



Tenth Anniversary Issue

ViewPoints



May 2009

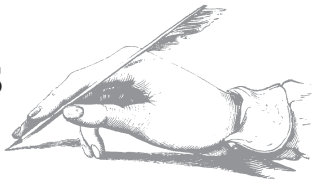
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AN OCCASIONAL NEWSLETTER OF THE GRANDVIEW HEIGHTS/MARBLE CLIFF HISTORICAL SOCIETY



PRESIDENT'S LETTER



Dear Members,

I hope you are enjoying the warmer weather now that it has finally arrived. I don't remember when we have had such a rainy spring—at least it seems that way. The GHHS varsity baseball and softball teams have had so many cancellations, I feared they'd be playing a game on graduation day! I've noticed all the new plantings and flower baskets on porches appearing, along with wicker being placed out for summer visits. Always warms my heart!

The board has had our regular monthly meetings. Board member Jeri Diehl Cusack is planning a program for our annual meeting on October 26th. You will be receiving more information on this as the date nears.

The board wishes to acknowledge generosity of the family of Skip Karlovec in asking that donations to the Society be made in lieu of flowers. Several such donations have been received. They will be put to good use.

We also wish to thank First Community Church for including us in their 100 year celebration. Board member Tom DeMaria attended the event, where time capsules were removed from the old chapel as well as the newer church on Cambridge Boulevard.

We welcome home former board member Terry Smith. He is back in Grandview and we hope to see him often. His contributions to the society have been invaluable.

In closing, I wish you a relaxing and fun summer. On June 7, my last child, Emma, will be a graduate of GHHS. Then I can finally put my feet up, enjoy a lemonade on the porch, and have fun with our visitors!! Isn't that part of what Grandview is about?

Sincerely,

Tracy Liberatore
President
614-488-0425
tliberat@wowway.com

First Community Church CORNERSTONE OPENING

by Jackie Day Cherry,
FCC Historian



Copper casket from 1320 Cambridge Boulevard cornerstone

photos by Louise Kutz

On the bright, sunny morning of April 8, 2009, a small group of church members gathered to witness the opening of Lincoln Road Chapel's cornerstone. The cornerstone for this building, originally known as Grandview Heights Congregational Church, had been laid on April 23, 1911, eight years before the church was reorganized as First Community Church. Now Diane Arthur and Jackie Cherry, co-chairmen of the Centennial Committee, along with committee member and local architect Robert Wandel, and Sandy Pfening, chairman of the cornerstone festivities, had come to watch as stonemason Jim Gadrim opened the wall to reveal the copper box that had been replaced inside when the cornerstone was previously opened in 1959 as part of the church's 50th anniversary celebration. Its contents would be revealed again during the centennial.

Sandy had encountered no difficulty in securing the services of a stone mason for Lincoln Road Chapel, but several had declined to even attempt opening the cornerstone of 1320 Cambridge Boulevard. Somehow they feared that it might

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This issue sponsored

IN MEMORY OF LORNA "SKIP" DONALDSON KARLOVEC



FCC—CORNERSTONE OPENING

(Continued from page 1)

damage the structural integrity of the church. This cornerstone had not been disturbed since being laid on May 18, 1924, amidst the full pageantry of a Masonic ceremony with more than a thousand people in attendance. Jim Gadrin, however, accepted the challenge and set to work with hammer and chisel. He soon discovered that this concrete had hardened almost to the consistency of steel. He worked with various tools over a two-day period before he finally succeeded in breaking through the wall. Then he discovered an added problem with the stone lid that covered the cavity where the copper casket was resting. At last his persistence paid off and the boxes from both cornerstones were turned over to Sandy for safekeeping until the ceremonial opening.

On April 16 a sizeable group of First Community members, clergy and staff assembled in the church's Brownlee Hall to view the contents of the cornerstones. Distinguished guests included Kate Erstein from the Upper Arlington Historical Society, Tom DeMaria representing Grandview Heights/Marble Cliff Historical Society, stone mason Jim Gadrin and Upper Arlington Mayor Don Leach, who presented a proclamation honoring the centennial. Sandy Pfening made a few welcoming remarks and introduced church historian Jackie Cherry who spoke briefly about both cornerstone laying ceremonies and gave an overview of the materials that had been placed inside.

The box from Lincoln Road Chapel was opened first and proved to be very disappointing. The contents, including film from the 50th anniversary, had deteriorated almost beyond recognition. Fortunately, when it was originally opened in 1959, all the documents were copied and are presently part of the church archives. They include the Church Covenant, the ordination bulletin for first minister Fred Brownlee, prophecies for the church's future, lists of charter members and Sunday School enrollment.

The contents from the 1924 cornerstone were a wonderful surprise. Everything was in amazingly pristine condition and appeared as if they had just come off the press. There were 1924



May 14, 1924 issues of Columbus newspapers

editions of *The Columbus Evening Dispatch*, *The Ohio State Journal* and *The Columbus Citizen*, as well as several issues of *The Community News*, published by the church. Other items included a photo of the groundbreaking ceremony, the Grandview Heights High School yearbook for 1923, the Upper Arlington High School manual, a bound copy of 1923/24 church bulletins, 1924 Women's Guild roster, a list of members, some booklets about the church, sermons of Rev. Oliver Weist, roster of the community Masonic Lodge, lists of teachers and boards of education for both Grandview and Upper Arlington schools, first columns of "The Norwester" and a complete set of blueprints for the church. These artifacts will be on display in the Gallery Court outside Brownlee Hall for the next several weeks.

Items to be included when the cornerstones are replaced are wishes for the future from each group of the Women's Guild, statements by the Governing Board and current senior minister, Dr. Richard Wing, a project created by members of the youth groups, drawings by Sunday School children showing what they think the world will be like in the future copies of the Centennial Legacy DVD, and "Reflections on Our Heritage: A History of First Community Church" by Jackie Day Cherry.



Sandy Pfening with copy of 1924 The Community News

Society On The Lawn

Look for the Historical Society's presence at some of the most festive events of the summer — the Music on the Lawn concert series and the 16th annual Lazy Daze of Summer Festival. All take place on the lawn of the Grandview Heights Public Library at 1685 West First Avenue. Society publications and historical playing cards will be available for purchase. Mark these dates on your calendar:

- **Music on the Lawn** every Tuesday night in June and July from 7:30 to 8:30 p.m. (weather permitting)
- **Lazy Daze** on Saturday, July 18 from 11 am to 5 pm

Pre-order books and cards and have them ready for pickup by contacting Ruthanne James at 486-6456 or artraj@att.net



GIVE 'EM A BIG BEAR HUG!

Recent news articles of proposed details and some construction dust rising at the 70 acre former site of Big Bear Stores warehouses and offices between Goodale Boulevard and West Third Avenue remind us that Big Bear was a significant presence for 50 years at the southwest corner of Grandview Avenue and West Fifth Avenue. Big Bear is also a major Columbus and Ohio story of corporate success, and, alas, decline. Our community doubtless still holds many Big Bear memories.

Big Bear Stores was founded in November 1933, in the depths of depression, by Wayne E. Brown, a dynamic individual with his own vision of the future of food distribution and retailing. The first Big Bear Store opened on February 15, 1934 on West Lane Avenue in Columbus in what was once a dance hall, a skating rink, and finally a tanbark ring for horse shows. Adjacent to the OSU campus, the location is now the site of Riverwatch Tower apartments. The store covered 47,000 square feet and included a candy store, shoe repair shop, restaurant, and drugstore, as well as butcher, baker and grocer all in one place. Within a year, a second store opened in Columbus in a former piano factory. By the end of the second year, two more stores had been opened, followed by stores in Lancaster, Marion, Newark, and Toledo. In 1937, Brown and other supermarket owners formed the Supermarket Institute.

Big Bear Stores utilized print and radio advertising from the beginning, along with in-store promotions. In 1936, shoppers could win \$5 to \$25 by mixing six words with "Big Bear" and "low prices" to create a store slogan. In the heart of the Great Depression shoppers welcomed low prices made possible by bulk purchases, along with the convenience of self service without the help of a store clerk.

Big Bear was the first self-serve supermarket in the Midwest, and was the first supermarket in the country to use cashier-operated motorized conveyor belts, and claimed several innovative services, including its own trolley line. Big Bear introduced shopping carts to their stores in 1937. Big Bear operated a farm north of Columbus, as well as Big Bear Bakery, located near the OSU campus. In 1948 Brown, along with other supermarket operators, founded Topco Associates, and Big Bear distributed their products (Food Club, ValuTime) as their "house brand" as well as their own private brand, "Betty Brown," named after the founder's wife. Like many other stores, Big Bear had a trading stamp program. For many years their orange and blue "Buckeye" stamps were a familiar sight for shoppers.

In the 1950s Big Bear became the first supermarket in the nation to use the new IBM 305 RAMAC mainframe computer. In 1954 a new prototype store was opened in Graceland Shopping Center in Columbus. With an interior store layout that became an industry standard, the store featured perishable items in the center of the store and lower displays to highlight products.

In the same year, Big Bear Stores purchased Harts Stores, a department store that was operating at the time in the basements of two Big Bears. Harts experienced rapid growth,



Big Bear Store #1 — West Lane Avenue, Columbus, OH

as Big Bear often opened grocery stores along with a Harts Department Store in an adjacent space.

Over time, Big Bear became a major supermarket chain in Ohio and West Virginia. In 1985 Big bear had sales of \$650 million and Forbes ranked it number one among 27 regional supermarkets in return on equity.

The Big Bear Credit Union was founded in 1957 by Big Bear employees and was located within Big Bear Stores Company headquarters at 770 West Goodale Boulevard. In 1990 the credit union moved into its first office with its own public entrance in converted warehouse space on West Third Avenue. In 2003, noting that only fifteen percent of its members were employed by Big Bear Stores Company, the membership voted to change the name to Members First Credit Union. In March 2004, Members First Credit Union moved into a newly built facility at 1445 West Goodale Boulevard, near Grandview Heights Senior Center, where it continues today.

The title of this article was a Big Bear slogan from 1987 to 2004. Earlier slogans were: *That's My Bear!* and *Get the Bear Minimum Price!*

For a more detailed story of the rise and demise of what was once our community's favored supermarket destination, visit www.fundinguniverse.com/company-histories/Big-Bear-Stores-Co.

See also: wikipedia

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Big_Bear_Stores

For information on the development of Grandview Yard, the former site of Big Bear offices and warehouses, visit: www.grandviewyard.com





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) _____

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Please check the appropriate membership box:

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YEARLY DUES (OCT. 1-SEPT. 30)

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LIFETIME MEMBERSHIP

ONE-TIME PAYMENT

- Single \$100.00
- Couple \$150.00
- Organization \$500.00
- Benefactor \$1000.00



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



1685 West First Avenue
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EDITOR
Patrick Mooney

DESIGN/PRODUCTION
Melissa Rady

Contact Editor Patrick Mooney
(614-225-0130) for any interesting article
ideas or to discuss photo contributions.

E-MAIL REQUEST

We are compiling e-mail addresses to improve our communications. Please include your e-mail on membership renewal form, or send your e-mail address to President Tracy Liberatore at: tliberat@wowway.com.

Thanks!

*Please save the date for our upcoming
Annual Meeting on Monday 26 October
at 7 p.m. in Grandview Heights Public
Library Meeting Room*

REMINISCENCES OF THE ROOSEVELTS

*I*n celebration of the 125th anniversary of the birth of Eleanor Roosevelt on October 11, 1884, Historical Society trustee Jeri Diehl Cusack will share her insights into the lives of "ER" and her intriguing family: husband Franklin (FDR), our only four-time elected president of the United States; his mother Sara Delano, daughter of a wealthy trader who made not one but two fortunes dealing in Chinese opium; Eleanor's uncle Teddy who gave her away in marriage for his deceased brother and even chose the wedding date, based on his commitment to be in NYC for the annual St. Patrick's Day parade; and "TR"'s daughter Alice, Eleanor's first cousin who was eight months older, but whose life ran anything but parallel to ER's.

Society members who would be willing to share their personal recollections of Roosevelt era stories or related memorabilia are invited to contact Jeri at jcusack@columbus.rr.com by September 1st to share any information or tales which could possibly be incorporated into the presentation.

More program details will follow in the the next *ViewPoints*.



Many thanks to member Nancy Connor Walter for her recent contribution of unique historical materials, including, amazingly, a square nail from the Urlin Mansion.
What else is out there, folks?



1685 WEST FIRST AVENUE
COLUMBUS, OHIO 43212

The Grandview
Heights/Marble Cliff
Historical Society

