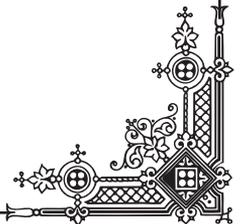




The Grandview
Heights/Marble Cliff
Historical Society

1685 WEST FIRST AVENUE
COLUMBUS, OHIO 43212



100 AND COUNTING!



By Patrick Mooney

Grandview Heights celebrates the centennial of its incorporation in 2006. We publish here a ‘snapshot’ of Grandview Heights, prepared for a proposed but never completed 2003 *“Book of Franklin County.”*

The City of Grandview Heights is a community of seven thousand residents located just northwest of the confluence of the Scioto and Olentangy Rivers. It is bounded by the City of Columbus, except on the west and northwest, where the city limit abuts Marble Cliff and Upper Arlington. The commonly perceived boundaries of the “Grandview Area” extend to King Avenue on the north and Olentangy River Road on the east, although the actual corporate limits are much smaller.

The transition of the area from farm and woodland to residential use began as early as the 1880s. The 1901 extension of a streetcar line across the Goodale Street bridge over the Olentangy River and into the area as far as the corner of Fifth and Arlington Avenues led to more rapid development and the incorporation of Grandview Heights in 1906. In its first decades Grandview Heights grew rapidly, becoming an independent municipality with its own mayor and council government, school district, police and fire departments, and public library. These departments maintain strong and long-standing records of excellence and of cooperation with neighboring communities.

Grandview Heights has remained attractive to new residents due to its mixture of residential, commercial and industrial development, its well-nourished pedestrian life, and its strong sense of place. A strong “social infrastructure” binds the community together. Many of the community’s activities center around the schools, although business associations and the Chamber of Commerce have been active for a long time. The Grandview Heights/Marble Cliff Historical Society, founded in 1975, has been active in documenting and displaying the area’s more than 100 years of history. Annual community events such as the Ox Roast, Memorial Day Parade and the Pumpkin Run bring the community together.

The Grandview Heights community enjoys a diverse population. Housing stock available includes large historic mansions, a wide variety of single

family homes and a number of rental units. The municipality and the Grandview School District have a history of financial stability. The land use mix provides tax receipts that pay for public services that most residents rate as good to excellent. In particular, the school system is perceived as being extremely good. The Grandview School District includes the Village of Marble Cliff, which has more than 600 residents and enjoys an exceptionally strong commercial tax base.

History. The beginnings of a residential community on the bluff above the Scioto River valley at the northern edge of Franklin Township occurred about 1890 when George Cambridge Urlin, Fred H. Croughton, and Edward Denmead purchased tracts of land west of Grandview Avenue and north to Fifth Avenue and platted them for development. Urlin built his home on the site of the present Summit Chase Condominium and platted the nearby area as Urlin's Grandview Heights, inspired, so the story goes, by his wife's exclamation of delight at the prospect across the river valley. The Croughton and Denmead plat included the area immediately west of Grandview Avenue. Other early plats farther west were John Chester's Chester Heights and John Tilton's Gladdington Heights, which survives as the only portion of Grandview Heights which extends as far north as Fifth Avenue. In 1911, Urlin developed Cambridge Boulevard south of Fifth Avenue in Marble Cliff. A number of the earliest homes from the 1890s survive today, mostly on the bluff immediately above Goodale Boulevard. The oldest home in the community is 987 Grandview Avenue, still referred to as the "Poor House," because it was built in the 1830s as the residence for the Franklin County Poor Farm, a short-lived effort almost immediately moved to another township because of the spring flooding of the Scioto River. This home was remodeled to its present form by William Bott in 1916.

Repeated efforts of developers to improve access to the area were finally rewarded in October 1901, when the trolley line was extended across the Olentangy River. In November, 1901, the first Marble Cliff incorporation included most of the area from river to river and north to King Avenue, but most of the area was detached in early 1903. Grandview Heights was incorporated in 1906.

The early commercial area of the community was on West First Avenue, between Ashland Avenue and Fairview Avenue, which was on the trolley line. Otherwise, the nearest shops and services were in a few Fifth Avenue locations and on Olentangy River Road.

Development of the area east of Grandview Avenue began after the 1913 purchase of the Thomas Farm by Ben and King Thompson's Northwest Boulevard Company. Late that same year the brothers purchased the 1000-acre Miller farm north of Fifth Avenue, which they platted as The Country Club District, a few years later to be named Upper Arlington. From this time on, residents of what came to be called the Tri-Village Area shared civic and

social life in many ways. For instance, the earliest Upper Arlington residents sent their children to Grandview schools, and for many years the Grandview and Upper Arlington Library was a single institution serving both communities. Marble Cliff has been part of the Grandview Heights School District since its establishment.

The Northwest Boulevard Company developed the residential blocks southeast of Grandview and First avenues at about the time of World War I, as well as the area near First and Virginia Avenues. The 1920s saw the annexation and development of much of the area east of Grandview Avenue, including the large Willard farm and the Salzgeber farm. The Salzgeber farmhouse still stands at the northeast corner of First and Grandview Avenues.

Rapid growth in the 1920s brought the construction of a new high school building to replace the old Harding School on Fairview Avenue, which had been built in 1895 as a Franklin Township school. In the mid-1920s a second elementary school was constructed in the eastern part of the city. When the new school was named the Robert L. Stevenson School, the 1911 Grandview School was renamed Edison School. The Harding School was demolished in 1930, and in the 1950s an award-winning kindergarten building was constructed on the site.

The 1920s also saw construction at First and Grandview Avenues of the Northwest Masonic Building, which included ground floor retail space. The Grandview Theater opened in 1926, and in 1928 developer Don Casto's first commercial project, called The Bank Block, and the first retail shopping center in the United States which included planned parking space, was built on the west side of Grandview Avenue between First and Third. In 1998 the Bank Block was placed on the National Register of Historic Places, and in 2001 an Ohio Bicentennial Historic Marker was placed there. A small retail center developed on First Avenue near Northwest Boulevard. The industrial section of the city developed on former farmland along West Goodale and in the area near the railroad east of Northwest Boulevard. The rezoning of the Goodale Boulevard corridor in 1945 to permit light industry brought a significant increase in tax income to the municipality. Grandview Swimming Pool, city-owned since the 1970s, was constructed on Goodale Boulevard in 1932 as a private enterprise. The original portion of Grandview Heights Public Library was built with the help of federal funds in the mid-1930s.

The earliest church presence in the community was the Methodist, in the early years at West Fifth and Star, later on Ashland Avenue near West First Avenue, and now Trinity Methodist Church in Marble Cliff. The early Congregational Church of the area became, in 1919, one of the first community churches in America, and is now First Community Church, on Cambridge Boulevard in Marble Cliff. The first Catholic church in northwest

Franklin County was Our Lady of Victory Church in Marble Cliff, which from its 1922 establishment served the Catholic population of the entire Tri-Village Community until 1948, when St. Christopher Church on Grandview Avenue was founded. The fourth church in the area was Boulevard Presbyterian Church, founded in 1923.

Local publishing began in the Tri-Village area in 1917 with *The Norwester*, a monthly small-format magazine of the Upper Arlington and Northwest Boulevard Companies. *The Norwester* was followed in 1922 by *The Community News*, a weekly newspaper produced at the Community Church by a cadre of local volunteers. *The Community News* was supplanted in 1930 by *The Tri-Village News*, a commercial weekly newspaper published for many years out of its building on Grandview Avenue, and now part of Suburban News Publications, under its original name.

Grandview Heights experienced the challenges of the Great Depression and World War II along with the rest of central Ohio and the nation. Post-war development brought new vitality to the community and the “baby boom” brought unprecedented growth to the schools. By 1970 Grandview Heights population had peaked at more than 8400. Since 1980 both total population and school enrollment have lessened and appear to have stabilized.

A publication of 1954 states:

“At the present time Grandview Heights rests between an old metropolis and a fantastically growing youngster [Upper Arlington]. There are less than 50 home sites remaining within the corporation limits and these areas may never be utilized for that purpose. Grandview Heights could be called a placid, pleasant place to live; where there are more homes than houses, and where most people are more interested in making a life than a living.”

Grandview Heights in 2003. Due to its longtime history as a high quality of life residential community, including a school system generally perceived as superior, and its proximity to the center of the Columbus Metropolitan Area, Grandview Heights has not only maintained its position, but is currently experiencing significant redevelopment.

The late 1980s and 1990s saw the revitalization of the business district along Grandview Avenue, including the Bank Block, as a popular entertainment area, which draws diners, shoppers and movie-goers from all of Columbus. New residential building is taking place, new and renovated commercial space has become available, and significant residential and commercial development is occurring in nearby areas outside Grandview Heights corporation limits. A September, 2002 county-wide study reported that Grandview Heights has enjoyed by far the greatest and most rapid increase in real estate tax valuation in Franklin County. The opening of Lennox Town Center, the nearby construction of large apartment complexes,

the Route 315/Interstate 670 interchange, the development of the Arena District and River West in downtown Columbus, and the removal of the low-lying area of Grandview from flood plain designation are all factors which will affect the community in the first decade of the 21st Century and beyond.

As Grandview Heights approaches the centennial of its incorporation in 2006, it continues its story as a small, leafy, pedestrian-friendly suburban community. Grandview residents experience a strong sense of place, appreciate the closeness of city government and services, and value the excellence of their schools and library, their significant parkland, playgrounds and community garden, senior center, churches and community organizations. At the same time, they enjoy the position of being the suburb nearest the center of the Columbus Metropolitan Area.



Sources:

Publications of the Grandview Heights/Marble Cliff Historical Society.

Items from the collections of the Grandview Heights/Marble Cliff Historical Society.

The City of Grandview Heights Community Plan. 1997.

The reader is referred to the award-winning website of the Grandview Heights/Marble Cliff Historical Society at: www.ghmchs.org

The website contains complete texts of early histories, historic photographs, a virtual tour of the community, the society newsletter, *Viewpoints*, information about society publications, links to municipal departments and Grandview Schools, demographic information, and more.



Credits:

Funding: Fully funded by an anonymous donor.

Printing: Minuteman Press, 18 Westerville Drive, Westerville, OH 43081

Design: Melissa Rady Design



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HAPPY 100, Grandview Heights!

On the morning of February 3 (the exact date of the successful 1906 vote for incorporation) the Grandview Heights Centennial Year began with a Kick-Off Ceremony and continental breakfast at Grandview Heights Senior Center. Mayor Ray DeGraw read his official proclamation of the centennial year (see page three), GH/MCHS trustees Tom DeMaria and Wayne Carlson presented a short program of early Grandview Heights history, and activities of the upcoming **“100 days of celebration”** were previewed by Jeri Diehl Cusack. Guests at the kick-off included current city officials, staff and employees, former mayors and council members, GH/MCHS founders, Win Keller and Ann Larrick, current board members, and interested citizens. Mike Dexter of I.D.C. Design Group designed the centennial logo, which will be used on various publications, banners, and promotional materials throughout the year. Grandview Area Merchants Association will kick off the 100 Days of Celebration with an opening event on Saturday, May 13, 2006. The hundred days will include special events, along with centennial observances incorporated into traditional community programs. The Mayor’s Centennial Picnic will conclude the 100 days on Sunday, August 20. Details of time, place and exact content of programs will be forthcoming as plans are completed.

“100 DAYS OF CELEBRATION” SCHEDULED EVENTS

Saturday	May 13	Grandview Area Merchants Association Kick-Off
Thursday	May 25	Discover Franklin County Walking Tour of Grandview Heights Sandi Latimer, Olentangy Owls
Saturday	May 27	Memorial Day Parade with Centennial Themes
Tuesdays	June 6, 13, 20 & 27	Music on the Lawn Centennial Concert Series Grandview Heights Public Library/Parks & Recreation
Fri. - Sun.	June 23-25	2006 “Tour de Grandview” International Cycling Classic
Tuesdays	July 11, 18 & 25	Music on the Lawn Centennial Concert Series Grandview Heights Public Library/Parks & Recreation
Saturday	July 22	13th Annual Lazy Daze of Summer Festival, GH/MC Arts Council
Sunday	August 20	Mayor’s Centennial Picnic

For more information on times, places, details, and opportunities to get involved in the celebration go to

www.ghmchs.org or www.grandviewheights.org