VIGNETTES OF CLIFTON PARK I

Blythe R. Gehring


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A note about the 1956 storm. The fantastic total of 53 trees were destroyed that night on the grounds. All were good size trees; some were forest giants. Windows were blown in and the wind was so fierce it blew a heavy capstone from its chimney. The capstone plunged through the roof where two sections of roof join. This is a difficult repair job.

The photograph of the house shows it after the repair work had been done, new roof, new windows, new siding.

On the lake side of the house were two massive wood beams 12 x 12 inches, carrying carved heads of Neptune and his wife Amphitrite. The Starkweathers apparently loved the water and this was their way of honoring the seas.

Very little was found about Mr. Starkweather, perhaps because so very much has been written about his father, Samuel Starkweather, a Cleveland pioneer. "Mr. W. J. Starkweather was interested in extensive real estate operations. He died at his Clifton Park home in 1899." *

Mr. Starkweather was a developer of Clifton Park when it was a public picnic and amusement area and he was active in developing Clifton Park as a residential spot.

Photograph courtesy of Mrs. Frank U. S. Gilbert.

*From the Annals of Early Settlers Association of Cuyahoga County, Ohio, Volume IV, Number II.
The second lot to be bought from the Clifton Park Association was the Henry D. Coffinberry lot at 17884 Beach Road. It was bought a few months after the Starkweather lot, but still in the year 1897. This property was more widely known as the Charles B. Stowe home. Even though the lot is within the borders of Clifton Park it is not part of the Clifton Park allotment. This property is in Lakewood proper.

Photograph courtesy of Mr. & Mrs. Clinton Barry

The house shown above is no longer standing. In its place is a brick Georgian style house presently owned by Dr. Edward J. Bishop.

Charles B. Stowe, later owner of the Coffinberry house, was born in Cleveland in 1862, and educated in the Cleveland schools. Mr. Stowe was a direct descendant of Joshua Stow, purser of the Connecticut Land Company, and a son of William Stow, the first settler of Summit County, Ohio (Stow, Ohio).

Mr. Stowe was president of the Stowe-Fuller Refractories Company. He also served as Vice President of Cleveland Mortgage Company; Director of City Savings and Loan Company; Director of Open Hearth Fire Brick Company; Director of City Investment Company; President of National Fire Brick Company; President of Mirror Fire Brick Company; Director of Lockhaven Fire Brick Company and the Federal Refractories Company.

Mr. Stowe held memberships in the Cleveland Art Club, the Clifton Club, Union Club, Westwood Golf Club, Masonic Lodge and the Elks. *

*From the Book of Clevelanders of 1914, Burrows Bros. Co., and Representative Clevelanders, Cleveland Topics Co., 1927.
The third house in the Park was built in 1899 by John G. Jennings. Here is another Victorian home with towers capped with battlements. It was originally the summer home of the Jennings family. It was purchased in 1955 by Dr. John D. Bibbs. The kind of woodwork has not been determined as the interior has been completely painted prior to the Bibbs' ownership. The public rooms are large and the living room is 30 x 30 feet. There is a sweeping view of the lake from the large picture window in the living room. The fireplace in the living room has a white marble facing. Sliding doors are used in the living room, dining room and library.

The library has an oak beamed ceiling and a whole wall of bookcases. In the center of the bookshelves is a hidden bar. Both the thirst for knowledge and the throat can be fixed here. The library fireplace and wall is all in carved plaster and finished in a wood effect of linenfold design. The wainscoating in the library is of the same carved plaster. This makes a warm and old English style room.

The dining room and living room fireplaces are back to back and in the dining room is another picture window giving a broad view of the lake.

On the first floor is an extra large closet which was originally an elevator to service the household. Going up the staircase the hand rail is of hammered wrought iron. The landing has a three foot high railing running along the upper hall in gallery style. The upper hall is large and in the beginning the elevator exited here.

All the bedrooms are large and three of the bedrooms have the delightful feature of jalousied sleeping porches for summer sleeping.

Mrs. Isaac L. Jennings, daughter-in-law of John G. Jennings said, "Some of my happiest memories of Clifton Park was when my husband and I were first married."

The John Jennings home was situated on Lake Avenue overlooking Lake Erie from the high bluff.

"All the families loved their gardens and I remember running over to the Jennings garden which was across the road and picking flowers for the house. I loved also walking along the edge of the bluff in front of the home when the lake looked especially lovely just when the sun was coming out on a clear day.

"Everyone of the neighbors seemed so friendly. It was like a small community then, one felt away from the city. Everyone appreciated their homes. Mr. John Jennings also had French plays up on their third floor."

The Jennings called their home, Restcliff.
Mr. Jennings was born in Cleveland, Ohio in 1856; he was educated in the Cleveland public schools. He graduated from Yale University in 1878.

In 1883, Mr. Jennings entered the firm of Lamson, Sessions and Company as a bookkeeper. In 1884 the business was incorporated as the Lamson and Sessions Company and Mr. Jennings became Treasurer and a Director. In 1911, Mr. Jennings became Vice President of the company. Mr. Jennings was also a Director and Secretary of the Johnston and Jennings Company, a foundry and manufacturing firm. He was active in industrial circles as well as civic and social groups. The following is a list of his associations in Greater Cleveland:

Director of the Ferry Cap and Screw Company; President of the Clifton Club Company; Trustee of the Cleveland Federation for Charity and Philanthropy; Trustee of Riverside Cemetery Association; President of Pilgrim Congregational Society. He was a member of the Union Club, Clifton Club, Lakewood Yacht Club, Westwood Golf Club, Cleveland Chamber of Commerce and the Tippecanoe Club.*

*From Cleveland and Its Environs by E. M. Avery, and the kindness of Mrs. F. U. S. Gilbert.
In 1899 the Clifton Park Association sold the reins of Park administration and lands to a new organization, The Clifton Park Land Improvement Company, as shown in these Articles of Incorporation.

These Articles of Incorporation

The Clifton Park Land Improvement Company.

Witnesseth, That we, the undersigned, all of whom are citizens of the State of Ohio, desiring to form a corporation, for profit, under the general corporation laws of said State, do hereby certify:

FIRST. The name of said corporation shall be The Clifton Park Land and Improvement Company.

SECOND. Said corporation is to be located at Cleveland, in Cuyahoga County, Ohio, and its principal business there transacted.

THIRD. Said corporation is formed for the purpose of purchasing, owning, controlling and selling certain Real Estate, situated in Cuyahoga County, State of Ohio, and known as the "Clifton Park Property", and formerly owned by the Clifton Park Association. A corporation organized under and by virtue of the laws of the State of Ohio, and consisting of One Thousand and Forty (140) Acres of land more or less, with full power and authority to buy, sell, lease, mortgage or improve the same.

FOURTH. The capital stock of said corporation shall be Three Thousand Dollars ($3,000), divided into Nine Thousand Shares of One Hundred Dollars ($100) each.

In Witness Whereof, we have hereunto set our hands this thirtieth day of July, A.D. 1899.
The State of Ohio, County of Cuyahoga, ss.

Personally appeared before me, the undersigned, a Notary Public, in and for said county, this 15th day of July, A.D. 1897, the above named: A. L. Steel, Harry A. Smith, E. C. Petrie, Howard A. Burgess, Chas. E. Farrell, E. F. Robbins, and F. C. Case, who each severally acknowledged the signing of the foregoing articles of incorporation to be his free act and deed, for the use and purposes therein mentioned.

Witness my hand and official seal on the day and year last before.

[Signature]
Notary Public

The State of Ohio, County of Cuyahoga, ss.

I, Harry A. Smith, Clerk of the Court of Common Pleas, within and for the county aforesaid, do hereby certify that the above named: A. L. Steel, Harry A. Smith, E. C. Petrie, Howard A. Burgess, Chas. E. Farrell, E. F. Robbins, and F. C. Case, who each severally acknowledged the signing of the foregoing articles of incorporation to be his free act and deed, in and for said county, duly commissioned and qualified, and authorized as such to give said acknowledgment; and further, that I am well acquainted with his handwriting, and believe that the signature to said acknowledgment is genuine.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and affixed the seal of said Court, at Cleveland, this 15th day of July, A.D. 1897.

[Signature]
Clerk.

[Seal]
Men who were the incorporators of the Clifton Park Land Improvement Company, 1899, included:

Arthur L. Stone Secretary and Treasurer of The Nicola, Stone and Myers Company.

Harry L. Vail Editor of the Sunday Morning Voice in 1881. County Commissioner 1909 to 1912. County Clerk in 1894. Practiced law, interested in politics and in real estate. A member of many Cleveland organizations.


Howard H. Burgess Member of Cleveland City Council for 14 years. Member of Cleveland Public Library Board; staff member of The Sunday Morning Voice.

Charles E. Ferrell Dealt in real estate.

Elmer E. Robbins Carpenter, contractors with Builder's Exchange.

John G. Jennings Cleveland industrialist. Gave behind the scene financial help to the new Lakewood Congregational Church.

Frank C. Case Cleveland industrialist. Worked with J. G. Jennings in helping the Lakewood Congregational Church.

Clark T. Hasbrouck Vice President of the Grief Brothers Company.

CLIFF PARK

Cliff Park in Clifton Park comprises two lots side by side between Mrs. Cyril P. Deibel, 17824 Lake Road and Dr. Carl Maldonado, 17830 Lake Road.

An 1899 map of Clifton Park shows a pavilion on the bluff which spanned the gully. There was also a bathing beach. Since the bluff is so steep there must have been a stairway to the beach.

The gully is still there but all trace of the pavilion is gone. There is still a small beach but there is no public stairway down to the beach.

Harry Hoffman tells how this gully went almost as far as Detroit Avenue and the gully was called the "Willows." A 1904 geological survey map called "The Baldwin Survey" shows this watery trench on the map; its widest part ending in Clifton Park.
THE OLD BATHHOUSE

This structure was built about 1899. It served as a meeting place for Park residents and Clifton Club members for years.

The "house" was built of heavy timber and it withstood dances, picnics, summer and winter storms. It even withstood the pail and water fights of the Stouffer boys, Gordon and Vernon.

The Bathhouse was a haven for everyone, including huge wooley spiders that seemed to lurk everywhere.

The house was not beautiful but it had the rugged charm of an old timer who enjoyed life. One summer, before World War I the Bathhouse was painted by ambitious Clifton Park boys. The idea was a good one but the color didn't turn out as planned. It ended up being a sickly yellow. Too many stirring the paint pot!

The furnishings of the Bathhouse were supplied through the "call" for contributions. The sturdy tables were made in the Beach workshop. There was an old square Steinway that stood on the second floor of the Bathhouse. The piano had old time stamina and grit. It was tuned every season and produced entertainment until the end of the Bathhouse.

During the winter of 1956 the Bathhouse burned to the ground. The kiddie pen which was right next to the Bathhouse was burned too. The following summer, 1957, a new Bathhouse was built in the same location and during the 1960 season the new kiddie pen was put up. The old wooden slide was also replaced. The replacement of the old slide was quite a relief to parent as well as to child. The trip down the slide produced at least one splinter per slider.

So, gone is the old Bathhouse and the old leisurely times in it. Each generation has its own memories, perhaps the new Bathhouse will mellow into fond memories for the new generations.
THE LAKEWOOD YACHT CLUB

On Clifton Beach there once stood a wooden building which was the home of the Lakewood Yacht Club, organized in 1900. The following are quotes from a folder of The Lakewood Yacht Follies of 1912: "First meeting held March, 1900 elected the first officers - T. R. Morgan, Commodore, George O. Campbell, Vice Commodore, M. B. Vorce, Fleet Captain, Dr. Henry Beck, Fleet Surgeon, Frank Fanning, Measurer.

Lakewood Yacht Club on Clifton Beach

(Photograph courtesy of Mr. & Mrs. Edmund Sprankle)

"A great friend to the cause was T. R. Morgan, the first commodore. He got permission from The Clifton Park Land Improvement Company to let the sailors use the river frontage for hauling boats out for repairs at a time when the club had no home. Later Morgan was instrumental in securing a leasehold of this property for the Club. Morgan was not a sailor or owner of a boat. For appreciation he was elected Commodore.

"Club consisted of 18 craft in 1900. At the end of 1902 the new clubhouse was nearly completed, but the cost of the building had nearly doubled. The total cost of the Clubhouse was $2,171.92."

(Mr. Morgan lived at 17866 Lake Road. Tragically he was killed in the 'Mentor Wreck' in 1905. Two familiar names were included in the long list of men who gathered at the preliminary meeting in 1900. They were Henry and George Gerlach. The Lakewood Yacht Clubhouse stayed on the Beach until 1907 and was moved to the Yacht Club Island in Rocky River.)
The Clifton Club was incorporated as a club in May, 1902. The clubhouse was built as a club; it did not occupy an old residence. The land the Club site is on was first leased from the Clifton Park Association for $1.00 per year for 14 years and then finally bought outright by the Club.

On a Sunday morning in January, 1942 the Club burned to the ground. Fine furnishings, Club records and a lot of comfortable living was gone in the smoke. Many people were married at the Club. Memories of excellent meals in the dining room, informal meetings of young people, billiards, card groups, children and adult dancing groups, and just plain relaxing on the wide verandas on a clear jewel day - gone.

From the Lakewood Press, March 7, 1918. "In 1904 before the automobile became so extensively owned and before the time of the rapid transit street car service, there came a demand by a number of Lakewood residents for a family club in Lakewood. Many were members of various clubs in Cleveland but on account of the distance, the Clifton Club was organized. Membership in 1918 was about 225 persons. Officers of 1918 were: George S. Case, President, Walter C. Saunders, Vice President, Charles L. Fish, Secretary, C. R. Cross, Treasurer, W. A. Greenlund, Chairman of the House Committee.

From January, 1942 during War II years and thereafter to June 1950, there was no clubhouse, but on June 2, 1950 a fresh new building stood on
the old club site ready to welcome its members once more. The purpose of the Clifton Club was restated as follows: "This corporation is a social club, the purpose of which is to provide means of entertainment, recreation, and enjoyment for its members, and their guests, and to promote culture, intellectual improvement, and social intercourse."

Mrs. Fred W. Stecher's Birthday Party at the Clifton Club 1934 in honor of Mrs. Charles Cody

1. Mrs. Charles Gager  
2. Mrs. Rose Cody  
3. Mrs. Fred Stecher  
4. Mrs. William P. Weaver  
5. Mrs. James C. Pettee  
6. Mrs. Edward G. Gilbert  
7. Miss Lucy Gleason  
8. Miss Carrie Tibbetts  
9. Mrs. Charles Honecker  
10. Mrs. Lewis Foote  
11. Mrs. Maxwell G. Tielke  
12. Mrs. Roth Williams  
13. Mrs. Harry Cody  
14. Mrs. Wm. J. Hunkin  
15. Mrs. Chas. W. Brainard  
16. Mrs. Kirkpatrick  
17. Mrs. Chas. L. F. Wieber  
18. Mrs. Hudson E. Willard  
19. Mrs. C. L. Cassingham  
20. Mrs. Robert B. Ranney  
21. Mrs. Claude Wilkinson  
22. Mrs. Higley  
23. Mrs. James O. King  
24. Mrs. Edgar Meckes  
25. Mrs. W. E. Wells  
26. Mrs. Frank L. Sessions  
27. Mrs. Palmer  
28. Mrs. Teare  
29. Mrs. Lyman A. Reed  
30. Mrs. Alfred Kroenke  
31. Mrs. Charles B. Stowe  
32. Mrs. James R. Sprinkle  
33. Mrs. Frank McCartney  
34. Mrs. Frederick W. Roberts
Mrs. Edgar E. Adams was hostess to six guests at luncheon on Tuesday, May the 10th.

Mrs. F. W. Stecher entertained a foursome at luncheon and cards on Tuesday.

On Thursday evening, May 12th, the Hi-Y Club of Lakewood High School gave a dancing party. There were thirty couples present. Refreshments were served during the evening. The Gamma Delta Tau sorority held their annual dance on Saturday evening, May 14th. At eleven thirty a buffet supper was served to the fifty guests in attendance.

On Thursday the 19th, Mrs. Eugene Kefferling was hostess to sixteen guests at luncheon.

Mr. and Mrs. J. O. King entertained their card club at dinner and bridge on Thursday evening, May 19th. The guests numbered sixteen.

Dr. and Mrs. J. S. Reid were hosts to a small party also on that evening.

Mr. and Mrs. E. G. Gilbert entertained at a family dinner party on Thursday evening.

Mrs. Robert Gresham was in charge of the card party given for the benefit of the Friendly Inn by the Junior Board on Friday, the 20th. Luncheon was served to two hundred and sixty-two.

On Saturday evening, May 21st, Mr. and Mrs. F. L. Sessions entertained eleven guests at dinner.

Dr. and Mrs. A. N. Dawson were hosts for the Parent-Teachers Association of Horace Mann School at a card party given on Monday evening, May 23rd. Sixty members and guests were present.

Twenty-one members of the Toastmasters' Club held their monthly dinner meeting and program on Monday evening.

On Wednesday afternoon, May 26th, the pupils of Miss Helen Reid gave a dance recital which was very much enjoyed by the parents and friends of the children.

The College Club of Lakewood held a card party on Wednesday evening, May 29th, with an attendance of one hundred and seventy-two. Evening refreshments were served.

Mrs. J. I. Nunn gave a luncheon and bridge for eight guests on Thursday, May 30th.

Mrs. Arthur Bishop entertained a foursome at luncheon and bridge also on Thursday.

On Thursday evening, Mrs. F. W. Stecher was hostess at a family dinner party.

The Three Arts Club of Lakewood held their monthly program and tea on Friday afternoon, May 27th.

Mr. R. A. Weaver was host to several business associates at dinner on Friday evening.

The Phi Delta Rho Sorority, sponsored by Mr. H. E. Coyle gave their annual dance on Friday evening.

Mr. and Mrs. Mars E. Wagar were hosts at a small dinner party on Saturday evening.

Mr. and Mrs. E. F. Cresswell and Mr. and Mrs. H. A. Cunningham entertained twelve guests at dinner and bridge on that evening.

Among those having dinner guests at the Club on Memorial Day were Mr. and Mrs. C. Folsom, Mrs. David L. Cable, Mr. and Mrs. C. C. Dibble, Miss Amanda Rauch was hostess to eight guests at dinner and cards.

The Club kitchen was kept busy on that day preparing dishes of various kinds for those who took advantage of the beautiful weather for picnics on the beach. This form of entertaining bids fair to be even more popular than in past years.

It was with a great deal of regret that the entertainment committee was forced to cancel the Club's annual May ball which was to have been held on last Saturday evening, but owing to the small number of reservations and late cancellations, this was thought necessary.

Mr. and Mrs. Kingsman will have charge of the beach and bathing pavilion for the coming season.

The Sunset Is Still There

Come and see these wonderful works of art beyond the conception of any human being.

Your board of directors voted to temporarily suspend the Art Fund feeling that eight cents a week might be a strain during these times of stress, and while we have helped needy artists and obtained works of art for our club house, these beautiful pictures of the Diety are without cost, for it is hardly an effort to come to the great Clifton playground during the wonderful weather which is before us.

Newton Baker in his farewell speech to James H. Rogers said, “the great and splendid Babylon we have built has caved. As it was swept away I think we began to realize that the really satisfying things of life are beauty, loneliness and charm.”

This is a timbly The Clifton Club offers to you and your guests, but you must have the ability to open your hearts for the reception.

Let us repeat, “talk it over with the club management.” It is not a case of the expense of entertaining but rather the economy.

A SUGGESTION

A chicken or ham sandwich with a fruit salad, dishes, table cloth, silver all packed in a basket for a table on the beach or in the bathing house. 65c.
The Lagoon was a cornfield in 1902, according to Lloyd McCartney! It was during the winter of 1908-09 that Rocky River and Lake Erie were so deeply frozen that the crush of ice from the Lake and upper River channel squeezed the ice into the soft sub soil of the Lagoon. In the spring thaw there was the beginning of the Lagoon.

In 1912 the Clifton Park Land Improvement Company had the Lagoon dredged. Water lots were sold to Clifton Park lot owners who were interested in boating.

The calm clear idea of a Clifton Park lot owner being an owner of a Lagoon water lot became complicated when the lot owner sold his home or lot to one person and his Lagoon water lot to a different person. The new owner of the

(Photo courtesy of J. T. Van Dorn)

Lagoon property developed ideas of a boat house. Later the boathouses became living quarters and in some instances the boathouses were winterized and the yachting people lived there year around. A Trusteeship was formed for the Lagoon people in 1912. All the ground that borders the Lagoon roadway and almost up to the Lagoon channel is Clifton Park land; however, the Lagoon owners maintain the grassy borders and the road.

Someone said the Lagoon houses remind one of a Dutch village. Through the efforts of the Lagoon Trustees and the cooperation of the owners the property is kept neat and is a compliment to the Cleveland Yacht Club across the river.

During the 1920's and 1930's when Prohibition reigned the Lagoon was the scene of illegal entry of whiskies and beer. It has been said a speedboat load of beer would be run into the Lagoon and if there was no gunfire or scuffle with the local police the illegal Canadian whiskies would follow. Sometimes there were gunshots. Once a body was found stuffed into an old well!

27.
The original Lagoon Trustees were Edgar E. Adams, F. W. Roberts, and Harry A. Parsons.

Perhaps you have noticed the boathouses have two house numbers. The smaller number is the water lot number. This number was used as a mail address number until about 19 years ago. The mail boxes were at the top of Beach Road Hill. They were the country style mail box fastened onto a post. Now the mail is delivered to the door of each boathouse that has an occupant.

The Lagoon has grown from a lonely sailboat tied to a jetty to a 44-member family with sailing racers and power boats as costly as a permanent home.

Mr. Harry A. Parsons served as Clifton Park Lagoon Trustee from 1912 to about 1920; he was succeeded by the following gentlemen: Thomas B. VanDorn served from 1920 to 1945; Rollin L. Bacher served from 1945 to 1952; Elmer A. Beuther served from 1952 to 1960; James T. VanDorn (son of T. B. VanDorn) served from 1960 to 1963; and Nathan Shapiro served from 1963 to date.

Mr. F. W. Roberts served from 1912 to about 1920. He was succeeded by the following gentlemen: Ralph B. Pettit served from 1920 to 1952; Milton N. Gallup served from 1952 to 1960; and John G. Robinson has served since 1960.

Mr. E. E. Adams served from 1912 until his death in 1937. He was succeeded by John R. Cox from 1937 to 1964. Mr. Cox was succeeded by W. G. Benkleman.

Bonitwo 1907
Champion of Lakewood Yacht Club and Interlake Yacht Assn.

A tracing from a photograph courtesy of James T. VanDorn
Clifton Beach and Lagoon

Photo courtesy of Mrs. Edwin K. Wright
By 1912 the Clifton Park Land Improvement Company was at the end of its planning and promoting the Park as a residential section. A Trusteeship was formed consisting of five Clifton Park residents.

The Clifton Park Trustees hold in trust for the lot owners the common property of the Park. This property is the Beach, the vacant lots known as Cliff Park (the lots between Dr. Carl Maldonado and Mrs. Cyril P. Deibel) the land at the railroad footbridge, the grassy triangles, Shady Lane and Beach Lane.

The Trustees cannot raise money in any way except to assess lot owners in accordance to tax value of each lot, but not including any building or house value.

The Trustees have no power to sell the common Park property unless 100% consent of the lot owners is given. The Trustees have no police power.

The first Clifton Park Trustees as of March 26, 1912 were: Frank C. Case, Lucien B. Hall, Frank B. Anderson, Frederick A. Glidden and Edgar E. Adams. Trustees serve for life as long as the person is a resident of the Park.

Other Trustees have been, Cleaveland R. Cross, Werner G. Smith, Clayton G. Hale, Chester Newcomb, George E. Guthery, Clayton Quintrell, Charles H. Reed, William D. Gorton, Robert L. Hartford, Harry L. Hoffman, Robert M. Lawther, John S. Ewing, John E. Rupert.

Mr. Pyke adds this pleasant bit of information. "Clayton Quintrell and I both served the Board of Trustees almost twenty years. We were pleased when our associates on the Board presented us with silver trays commemorating our service." Similar trays have been presented to Mr. Reed and Mr. Gorton upon their retirement.

A copy of the Trust Deed is included for the reader who enjoys detail.
Know all Men by these Presents, That The Clifton Park Land & Improvement Company, the Grantor, for divers good causes and considerations thereunto moving, and especially in consideration of the covenants and agreements entered into by said Company with the several owners of lots and lands in its allotment herein described, and further for the sum of One Dollar ($1.00) received to its full satisfaction of F. C. Case, Lucien B. Hall, F. A. Glidden, E. E. Adams and F. B. Anderson, Trustees, has given, granted, remissed, released and forever quit-claimed and does by these presents absolutely give, grant, remise, release and forever quit-claim unto said grantees, and their successors in trust or assigns, and the survivors or survivor of them, and the heirs of such survivor, forever, all such right and title as the said grantor has or ought to have in the following described pieces and parcels of land, situated in the City of Lakewood, County of Cuyahoga, and State of Ohio, and being the parts and parcels of land in the grantor's said allotment or lying adjacent thereto which have been reserved for the use and benefit of the owners of land in said allotment, and described as follows, viz.:

1. The three triangular parcels designated as "Reserved M," "Reserved N," and "Reserved O," on the map of the allotment of Clifton Park as the same is recorded in the Map Records of Cuyahoga County, Volume 29, Page 11, reserving, however, to the grantor the right at any time within one year from this date to remove from said parcel marked "Reserved O" the earth and other material piled thereon to a level not lower than the street curb line bounding said parcel; also the shelter house standing in Clifton Road at the entrance to the Park.

2. All that part of Blocks A and B in said Clifton Park allotment above referred to, lying westerly from the 10-foot strip of land through said Block B, which was designated as a right of way connected with the overhead crossing over the tracks of the N. Y. C. & St. L. Railroad, and dedicated by said The Clifton Park Land & Improvement Company in a map and dedication of Sloan Subway and other lands, as shown by the plat of said dedication upon the Map Records of Cuyahoga County, Volume 30, Page 7, excepting from said Block A all that portion heretofore conveyed by The Clifton Park Land & Improvement Company to The American Construction Company by a deed recorded in Cuyahoga County Records, Volume 1158, Page 598, subject to the right of way for Sloan Subway, as designated on said subway map, in volume 30 of Maps, Page 7, above referred to.

3. The strip of land 8 feet in width extending from Clifton Road to Forest Road between sub lots 116 and 117 and 94 and 95, and between Forest Road and Lake Road between sub lots 75 and 76 and 59 and 60, designated as "Shady Lane—private right of way," on the map of said Clifton Park allotment.

4. A right of way or footpath from Lake Road westerly to the land described herein as Parcel 7, in common with the owners of sub lots 32 and 33, and between Forest Road and Lake Road between sub lots 75 and 76 and 59 and 60, designated as "Shady Lane—private right of way," on the map of said Clifton Park allotment.

5. All of sub lots 13 and 14 in said Clifton Park allotment, having a frontage of 200 feet on Lake Ave, and extending back northerly to Lake Erie, as shown by the recorded plat of said allotment in Volume 29 of Maps, Page 11, Cuyahoga County Records.
6. Part of Section number 23 in the Township of Rockport, bounded as follows:

Beginning at an iron pipe set in the northerly line of land conveyed to Franc C. Stowe by deed recorded in Volume 807 of Deeds, Page 127, Cuyahoga County Records, at the intersection thereof with the westerly curved line of Beach Road, a private road; thence westerly along the westerly line of said northerly line of lands so deeded to Franc C. Stowe, 25.22 feet to a point in the westerly line of sub lot number 37 in The Clifton Park Land & Improvement Company's allotment, recorded in Volume 29 of Maps, Page 11, Cuyahoga County Records; thence southerly 91.90 feet along a curved line deflecting to the left and having a radius of 432.45 feet and being the westerly line of sub lots numbers 37 and 38 in said allotment, to a stone monument; thence southeasterly along a curved line deflecting to the left and having a radius of 283.37 feet and being the southwesterly line of sub lots numbers 38 and 39 in said allotment, to the intersection of said curved line and the westerly line of said "Reserved Parcel M" to the most northerly corner of sub lot number 42 in said allotment; thence northerly parallel with and 25 feet distant from the southwesterly line of sub lots numbers 39, 38 and 37, to the place of beginning.

7. Known as being part of Section number 23 in the Township of Rockport, bounded as follows:

Beginning at a point in the westerly line of sub lot number 37 in The Clifton Park Land & Improvement Company's allotment recorded in Volume 29 of Maps, Page 11, Cuyahoga County Records, where said line is intersected by the extension easterly of the northerly line of land conveyed to Franc C. Stowe, by deed recorded in Volume 807, Page 127, Cuyahoga County Records of deeds; thence northerly along the westerly line of sub lots numbers 37 and 36 in said allotment, 177.16 feet, (being a curved line deflecting to the right and having a radius of 432.45 feet, and a chord which bears north 0° 50' west 175.95 feet) to an iron pipe at a point of reverse curvature; thence northerly along the westerly line of sub lots numbers 36, 34, 33 and 32 in said allotment 465.10 feet, (being a curved line deflecting to the left and having a radius of 825.11 feet and a chord which bears north 5° 19' 55" west 458.88 feet) to an iron pipe at the northwesterly corner of said sub lot number 32; thence northerly by the westerly line of said sub lot 60.17 feet to an iron pipe at a point projecting to the left and having a radius of 155.72 feet, and a chord which bears north 32° 20' 30" west 59.79 feet) to a gas pipe in the northerly line of land conveyed to Franc C. Stowe as aforesaid at a point distant south 77° 02' 30" feet to the principal place of beginning.

But excepting from the above described land a parcel of land described as follows:

Beginning at a stone monument which shall be called the principal place of beginning and which principal place of beginning is found by running the following course; beginning at a stone monument set in the northerly line of land deeded to Franc C. Stowe as aforesaid at a point distant south 69° 36' 30" west 109.18 feet from a gas pipe in the northerly line of land so deeded to Franc C. Stowe at its intersection with the westerly curved line of Beach Road, a private road 25 feet in width; thence north 12° 57' 30" west 209.92 feet to said principal place of beginning; thence south 77° 02' 30" west 12.50 feet to a point; thence southerly and westerly 265.12 feet along a curved line deflecting to the right and having a radius of 155 feet and a chord which bears south 36° 02' 30" west 233.96 feet; thence northwesterly 86.14 feet along a curved line deflecting to the right, having a radius of 97.905 feet and a chord which bears north 69° 45' 7½" west 83.39 feet; thence north 44° 32' 45" west 415 feet to a point; thence south 45° 27' 15" west 71.61 feet along the water's edge on the easterly shore of Rocky River; thence north 47° 08' west along the water’s edge on the easterly side of Rocky River 111.82 feet; thence south 47° 08' west along the water’s edge on the easterly side of Rocky River 112.49 feet; thence north 45° 27' 15" east 252.75 feet to a point from which a stone monument set in the ground bears south 77° 02' 30" west 91.64 feet; thence north 77° 02' 30" east 462.14 feet to a stone monument; thence south 37° 24' 10" east 181.25 feet to a point; thence south 8° 52' 30" east 350.87 feet to a point; thence south 77° 02' 30" west 50 feet to the principal place of beginning.

The above described land known as "Reserved M" and parcels 6 and 7 herein described, are made subject to such rights as have heretofore been granted to The East Ohio Gas Company to extend and maintain its gas supply pipes under a portion thereof; and also subject to the rights given by the grantor herein to The Lakewood Yacht Club Company by an Article of Agreement dated June 1, 1903. Also subject to the rights of owners of lots fronting on the lagoon in the land described as "excepted" from said parcel 7, for themselves and their grantees, licensees and employes, to pass over and along the private roads, paths, stairways and common grounds to reach said lagoon from the dedicated roads and avenues in said Clifton Park allotment. Also subject to right of way for owners of land fronting on the private road known as Beach Road.

To Have and to Hold the premises aforesaid, with the appurtenances thereunto belonging unto the said grantees and their successors in trust and assigns, and the survivors or survivor thereof, and the heirs of such survivor, so that neither said grantor, nor its successors, nor any other person claiming title through or under it, shall or will hereafter claim or demand any right or title to the premises, or any part thereof, but they and every one of them shall by these presents be excluded and forever barred; in trust, nevertheless, for the sole use and benefit of all the owners of sub lots, or parts of lots, in the Clifton Park allotment, as the same is recorded in Cuyahoga County Map Records, Volume 29, Page 11, and the heirs, representatives, successors or assigns of such owners; subject to the terms, conditions and regulations herein contained; that is to say:
APPOINTMENT AND TERM OF TRUSTEES.

The trustees shall be five in number, all of whom shall at all times be owners of land and residents in the Clifton Park allotment. If at any time any trustee shall cease to be an owner of land or resident in the Clifton Park allotment, his position as trustee shall at once become vacant, and a successor shall be chosen as herein provided. When the position of any trustee is vacated by resignation, disability or death, the remaining trustees shall at once choose a successor. The fact of such vacancy and choice of successor shall be reduced to writing, signed and acknowledged by a majority of the remaining trustees, and recorded in the office of the County Recorder; whereupon the new trustee shall succeed to all the title and right of his predecessor.

DUTIES OF TRUSTEES.

1. The trustees shall hold title to and preserve all the land deeded to them for the common use of all the lot owners in the Clifton Park allotment, and their successors in title, and members of their households.

2. No part of said land shall be sold, conveyed or dedicated to public use without the unanimous consent of all the lot owners in said allotment.

3. The trustees shall collect money from the persons interested as hereinafter provided, and from the sums so collected, and from any other moneys coming to their hands, shall pay taxes and assessments on said lands as they become payable; shall keep the weeds and grass cut, and trees, shrubbery and flower beds on said lands in good condition; shall provide for removal of snow and ice when necessary; shall keep the bathing pavilion, stairways private roadways and sidewalks in repair; shall establish regulations for the use of, and provide for proper policing of private roads, lanes, parks and bathing pavilion; and generally maintain all of said property in good order and condition for the use of lot owners in said allotment, as the same is now maintained.

4. If at any time the owners of one-fourth of the lots in said allotment wish for more improvement or embellishment of said common land, or any part of it, than said trustees by the terms of these regulations are bound to make, such lot owners may call a meeting to be held at some convenient place within the boundaries of Clifton Park, of which meeting all lot owners shall have at least ten days' notice by mail or public advertisement. Should a majority of the lot owners present at such meeting decide in favor of any extraordinary improvement of such land for the common benefit, the trustees, upon receiving or being guaranteed the money necessary for that purpose, may proceed to make such improvement, which shall then be a part of the common property, and shall be cared for as herein provided.

5. The trustees shall serve without compensation, but may charge to and collect from the lot owners all their necessary expenses as hereinafter provided.

MAKING AND COLLECTION OF ASSESSMENTS.

The cost of all ordinary care of the lands and buildings in the hands of the trustees, and their necessary expenses in carrying out their duties, shall be divided among the several lot owners and collected from them by an annual assessment as follows: Each sub lot, or part of sub lot, in the allotment shall be charged with such proportion of the total annual expense as its value for taxation, exclusive of buildings, is of the total tax value of all of the sub lots in said allotment, exclusive of buildings. The owner of such sub lot, or part of sub lot, shall be bound to pay the sum so assessed to the trustees upon their written notice and demand; and the lien upon the several sub lots reserved to the Company in the deeds of conveyance for the same to secure the payment of such assessments, is transferred to the said trustees, and may be enforced by them. Any extraordinary expenses for improvement of the property shall be met by voluntary subscription.

In Witness Whereof, the said grantor has caused its seal to be affixed hereto, and these presents to be signed by its vice president and secretary, duly authorized by resolution of its board of directors, this 25th day of March, A. D. 1912.

Signed and acknowledged in presence of

J. M. SHALLENBERGER,
T. H. WILSON.

THE CLIFTON PARK LAND & IMPROVEMENT CO.
L. A. REED, Vice President.
J. J. CROOKS, Secretary.

STATE OF OHIO,
CUYAHOGA COUNTY, ss.

In Testimony Whereof, I hereunto set my hand and official seal at Cleveland, Ohio, this 25th day of March, A. D. 1912.

J. M. SHALLENBERGER,
Notary Public.
"OLD GEORGE"

This interview with George Gerlach, written March 24, 1932 by Ralph Izard, appeared in Parade Magazine.

"He sailed the Great Lakes on cargo carrying ships when sail was still the order of the day. His uncle, John Gerlach, owned and operated one of the last fleets of schooners on the Great Lakes, the ships Red Wing, Sun Rise and Sun Bound.

"Old George held every seamans' position except that of master. (George) never knew exact dates. Always said, 'Oh, it was a long time ago - sailors don't remember years, only ships.'

"When the last sailing vessels were taken from the lakes Old George went ashore in disgust. He said, 'Those moving factories they call ships don't need sailors anymore.' For a while, however, Old George commanded the tug Sea Fox for a few years on the Cuyahoga River.

"George and his brother (Henry) opened a fishing business about 1908, using Rocky River as their base of operations. When his brother died, George abandoned the fishing business and lived on the proceeds of the boat livery he maintained in the summer. His needs were few, his life simple; he had his own home, rent free.

"Mr. C. B. Stowe gave George the property on Rocky River where his house now stands with the understanding that it was to be his as long as he kept it up and wished to stay.

"Before the Lagoon was dredged out, Old George established himself in single comfort in a tiny green and white one-story house in which he still lives. George built it himself, using for the framework the shed that had once housed his rowboats. The house stands at the foot of the cliff atop which is Mr. Stowe's home. It is a quiet place, shaded in summer by the branches of a venerable elm which stands at the river's edge. A pebbly walk leads from the drive which encircles the Lagoon to the doorway. Within that door everything is snug and tidy.

"From 1912, when he first assumed those duties, until the present, he has saved 'somewhere between ten and twenty' people from drowning.

"While busied with small tasks about the grounds he always kept an eye cocked on the bathers, a reassuring figure in the background for anxious mothers. Small boys came to rely on him rather than their busy fathers for their first swimming lessons, and he acquired added lustre in their eyes by knowing how to tie a great many more knots than were ever listed in the Scout manual. He is always ready to whittle out a boat for any youngster who wants one, or to give older boys their first lessons on handling a sloop."
The field of education in which George has earned his greatest fame, however, is in teaching people how to skate.

The Elysium opened in 1907; beginning with 1908, George was the leading skating instructor every year until the present winter. This year, George says, he "just hasn't got around to going over." He and Dudley S. Humphrey, owner of the Elysium and Euclid Beach, became fast friends. The pleasing vogue of marches, waltzes, and two steps in the Elysium music is one of George's ideas.

George built the only ice boat that ever sailed on Rocky River and sailed her every year until she finally went out with the spring ice and vanished in the lake.

Hard winters have always been a delight to George and he loves to be out in them. He used to build bobsleds and give them to the boys in Clifton Park before they put a curve in the hill that made coasting too dangerous. This particular winter has been mild. Old George rose and peered out the open window to where the breakers smashed on the jetty. He took his pipe from his mouth, and spat accurately out the window. "Spring'll be along soon now," he said.

As a youngster I was always impressed with George Gerlach, not only because he taught us kids to sail but that he always had sweetbread and bananas for breakfast, lunch and dinner.

George lived in the little shack at the bottom of the hill which was later Wilbur Wright's residence. George Gerlach was never without a cat or cats.

In some way George came into ownership of an "H" class sailing sloop which he docked in front of Edgar Adams' boathouse on the Lagoon. The sloop was the old Fatima which had a good racing record and many trophies to her credit. It was on this boat that I learned to sail and race, along with help from Rolly Francis.

Rolly owned the "J" class Spook; Ralph Newell had the famous "H" class boat the Hayseed and old Mr. Kendel owned the Latonka; the Pettit boys bought Jim Van Dorn's Banshee; and Frank Jontzen had the "R" boat Elyria, known earlier as the Melba. These are the people and their boats that I remember when I think of George Gerlach.

(Photo courtesy of Martha and Mary Jane Adams)
After Clifton Beach the sailing boat was George Gerlach's great love. Religiously twice a day George would count how many times a sponge would fill with water from the leak in the boat. He liked the boat to leak a little. George claimed leaking kept the wood sweet. There were times when sailing with him that the crew would be knee deep in "sweetness." We would frantically throw water overboard with buckets to keep from going to the bottom!

George got too feeble to sail so he sold the boat to Jim and Stan Kresge. They called the boat the Bonito, raced it for several years, and sold it to Al Edgerton. Al fixed it up and raced it a few years before deciding it wouldn't float anymore. That's the last I heard of the old Bonito. - Frederick P. (Bud) Winkler

PARK ONE HUNDRED CLUB

The Park One Hundred Club was started in the fall of 1930. The depression years left little money for entertainment. By combining the resources of the young married couples formerly of the Park and the young adults living in the Park, dance programs were printed and a dance club was born.

The guiding hands of the Club belonged to Jim Sprankle, Margaret Treadway and Russell Treadway. From their early efforts grew a very desirable dance club. The keynote was elegance. The men wore their formal dress to fit the season and the women once again could wear their gowns. For a few hours each month the grim depression was forgotten. Fifty couples made up the original group and all dances were held in the ballroom of the old Clifton Club or at the Bathhouse. Committees were formed to decorate the ballroom and orchestras had to be found to fit the pocketbook.

The membership finally became too large for the Clifton Club to accommodate the dance group. Dances were then held in other places, but the gay atmosphere was never quite the same. Later the Park One Hundred Dance Club was renamed the Winterset Dance Club.

The Park-One-Hundred Club

announces

the first dance of the season

at the Clifton Club

Saturday, January 28th, 1933

Music by

Larry Revell's Revellers

Apply to the Secretary
Mr. Ralph F. Briggs
13514 Edgewater Drive

Guest Cards
In-Town guests • • • • $1.75 each
Out-of-town guests • • • • $1.00 each
A job for sidewalk superintendents was the moving of James A. Wigmore's house in 1931. It was called Mt. Vernon and looked almost like its counterpart.

The house stood on two large lots. It was on the present lot at 17870 Lake Road and the adjoining lot at 17874 Lake Road.

A whole architectural firm was engaged to plot every piece of construction in order to set the house together again correctly. The house was moved to Gates Mills, Ohio and stands there today.

Mr. Wigmore has helped add a few interesting facts about the house as it stood in Clifton Park. The living room was 36 x 54' and all other rooms were in proportion. The ceilings were 16 feet high. The ballroom on the third floor was the finest private ballroom in Cleveland. It had seating all around the room and it was the same dimension as the living room. The main staircase was an open circular type which went from basement to the third floor. Mr. Wigmore said that the house was not large for the number of rooms; it was that all the rooms were very large in size. The second floor had four bedrooms and each bedroom had an enormous dressing room.

The house had a fine view of the lake. The basement had a bowling alley, a billiard room plus pool tables. This large room had a fireplace. There was a grill room with a fireplace too. The basement also housed a three car garage.

Why was the house moved? The newspapers of the day teased Mr. Wigmore. Some news captions read, "Horses refuse to go to Wigmore." Another caption said "Wigmore's Folly." Mr. Wigmore was a horseman and his game was polo. He was on the Cleveland Polo Team and the playing grounds were in Gates Mills.

It took five years to reconstruct the house and make additions. At the new site the house was set on a knoll and the new lands totalled 680 acres.

Mr. Arthur Meifert is now the owner of this fine house. However, it is now multiple dwelling. Mr. Meifert said the walls are 22 inches thick. There are seven Italian marble fireplaces all 8 feet wide, and there are seven tiled baths. The living room is now a 5-room apartment. The whole house now holds six apartments of different sizes. The third floor is not used for dwelling as Mr. Meifert does not want to mar the building with a fire escape. The land has been reduced to six acres.

Photo courtesy of Mr. Arthur Meifert
James A. Wigmore was one of the early promoters of Clifton Park. He also helped lay out the Lagoon lots. He said he bought the largest water lot but he never owned a yacht.

During Prohibition there appeared a headline in the newspapers which reached Mr. Wigmore in California. It read something like this - LARGE YACHT SEIZED IN WIGMORE'S BOAT HOUSE. The yacht was filled with Canadian whiskey and the bootleggers had helped themselves to a hiding place in the Lagoon.

Mr. Wigmore had the American Dream. He came to the States from Canada with $50 and during his lifetime here made a fortune.

From farm boy to grocer; to appraiser for John D. Rockefeller; to negotiator for the Van Sweringen's; land developer and builder. This was the beginning and the career of Mr. Wigmore. He was the man who created the idea of the Terminal Building group on Cleveland's Public Square. Mr. Wigmore built the Statler Hotel and brought the Higbee Company to the Terminal group. He built many Shaker Heights homes during the Van Sweringen reign as he did earlier with Clifton Park.

At the age of 45 years when most sportsmen are reminiscing, Mr. Wigmore learned to play polo. His achievement in this sport was so excellent that he played with and against the top polo teams of the International leagues at Meadowbrook, Long Island. For those who know the great names in polo Mr. Wigmore played with Tommy Hitchcock and Dave Milburn, Jr. A small fortune in silver trophy cups which were won in polo matches has a prominent place in the Wigmore household.

Mr. Wigmore's work made him move among many famous people, but the one person who made the most lasting impression on the memory of Mr. Wigmore was a simple humble country boy with startling truths about us all, Will Rogers.

From an interview with Mr. and Mrs. J. A. Wigmore, September 5, 1964.
The first meeting of the Clifton Beach Improvement Association was at Horace Mann Junior High School, March, 1948. The purpose of the meeting was to explain in detail what the Association hoped to accomplish. Those present were Clifton Park lot owners and Clifton Club members. Copies of the constitution that had previously been drawn were given to all members present.

Here are a few details taken from the Association's constitution:

"Article 2 - The purpose of the Association is to promote the general welfare of the property in the City of Lakewood known as the Clifton Park Beach; to promote, sponsor and encourage the improvement and maintenance of this Beach for the benefit of all owners of property in the Clifton Park allotment and members of the Clifton Club Company; to encourage and promote social activities among the members of the Association; and to do any and all things necessary of incident thereto."

"Article 5 - The Association shall be governed by a Board of Trustees consisting of nine members of the Association." It was set up at the time so that three Trustees would have a one year term, three a two year term and three a three year term. Each year three members would retire and their chairs would be taken over by duly elected Trustees. This creates a rotation system and sets up a program whereby each Trustee serves for three years.

Qualification for Trusteeship as set down at the original meeting was that three Trustees must be Park lot owners, three Clifton Club members and three both lot and Club members. An amendment to this by-law qualification was made in 1958 stating ... the Nominating Committee can consider people who are Clifton Club and/or Clifton Park residents. This was done because it became difficult to find the combination of both Park resident and Club member.

The Clifton Beach Improvement Association was backed by a Development Fund of about $70,000 which came from pledges of Park and Club members. The major purpose was the rehabilitation of the Bathhouse and roadway improvement. Since that time of the first meeting in 1948, the Association has had a twofold objective:

1. To continue on a similar scale with periodic capital improvements at the Beach.

2. To develop social programs, drawing Clifton Club and Clifton Park people into central community activities.
The largest single project of the Clifton Beach Improvement Association was the building of the brick Beach House, to replace the old wooden pavilion which was destroyed by fire in 1956. Total cost of this project, raised through voluntary contributions, was nearly $75,000.

Today the prime source of funds of the Clifton Beach Improvement Association is the Spring Dance held at the Clifton Club.

Other activities which have been annually held are:

1. Children's Fourth of July parade in the Park
2. Family picnics at the Beach on the holidays
3. Beach Clean Up Day
4. Bridge and fashion shows held in the Bathhouse
5. Clambake at the end of the summer season
6. Talent show which stars adults or teens.

Information supplied by William Gerber.
Like the rolling in of a thunder storm came the roadway splitting the Park in two.

Back in the 1920's the storm gathered and blew over. Year after year the road and bridge threatened and finally in 1956 definite plans were drawn up and public hearings held to explain the bridge. Law suits, privately and collectively, were thrust back and forth. When the surveyors came walking in to put the doom mark on house, lot and tree; when the money changed hands; when homesteads collapsed under the big shovel; then the road and bridge became real.

To the old resident it was a crime; to the newcomer it was progress; to the youngster it was a delight of dirt to wallow in and equipment to clamber over. One small boy got stuck in a sink hole and no one but the fire department could get him out. For months the tree saws disturbed the peace. All through a deep freeze winter of 1962 the throb of machinery was heard setting the bridge footings in place. No matter if slippery clay and deep sewer trenches divided the Park, small boys and brave adults crossed the no man's land. Daily inspection walks were made by most Park residents.

The formal opening of the bridge was on January 15, 1964. That night the residents from the first entrance of the Park to the ramps in Rocky River discovered another intruder - the lights. Even homes quite removed from the road were bothered by the lights.

The casualty list is greater than we realize. We think in terms of a house being moved or "mortal"ly wounded, but many portions of property were swallowed by the concrete swath. The State of Ohio paid well but it will never cover the loss of a lifetime of living in a house in a very unique section of the world.

On Clifton Road the F. J. Pfeiffer house at 18098 was moved to 13824 Lake Avenue and sold to new owners. At 18100 Clifton Road the C. C. Kimball house was moved to 18104 Clifton Road and was sold to Philip Astry.
More houses on Clifton Road trembled. The home of Edwin K. Wright at 18114 was the girlhood home of Mrs. Wright. The house at 18116 belonged to W. S. Smith. Originally this was the home of Mrs. E. K. Wright's aunt and uncle, Mr. and Mrs. Fredric W. Throssell. The Throssell grounds were beautifully landscaped. It had showcase gardens and beyond the gardens was a tennis court. Both of these houses were built within the same year, 1917.

The road cut continued on Clifton Road. The old grassy triangle was taken. At 18127 the J. A. S. Brown house caught fire and was a total loss. The John E. Rupert house was in the path of the road and it was moved from 18125 Clifton Road to 18129 West Clifton Road.

The terrible road cut still rolled - it destroyed the home of the Robert Hartford's at 1111 Forest Road. The girlhood home of Mrs. Donald Harbaugh at 1113 Forest was destroyed. The T. J. McDowell house at 1115 Forest was moved to 1122 Forest Road by Mr. Wallace Snow who had bought it.

The new road crossed the intersection of Forest and West Forest Road forcing another house to find a new location or fall under the big shovel. The John Linns bought the house at 1112 West Forest. This was the home of Roy C. Ossman. The house stood on two lots and was a showplace not only in house design but in beautiful landscaped grounds. Mr. Linn placed the house on a newly created lot at 17893 Lake Road.

The house at 17891 Lake Road was destroyed. This forced the H. Clay Stier family to find another home. Across the road was another fine old home of brick and timber. This house was built in 1905 by Lyman A. Reed. The house number here was 17894 Lake Road.
The childhood home of Bet Fish, 18114 West Clifton Road, was destroyed because it was in the path of the bridge approach. At that time she and her husband, Edwin K. Wright, lived in the house.

"Riverbank", at 17894 Lake Road was originally built for L. A. Reed. It stood empty for many years prior to being demolished for the bridge construction, and was known by a generation of Clifton Park children as "the haunted house". 

Photo courtesy of Mrs. Edwin K. Wright

"Riverbank", at 17894 Lake Road was originally built for L. A. Reed. It stood empty for many years prior to being demolished for the bridge construction, and was known by a generation of Clifton Park children as "the haunted house".

Photo courtesy of Mr. & Mrs. Clinton Barry
These two houses stood side-by-side on Forest Road. Above at 1113 stood the Newell family home. It was occupied in its later years by Margaret Newell Harbaugh, her husband Donald L. Harbaugh and their family. It was in their house that the Lakewood Congregational Church was organized. Below, at 1111 Forest Road was one of the Nilges–built homes owned for many years by the Du Ross family and for the last dozen years by the Robert L. Hartford family. Both houses were razed for the bridge construction.
The home at 17891 Lake Road was built for George W. Cady. The last owner prior to its destruction was H. Clay Stier.

Originally the home of Fredric W. Throssell. This house at 18116 West Clifton Road was owned by Walter Smith before it was razed.

These beautiful gardens stood behind the Throssell house on West Clifton Road.

Photos courtesy of Mrs. E. K. Wright
These three homes were all moved to new locations within Clifton Park to avoid being torn down. Above, left, at 18100 Clifton Road, the home of C. C. Kimball was moved to 18104 Clifton Road and sold to Philip Astry. John E. Rupert moved his home, (above right) from 18125 Clifton Road to 18129 West Clifton Road. Below, just after being moved to its new site at 1122 Forest Road is the home of Thomas J. McDowell, which formerly stood at 1115 Forest Road.
Personal recollections of Clifton Park activities must provide a mass of happy thoughts among all people who have ever lived in the Park. Some of these have been captured on paper through interviews with many individuals whose memories go back through the years.

One such individual was Warren K. Roberts. He told us he remembers back to 1899 when he would ride on a buckboard wagon out to Rocky River to go sailing. The road was Lake Avenue which was then a plank road.

Mr. Roberts said that in 1899 there was no Clifton Park, no Lagoon, no Clifton Boulevard; just the Starkweather and Coffinberry houses and the Bathhouse were built. The Yacht Club Island was a fishing station run by the Horn family. The boats were all sail; no power boats. The deep channel in the river was the west channel. A person could wade across to the Island from the east or Lagoon side of the river in those days.

George and Henry Gerlach lived in a cottage which they built with the help and permission of C. B. Stowe. It was Stowe's river edge property they built on. It is now the property of Wilbur Wright. Henry Gerlach was a ship carpenter and the carpenter shop was right here (17856 Beach Road). There was an ice house and a road house on the Beach before 1898.

In 1902 the Lakewood Yacht Club building was put up on the Beach. The Lagoon was dredged in 1912 and allotted by the Clifton Park Land Improvement Company. Boathouses only were permitted. The United States Government (Army Engineers) dredged the river up to the railroad bridge in 1913.

On May 15, 1914 the Cleveland Yacht Club merged with the Lakewood Yacht Club and the Cleveland Clubhouse was moved to the Yacht Club Island.

Philip T. Ranney recalls the pump house cistern at the Beach proved to be a dangerous place for two adventurous boys. Philip Ranney of 1115 Forest and Kenneth Newell of 1113 Forest were playing at the cistern. It was a large well with a cone shaped roof. A door in the roof let one in to a ladder which went down about eight feet to the water. Boards set in the wall made a makeshift runway, about a foot above the water.

Ken and Phil climbed down the ladder to the runway, but Phil stumbled and fell off into the water. With much struggling and ado Ken was able to get Phil back on the plank. Why Ken didn't fall in himself in the process will ever be untold. The plank was only a foot wide and it was not exactly light down there. After that narrow escape the doorway in the roof was boarded up.

It wasn't a Ranney day. Mr. Ranney came down the road from St. Ann's Hospital where Mrs. Ranney was with the newest Ranney arrival, Robert B., Jr. and from Charity Hospital where his daughter, Judith, had undergone emergency surgery for appendicitis; to see Phil coming up West Forest Road looking like a half drowned rat.
Remembering Clifton Park brings George Gerlach to mind for Mrs. William A. Porteous (Lois Saunders). He was the old salt sailor who was the caretaker of the Beach "way back when." He lived in a little white cottage across from the Yacht Club. I recall he was a devil on skates and he always smoked a funny curved pipe.

Coasting down the Beach hill in my Flexible Flyer! This was my pride and joy. Sometimes we made it out onto the lake. Such fun! Once Holly Rose dared me to try skis on old Stowe's hill. I did and practically climbed a tree. This was my first and last offense. Crack the whip on the Lagoon, with Holly in the lead was always good for breath taking. I don't remember where I wound up, but I'm still alive.

Mr. Adams was a friendly father to us all. The good times we had at Adams' boathouse; the stories of Ike Metcalf chopping the ice to go swimming; none of us ever saw him do it. Ike and I would discuss books. He knew good literature. I listened and profited thereby.

I remember Weeno Kendel's daddy sailing around all by himself in his little boat; sailing on the lake and Laurie Jontzen's speed boat was fun too; Harvey the burly lifeguard.

Betty Stone and I played tennis every day on the old outsized court. Crack players were Marian DuRoss (Mrs. Yost) and the Hill twins (Marian Sessions and Margaret Treadway).

I remember the old willow tree at the point. Mr. P. (Porteous) proposed to me there. He forgot to take off his hat until I reminded him!

The old Clifton Club dining room had beautiful French wallpaper. The delicious meals were served by maids in starched white uniforms. Miss Monnel's marvelous creamed potatoes are especially remembered.

The creaky hardwood floors of the Club bring back memories and the huge ballroom where we suffered the dancing class. Our mothers meant well but it was torture. The girls lined up on one side and the boys were on the other side. Eventually we had to meet at the teacher's direction. I recall Ed Sprankle was forever hitching up his brown knee britches. I was so annoyed that I stepped on his feet purposely.

Incidentally, I was married at the old Clifton Club on September 2, 1933.

Clifton Park is the perfect place for a child to grow up. I am thankful for it. I still know every tree and stone along Shady Lane. Baseball was good fun. We played in the field between Bet Fish's and Sonny Winton's. Walter Gehring was the pitcher and I proudly played first base. We had fun.

In the fall I remember raking leaves and jumping in the big pile. Barb Dean, Betty-Ann Forbes and Jim Forbes used to help us. When the leaves were burned we toasted marshmallows on sticks.