

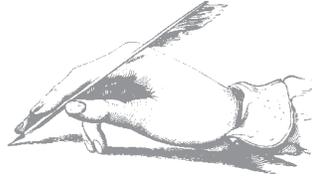


ViewPoints

FALL, 1999

AN OCCASIONAL NEWSLETTER OF THE GRANDVIEW HEIGHTS/MARBLE CLIFF HISTORICAL SOCIETY

PRESIDENT'S LETTER



Dear Members,

Thanks to all who attended the Society's Annual Meeting and 25th Anniversary Celebration on September 19. Special thanks to Program Chair Pat Mooney and board members who set up stations of special interest and were on hand for questions.

The 25th Anniversary Meeting was well attended, and extra thanks go to Grandview Heights Library staff for all their assistance. We also had volunteers from the Eighth Grade Class at Grandview Heights Middle School, who assisted with directions to patrons and with hospitality. It was a delight to have these young people involved! The celebration was an occasion for charter members to reminisce about the past. We would like to continue reminiscing by way of interviews with villagers, old and new. Watch for this in future newsletters.

The holiday season is upon us! Please have a happy, safe, joyous time! Remember if you are working on old photo albums this winter, let us copy your old pictures for our archives. Stories with pictures are even better! Happy Days!

Sincerely,
Win Keller, President
GHMCHS

The Brotherhood of Rooks



Few if any of today's high school students are aware that high school fraternities and sororities were once a significant part of high school life in many communities. Since the outlawing of such organizations by the Ohio Legislature in the 1960s, most of these student groups of the past exist only in the memories of those who were once members. In Grandview Heights, however, the fraternal organization, Brotherhood of Rooks, established in 1915, still has an active existence, though not in the high school, and not among high school students. Its existence was never under school sponsorship.

While little information is available about similar organizations in Ohio, the Brotherhood of Rooks is believed to be somewhat unique: established as a boys' club by students themselves in 1915, meeting first in borrowed quarters, the Rooks in 1921 formed a stock company to build their own clubhouse, contributed most of the labor themselves, and continued to maintain the facility until its sale in 1965. Brotherhood members became respected for their standards of behavior

and their contributions to the school and community. Many members continued active involvement through their college years and beyond, in some cases throughout their lifetimes.

While no longer a high school fraternity, the Brotherhood of Rooks maintains a membership list, and holds an annual Reunion Banquet, and each May, at the Grandview Heights High School Awards Assembly, the Rooks - Ted J. Eaton Memorial Scholarship for college is presented to a Grandview Heights High School senior student who best exemplifies the ideals of the brotherhood.

According to History of the Brotherhood of Rooks, as remembered by Bradley Skeele (1970) and summarized by Lyman Markel. [*Capital City Press, August, 1980.*]

"The normal desire of most boys to form gangs, and the possession by Joe Bronson's family of an ancient log cabin [*Note: see newsletter masthead; actually, the cabin was purchased by the Rooks and moved from near Cardigan and Cambridge to the Bronson property. Ed.*], set



LONG-TIME GRANDVIEW-ITES AT THE ANNUAL MEETING CELEBRATING OUR 25TH ANNIVERSARY. L to R: Martha Latshaw, Dean Pape, Dick McKeever, Lucile Osborn.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2



Brotherhood of Rooks (CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1)

on the edge of a wooded ravine, and surrounded by groves of trees, was an ideal setting for the formation of a club. No doubt, counseling by his lawyer father led to the forming of a Moral, Christian Fraternity, to be called the Brotherhood of Rooks. Joe Bronson and his bosom pal, Maurice "Marny" Hendershott, got their heads together and decided to form a club with the highest ideals for community service and "for the fun of it."

Charter-member Rooks in 1915 were: Joe Bronson, Al Bradbury, Marny Hendershott, Francis Paddock, Bob Page, and Ellis Rogers. The first two pledges were Bradley Skeele and Lyman Markel. In a year or two, 17 more members had been added, as follows: Ralph Karns, Julius Stone, Jr., Ed Hill, Stu Constable, John Kenny Landaker, Ed Baker, Bob Livingston, Bill Long, Bern Jaeger, George Stone, Harry Knox, Frame Howell, Ted Eaton, Malcolm Anderson, Leroy Hendershott, Bob Rex, and Irving Bradbury. Most charter members were freshman and sophomores. Honorary member at the founding was P.J. McCarty, Grandview High School Principal, and a later honorary member was I. Stanton Jones, teacher and coach, but they rarely participated after their induction. Over the years, membership grew to quite a large number, possibly 500 or more, a complete roster not being available.

Ted J. Eaton, for whom the Rooks Scholarship is named, was continuously supportive and available, and remained active until his death in 1967. His name on the scholarship commemorates his contributions of energy, wisdom, ideas and sincerely unselfish interest throughout his lifetime.

Until 1920, the Rooks met in the cabin at the rear of the Bronson property at 1096 Wyandotte Road. After Mr. Bronson's death in 1920, the property was sold and the new owner declined to rent the property to the club. For a year or two, the boys met at the Skeele and Thompson homes. By this time Lyman Markel was an

engineering student at The Ohio State University and still an active Rook. He made plans for a Rooks Club house according to required building codes, and had the plans reviewed by University Architect, Howard Dwight Smith, who had just designed Ohio Stadium. The plans were approved with minor changes. Early in 1921, The Rook House Company was incorporated with Lyman A. Markel as President and Ted J. Eaton as Secretary, with a capital stock of \$2500. (SEE ILLUSTRATION AT THE RIGHT)

Shares were sold to Rooks' parents and others. In later years, much of this stock was surrendered free to the Rooks and all debts paid. George C. Urlin, prominent Grandview developer, donated \$300 for a lot on Elmwood Avenue. Every known method was used to raise money for building materials: plays were given, soft drinks were sold at Field Day and at football games and other communi-

ty events. Work teams were organized, foundations dug, concrete poured, and a building of frame with wood siding and a large fireplace completed by 1922. Every bit of work was done by the Rooks, including painting and pouring concrete walks. Art Bogen got his father's heating firm to donate a coal furnace, and the concrete work was overseen by Ellis Roger's uncle, Roy Ohnsman.

On 9 June 1922, the Brotherhood of Rooks was incorporated under the laws of the State of Ohio as a not for profit corpora-



BILL ARTER'S RENDERING OF ELMWOOD ROOK HOUSE

tion, formed for the purpose of "promoting all athletics, higher scholastic standing, and the development of good fellowship and social grace among its members." The articles of incorporation

were signed by T. J. Eaton, R. P. Karns, L. A. Markel, A. G. Bradbury, and Edward F. Baker. The Brotherhood of Rooks continued as a significant influence in Grandview Heights/Marble Cliff community life. Rooks earned the respect and admiration of the community for their contributions in forming a good influence and providing guidance to many boys' lives and the furtherance of good sportsmanship and community projects. After Ohio law in 1961 prohibited high school fraternities and sororities, The Brotherhood of Rooks lost its official standing. The Rooks House, now a private home at 1347 Elmwood Avenue, was sold in 1965 and, under the leadership of Chuck Whipple, the proceeds formed the nucleus of the funds of the Brotherhood of Rooks-Ted J. Eaton Scholarship Foundation, established 27 January 1966 "for the purpose of providing financial assistance for worthy young men graduates of Grandview Heights High School, for attendance at accredited col-



INTERIOR VIEW OF THE ROOK'S CABIN



STOCK CERTIFICATE SOLD TO HELP FUND THE ELMWOOD ROOKS HOUSE

leges or universities". The fund has grown over the years from gifts and bequests. The first scholarship of \$300 was awarded in 1967, and in 1999, two recipients received \$2000 each. Scholarship recipients become members of The Brotherhood of Rooks, and they and their fathers are welcomed each year, along with all former Rooks, at the Annual Banquet and Scholarship Award Meeting. In 1999, the Rooks-Ted J. Eaton Scholarship Foundation is administered by a board of trustees consisting of Larry Berlin, Phil Carr, Jerry Grinstead, Stan Jones, Gene Karlovec and Bob Keitz. Attendance at the 1999 Annual Meeting was 120 persons.

SECOND IN A SERIES OF THREE ARTICLES...

History of the Schools in Grandview Heights and Marble Cliff *by Wayne Carlson*

In 1919, there were a total of 86 students in Grandview Heights High School; this number grew to 130 in 1920, and 141 in 1921, with 15 seniors and 725 students enrolled in the district overall. This prompted the board to ask for a levy to fund a new combination high school and junior high school. The plans for this building were presented to the public for review and input in January of 1922. Response to the proposal was good, and the levy passed in November.

One of the distinguishing features of the new high school plans was the inclusion of a combination gymnasium and auditorium, which included a stage and movable chairs. According to an article in the February, 1922 *Norwester*:

[The building] is designed to meet all the needs of the child's school life. In addition to the provision for the regular curricular activities, the physical welfare of the child is cared for through the gymnasium, locker and shower rooms. Physical education is not a coming thing; it is already here. With the completion of the building, gymnasium periods will be as much a part of the work in school as English or mathematics.

The design was also cognizant of a growing trend to

utilize the buildings all year around by making it available for community use in off-hours and during the summer months. Controllable access routes and independent heating units were planned so that public spaces could be accommodated without impacting the remaining parts of the facility.

Construction began immediately, and the school opened on September 17, 1923. It was formally dedicated on March 7, 1924. In that same year, one of the rooms on the second floor was used to house the new Grandview Public Library, which later moved to a building on First Avenue. The cost of the high school was \$290,000, and it added \$12,000 to the annual operating budget of the district. The school, built by the L.L. LaVeque Company contained 22 rooms and was designed to accommodate 600 students. The school board also was interested in preserving the expandability of the school campus, so between 1922 and 1924 they acquired the property to the north of the high school, which is now used as the athletic fields.

To overcome the lack of telephones in the Grandview and Arlington schools, and to allow for necessary communications between the buildings, a group of enterprising high school students designed and built a wireless system and

served as operators for the schools ("... as long as they maintained their good academic standing"). A similar model was put in place in the junior high, where students were "hired" as librarians to run the new 140-volume junior high library.

At the same time, "... parents were anxious that their small children be spared the long walk and dangers of crossing at Grandview, Broadview and Fairview..." and school officials recognized a need for additional space for these elementary students as well. Plans proceeded to acquire land "at the bottom of the Northwest Boulevard hill" at First Avenue and Oxley Road. This location was chosen because of its centrality to the eastern side of the community and because of a park (currently Pierce Field) across the street. When the High School was completed, a temporary building used during the construction (called "the portable") was moved to this new site. This two room "portable" opened in February of 1924 (the opening was delayed because of a lack of sewer service at the site) and housed 26 kids in grades one and two, and 21 kids in grades three and four. The next year, the upper grades transferred to the Grandview Elementary School on Fairview Avenue. The board was again pressed to provide additional facilities, and the plans were presented in

October for a new elementary school on this property.

A proposed \$175,000 levy to build the new elementary school was defeated in the November, 1924 elections, and the district was forced to go to half-day sessions in grades one to three. School officials and community members felt that there was a significant amount of misunderstanding, and in fact misinformation, concerning the use of the funds from the levy. Clarification was made through a widespread public relations campaign, and the issue was again placed on the ballot in November of 1925. This time it passed. The levy provided \$140,000 for construction of the building and \$35,000 to purchase additional property on the western side of the city. Ground-breaking took place on January 7, 1926 for the new school, which the children recommended to be called Robert Louis Stevenson Elementary School.

The delay caused by the failure of the levy actually proved beneficial. The number of rooms was increased from the eight specified in the original plan to twelve because of additional need, but the cost for a building with these twelve rooms went down by \$8,000 because of timing of the bids. The

CONTINUED ON PAGE 4



ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON ELEMENTARY



BECOME A MEMBER

of the Grandview Heights/Marble Cliff Historical Society!

Please complete the information below and send with your check made out to: **GH/MC Historical Society** Mail or drop off at the **Grandview Heights Library, 1685 West First Avenue, Columbus, OH 43212**

NAME _____

SPOUSE
(IF COUPLE MEMBERSHIP) _____

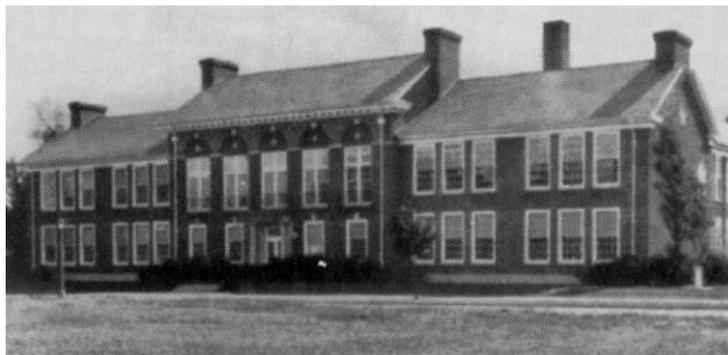
ADDRESS _____

CITY/STATE/ZIP _____

PHONE _____

Please check the appropriate membership box:

ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP	LIFE TIME MEMBERSHIP
YEARLY DUES (OCT. 1-SEPT. 30)	ONE-TIME PAYMENT
<input type="checkbox"/> Single \$5.00	<input type="checkbox"/> Single \$100.00
<input type="checkbox"/> Couple \$8.00	<input type="checkbox"/> Couple \$150.00
<input type="checkbox"/> Organization \$15.00	<input type="checkbox"/> Organization \$500.00



GRANDVIEW HEIGHTS HIGH SCHOOL

design was also modified to allow for expansion of an additional four rooms on each end of the building, and it opened in the fall of 1926 with Mrs. Margaret Bush as principal (she retired in 1938.) The portable was sold, and again placed on wheels and moved intact to a new location. Evelyn Hughes and Anne Rhodes were 6th grade students at Stevenson in 1931 when they wrote about the history of the school. According to these girls:

"The boys and girls [in the portable] watched them as they took the first shovel of dirt out of the ground. It was for the new building. They watched daily as the building rose higher and higher into the air. When it was finally finished there was a great cheer."

The rapid growth continued in Grandview and Marble Cliff. By the beginning of the 1925 school year, enrollment in the district rose to 782; by June it was at 944, with 337 in the high school. Enrollment in the elementary schools alone was up by 88 students from the previous year. In the 1926 school year, there was a 44% increase on the east side alone, and by the 1927/28

school year total enrollment grew to 1218 in the district.

August, 1925 saw a discussion beginning in the community regarding the need for a kindergarten to serve the young children, which was becoming a trend throughout the United States. The First Community Church took the leadership in this area and established the first such classes in Grandview for the 1925/26 school year. The Community Pre-School classes were held in their building on the corner of Lincoln Road (formerly Paul Ave.) and First Ave.

TO BE CONTINUED IN OUR NEXT ISSUE

Volunteers sought!

If you think you might help your society in any way, contact the editor at <pmooney@columbus.rr.com> or <ghmchs@hotmail.com>. All input appreciated!

ViewPoints is an occasional publication of the Grandview Heights/Marble Cliff Historical Society.

1685 West First Avenue
Columbus, Ohio 43212
EDITOR DESIGN/PRODUCTION
Patrick Mooney Margie Wilson

Contact Editor Patrick Mooney (279-6665) for any interesting article ideas or to discuss photo contributions.



The Grandview Heights/Marble Cliff Historical Society

1685 WEST FIRST AVENUE
COLUMBUS, OHIO 43212

Visit Our New Website!

<http://www.ghpl.lib.oh.us/ghmchistorical/main.html>

If you are not on-line at home, the reference librarians at Grandview Heights Public Library will show you how to access us at the library.