa and Grandma..."

What Makes Cuyahoga Heights Feel Like "Home"?



"I like how a whole Village can get together and spread happiness with some of the events that are held."

Olivia Santiago, age 14

"The suburban and relaxed atmosphere..."

"Small, close-knit community..."

"It feels very safe and everyone feels like family..."

"Friendly atmosphere"

"Friendly people..."

"It is safe, friendly and beautiful—you feel welcomed every time you drive through the Village..."



If You Were Giving Advice To Students 50 Years From Now, What Would You Say?

"Cherish the time & people because you will never meet people who are more loving & caring than the ones here."

"It's a wonderful place to start and raise a family—when you get older, they have great senior services."

"Take care of it by keeping it clean..."



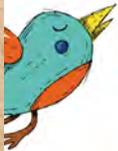
"As an adult, you will appreciate everything you once thought you couldn't stand about living here..."

"Get involved...The schools and village have so much to offer—Go to the football games even if you don't play or have anyone you know playing. Go to the music/choir events at the school even if you don't sing or play an instrument."

"The village is small but it makes for a big family where we all know each other;" and "How they treat their residents..."

"This *is* the place you want to live..."

"It's a very small, close community. It's like one big family - everyone watches out for everyone - the village does so much for its residents."



"...be appreciative that you live in such a nice neighborhood and are able to go to a nice school."

Paige Porter, age 14

What Makes Cuyahoga Heights An Awesome Place To Live?



We have good schools

Evan Wojtyszyn, age 10



"Cuyahoga Heights is a awesome place to live because the people here are so nice and kind."

Hanna Trusso, age 12



"because the snack bar is great and having friends!"

Brody Mahoney, Age 8



"I love the concession stand and the pool."

Zander Meriwether, age 8



Kalyn Wojtyszyn, age 7

I think it is fun



"The concession stand makes Cuyahoga Heights an awesome place to live!"

Tyler Herman, age 11



Lily Bacci, age 7



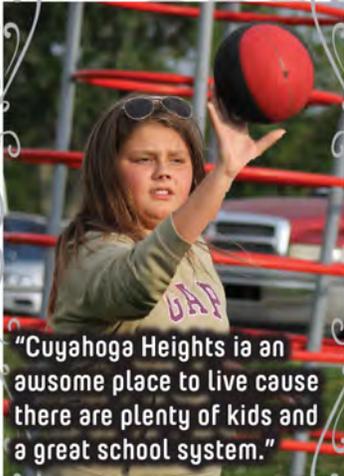
I Love the pool

"The effort it [the village] makes for its residents..."
"It's beautiful and small enough everyone knows everyone"



"Bacci Park and the pool!"

Monica Menkhaus, age 15



"Cuyahoga Heights is an awesome place to live cause there are plenty of kids and a great school system."

Nia Hunter, age 11

"the pool and school"
Caleb Mahoney, Age 13



"Swimming and water balloons! Playing outside and riding my bike!"

Markie Pate, age 5



What Makes Cuyahoga Heights Feel Like Home?



"It is very safe around here because there are many cops...I also have been here since kindergarten and it feels like home..."
Mackenzie Horky, age 13



"I like to play with my friends at the pool"

Harper Deal, age 8



"Even though we may not be related by blood, all the people who I have grown up living next to and going to school with in Cuyahoga (Heights) have become my family—making it feel like home."

What Do You Like Most About Living In The Village?



"The most I like about Cuyahoga Heights is living so close to the school—this lets me sleep in a little bit longer on school days."

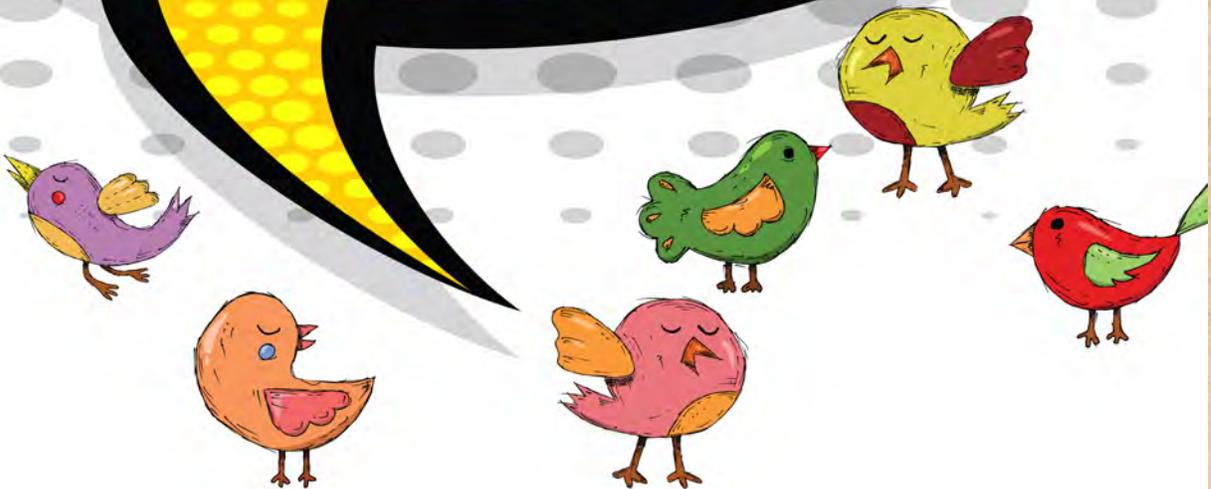
Bella Williams, age 13

So if I ask you again –
What Makes Cuyahoga Heights Feel
Like Home?



“EVERYTHING!”

Jeremy, age 8



Cuyahoga Heights 2018 Centennial

Online Collected Memories Resources

Please join our Cuyahoga Heights Memories page at:
<https://www.facebook.com/groups/cuyahogaheightsmemories/>

•

Visit the Cuyahoga Heights Historical Committee website at:
<https://sites.google.com/site/cuyahogahtshistorical/>