



Bulletin of the Kenton County Historical Society

Website: www.kentonlibrary.org Email: nkyheritage.kchs@juno.com
P.O. Box 641, Covington, Kentucky 41012-0641 (859) 431-2666

March/April

2009

I Bet You Didn't Know

*Tidbits from Kentucky's heritage
for every day of the calendar year*

March 7, 1789: The Virginia General Assembly, determining the correct spelling to be "Kentucky" officially changed the state's name from the previous "Kentucke"

March 9, 1880: Centre College and Transylvania competed in a football game, the first played west of the Alleghenies.

March 29, 1969: Latonia (Turfway) became the first thoroughbred track in the state to offer night racing.

April 16, 1981: The Sherburne Bridge over the Licking in Fleming County, the only suspension-style covered bridge in the world, was destroyed in an arson fire.

"On This Day In Kentucky" — Robert Powell

Upcoming Programs

KET Special on William Goebel

KET is presenting a program about Governor William Goebel's life titled *Damn Bad Oyster*. KCHS board members, John Boh and Karl Lietzenmayer were interviewed for the special. Check local listings, but the program is scheduled to air frequently until May 15, 2009.

2009 Northern Kentucky History, Art & Culture Lecture Series

Sponsored by the Friends of Baker Hunt Art and Cultural Center and the Kenton County Historical Society, this yearly series is held at the Baker Hunt Center, 620 Greenup Street in Covington. Lectures begin at 2:00pm. Upcoming topics include: March 8th – *Good Old Days in Cincinnati Broadcasting*, and April 19th – *Frank Duveneck, Cincinnati Arts and Artists*. Price: \$7 at the door or \$45 for seven lecture series. For more information, contact Baker Hunt at 859-431-0020.

Northern Kentucky Regional History Day

This yearly event, the highlight of our local history community, will be held at Northern Kentucky University on April 4, 2009, in the brand-new Student Union. A display area filled with presentations from local historical societies, genealogical societies, museums, book publishers, and sites of historical interest will be open from 8:00 a.m. until 2:00 p.m. The feature lecture, *The Dimming Lights of the Entertainment Industry of Cincinnati and Northern Kentucky*, begins at 10:00 a.m. Following this lecture, choose from five other lectures/workshops that run from 11:15 a.m. to Noon and from five others which run from 12:15 p.m. to 1:00 p.m. There certainly is something for everyone!

Registration is \$6.00 in advance or \$8.00 at the door.

For further information, please contact John Boh at (859) 491-0490.

Published bi-monthly by

The Kenton County Historical Society
Membership, which includes the Bulletin,
\$20.00 per year

President.....Ronnin Einhaus
Vice-President..... Donald Fowler
Treasurer..... W. Terry Averbeck
Secretary.....John H. Boh

Board Members:

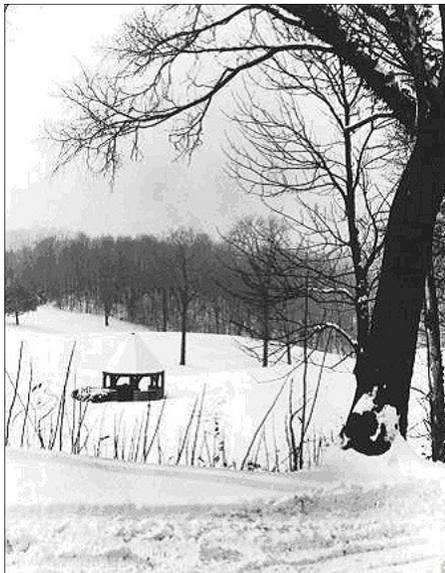
Paula Farrell, George Gressle,
Richard Johannemann, Mary Elise Regan,
Robert Webster (Bulletin Editor),
Alex Weldon, and
Ex officio - Karl Lietzenmayer

ARTICLES FROM BACK ISSUES ARE INDEXED ON OUR WEBSITE!

Vanishing into the Underbrush: Re-discovering St. Mary's Cemetery

Julie M. Ashton

A piece of oral history is sometimes able to breathe new life into an old mystery, such as the story passed down to Mark Rudebusch, Director of St. Mary's Cemetery, Ft. Mitchell, Kentucky. Rudebusch maintains there used to be an old cemetery in what is now Devou Park. His



Winter Scene at Devou Park 1966

grandfather, who was the previous director, told him there had been a little more than half an acre of land set aside for a cemetery for parishioners of St. Mary's Cathedral.¹ All the graves in the old cemetery were supposedly moved to the new cemetery on Dixie Highway.² However, Rudebusch is unable to verify that. There are no records that indicate the removal or relocation of any bodies once buried in the park, and there are no records that pre-date 1891. Those records were said to be destroyed in a fire in the 1920s.³ To corroborate the story, Jack Nienaber, Diocesan Director of cemeteries for the Diocese was contacted. He had heard rumors of a fire in the 1920s destroying records, but suspected there may not have been a fire.⁴

Staff at the Behringer-Crawford Museum stated there has been interest in the Old Cathedral Cemetery, but they have no records as well. According to Tom Ward, archivist for the Diocese of Covington, Kentucky, all records pertaining to the old cemetery should be located with the current burial records at St. Mary's Cemetery in Fort Mitchell.⁵ The

only record regarding the Old Cathedral Cemetery in Devou Park that Ward has is an unrecorded plat map dated 7 March 1900.⁶ With undocumented fragments and sometimes-contradictory information regarding the cemetery, it becomes difficult to piece together the complete story. If documents were destroyed in a fire in the 1920s, then it is possible that a complete history may never be obtained.



St. Mary's Cemetery, Ft. Mitchell, Kentucky

St. Mary's Beginning

The history of St. Mary's Cemetery stems far beyond July 14, 1870⁷, when the current St. Mary's Cemetery gates opened. St. Mary's Parish was established in 1837, however, in 1833 Catholics who resided in Covington purchased the land on 5th Street to build a church/school and an orphanage.⁸ The church was dedicated in 1834 and it served as a place of worship twice a month, when priests from the Diocese of Cincinnati were available to say mass.⁹ St. Mary's was able to obtain "a resident pastor" in 1837.¹⁰ There was such a massive influx of German Catholics, masses were celebrated in both English and German at St. Mary's until 1841. By 1841, the population, particularly Germans, had increased to make the little church extremely overcrowded.¹¹ The Germans sought out their own worship space.

Chain of Title for the Devou Property

Grantor and Grantee	Dated and Recorded Dates	Kenton Co. Deed Book and Page	Amount of Acreage conveyed
William P. Devou, Jr. and Charles P. Devou to the City of Covington ¹⁹	Dtd. and Recorded 28 November 1910	140 / 161	In reference to this paper... article 35 conveys 1.86 acres (.753 hectares)
Rt. Rev. Camillus P. Maes to Sarah O. Devou ²⁰	Dtd. and Recorded 24 March 1900	103 / 586	1.86 acres (.753 hectares)
Rev. George A. Carroll to Louise J. Devou ²¹	Dtd. and Recorded April 1867 / July 1867	15 / 229	8.14 acres (3.294 hectares)
Rt. Rev. John Lamy to Rt. Rev. George A. Carroll ²²	Dtd. and Recorded 13 June 1867 25 June 1867	15 / 192	10 acres (4.047 hectares)
Edward Purcell to Rt. Rev. George A. Carroll ²³	Dtd. and Recorded 19 September 1856 10 July 1867	16 / 318	10 acres (4.047 hectares)
Rt. Rev. John Lamy to Edward Purcell ²⁴	Dtd. and Recorded 20 November 1850	17 / 215	10 acres (4.047 hectares)
Charles Henry Hayes to Rt. Rev. John Lamy ²⁵	Dtd. and Recorded 15 July 1850 25 June 1867	15 / 190	10 acres (4.047 hectares)

The seat of the Catholic Diocese was then in Bardstown, Kentucky, and the northern end of Episcopal See [Covington and Newport] looked to Cincinnati clergy for assistance. With the aid of the Bishop of Cincinnati, St. Mary's Parish officially split into two separate parishes. One parish served the Germans, known today as Mother of God, while the Parish of St. Mary's remained to serve the English speakers.¹² It was thought that the split between the English and German speaking communities would alleviate the burden on the small church, but by 1850, St. Mary's Parish had become so large that a new location was needed.¹³ It was at this time that a ten-acre plot of land was purchased for a cemetery.¹⁴ The available vague description makes it difficult to determine the exact location of the cemetery. However, a hand drawn plat map, titled "Plat of St. Mary's Old Cathedral Cemetery", provided enough evidence to determine it was within the boundaries of Devou Park.¹⁵

Even with this plat map, there was no actual deed reference attached to state that there was a purchase of the ten-acre plot. The plat map only provided sufficient evidence to support the claim that there was a parcel of land totaling 1.84 acres in Devou Park.¹⁶ By tracing the only known existing element on the property today that correlates with the plat map, a deed was found that conveyed property from William P. Devou, Jr. and Charles P. Devou to the City of Covington, which reports in article 35, "a tract of 1.86 acres, in Kenton County, Ky., and being the same conveyed to Sarah O. Devou, by deed from Rt. Rev. Camillus P. Maes, dated March 24, 1900, and recorded in Deed Book 103, Page 586, at Covington; the above tract being the Old Catholic Cemetery."¹⁷

According to the deed as recorded in Deed Book 103, Page 586, an 8.14 acre plot of land was conveyed to Louise J. Devou in 1867, which would round out the remaining 10 acres reported in historian Rev. Paul E. Ryan's account.¹⁸ Following the deed chain further back, it revealed a series of four deeds, all for the amount of ten acres of land, were conveyed to the Diocese of Covington beginning in 1850.

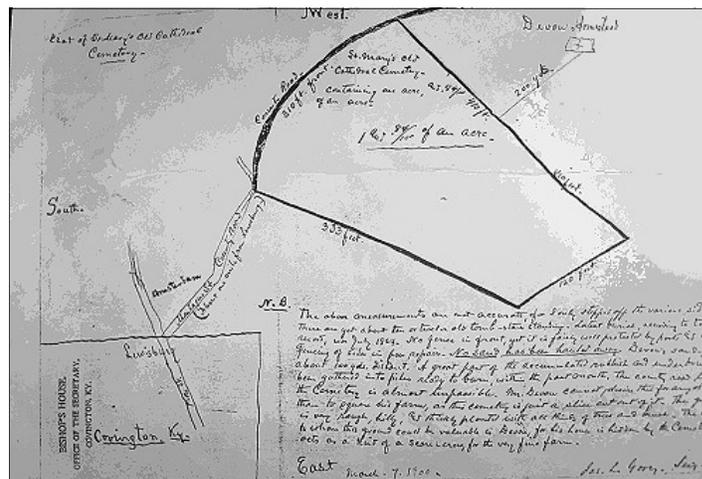
The first deed that actually obtained the property for the diocese was from Charles Henry Hayes and his wife to the Rt. Rev. John Lamy (pastor of St. Mary's parish from 1848 to November of 1850)²⁶ in July of 1850 for the purpose of a cemetery. The second deed transfers the same 10-acre plot of land from Rt. Rev. John Lamy to Edward Purcell²⁷ in November of that same year.²⁸ The third deed, in 1856, has the Rt. Rev. Edward Purcell conveying the ten acres to Rt. Rev. George A. Carroll²⁹ (the first Bishop of the Diocese of Covington, Kentucky).³⁰ The fourth deed transfers the ten acres from Rt. Rev. John Lamy (became Bishop of the Diocese of Santa Fe, New Mexico) to the Rt. Rev. George A. Carroll in 1867;³¹ however, the last three deeds were not recorded until 25 June 1867, shortly before the sale of 8.14 acres to Louis J. Devou on 13 July 1867.³² With the sale of the 8.14 acre tract to Louis J. Devou, all that remained was 1.86 acres to be used as a cemetery for St. Mary's.

The remaining 1.86 acre tract of land was described in a hand drawn plat map dated March 1900 by a Jas L. Gorty, surveyor. The plat map indicates the cemetery was located about two hundred yards Southeast of the Devou homestead. According to the surveyor the tract totaled 1.84 acres with the northwest perimeter measuring 410 feet, the northeast perimeter measuring 120 feet, the southeast perimeter measuring 333 feet, and the southwest perimeter running along the County Road measuring 310 feet.³³ The surveyor's description reads as follows:

“The above measurements are not accurate for I only stepped off the various sides. There are yet about ten or twelve old tombstones standing. Latest burial, according to tombstone records, was July 1864. No fence in front, yet it is fairly well protected by posts and brush. Fencing of sides in poor repair. No sand has been hauled away. Devou’s sand pits are about 100 yards (91.44 meters) distant. A great part of the accumulated rubbish and underbrush have been gathered into piles ready to burn within the past month. The county road leading to the cemetery is about impassible. Mr. Devou cannot desire this for any other purpose than to square his farm, as this cemetery is just a slice cut out of it. The ground is very rough, hilly; it’s thickly planted with all kinds of trees and brush. The only person to whom this ground could be valuable is Devou, for his house is hidden by the cemetery, which acts as a kind of scarecrow, for the very fine farm.”

The map shows the Devou Homestead being 200 yards (182.88 meters) northwest of the Old Cathedral Cemetery along the county road that leads into Montague Street. Montague Street intersects with Pike Street and Amsterdam.³⁵ While no photographs containing the cemetery have been found, it is clear from early photographs of the Devou family home that a thickly planted area surrounded the Devou homestead.

Today the area surrounding the Devou homestead (Behringer-Crawford Museum) is cleared of a great deal of the brush, leaving few trees to line the southeastern portion of the property. After the property was deeded to the City of Covington in 1910 various expansion projects took place. The brush surrounding the Devou homestead was converted into a portion of the golf course. A great deal of information has either been misplaced or never actually existed, making it very difficult to find new documents of what actually happened to those buried in the old cemetery. The information passed down to Mr. Rudebusch sparked the search for a cemetery in Devou Park but it ended up revealing more than the existence of the old cemetery. It revealed the poor state of church records. Several months of searching for burial records that could corroborate the relocation of



Above: Plat Map of the Old Cathedral Cemetery ³⁴
Covington Diocese Archive

Below: Devou Homestead circa 1920
Kenton County Public Library



bodies from the old cemetery prompted church leaders to find out where their records might be held.

Evidence accumulated thus far could provide a small clue for other individuals hoping to locate the Old Cathedral Cemetery. While the physical remnants of the Old Cathedral Cemetery have vanished into the underbrush, the oral legend continues.

About the Author

Julie Ashton is a recent graduate of Northern Kentucky University, with Bachelor of Arts degrees in Anthropology, History and English. She presented a version of this paper at a conference of Ohio Valley Urban and Historical Archaeology in March of 2007, under the guidance of Professor Jeannine Kreinbrink. After a brief hiatus, she continued research on this topic under NKU professor, Dr. Jonathan Reynolds.

Vanishing Into the Underbrush – Endnotes

1. Mark Rudebusch, personal communication, Fort Mitchell, Kentucky, 20 March 2008.
2. *Ibid*
3. *Ibid*
4. Jack Nienaber, personal communication by telephone. Erlanger, Kentucky, 24 April 2008.
5. Tom Ward, personal communication by telephone. Erlanger, Kentucky, 6 March 2008.
6. *Ibid*
7. Kenton County Courthouse, Covington, Kentucky, Deed from John Steffen to Rt. Rev. A. M. Tobbe, Bishop of Covington, Kentucky, July 14, 1870, recorded December 21, 1880 in Deed Book 42, pp. 810.
8. Rev. Paul E. Ryan, *History of the Diocese of Covington, Kentucky*, (Covington, Kentucky, 1953), pp. 110-111.
9. Ryan, *History of the Diocese of Covington, Kentucky*, pp. 112.
10. *Ibid*.
11. *Ibid.*, 114.
12. *Ibid*.
13. *Ibid.*, 115.
14. *Ibid.*, 116.
15. Archives of the Diocese of Covington, Kentucky, March 7, 1900, Plat of St. Mary's Old Cathedral Cemetery, drawn by Jas L. Gory, Surveyor.
16. *Ibid*.
17. Deed from William P. Devou, Jr. and Charles P. Devou to the City of Covington, 28 November 1910, in Deed Book 140, PP. 161. Notice the discrepancy between the plat map and the reported deed of .02 acres of land. In all further deeds it is reported that 1.86 acres was conveyed to Sarah O. Devou.
18. Deed from Rt. Rev. Camillus P. Maes to Sarah O. Devou, 24 March 1900, in Deed Book 103, pp. 586.
19. Deed from William P. Devou, Jr. and Charles P. Devou to the City of Covington, DB 140, pp. 161.
20. Deed from Rt. Rev. Camillus P. Maes to Sarah O. Devou, DB 103, pp. 586. 21. Deed from Rev. George A. Carroll to Louise J. Devou, April 1867, 3 July 1867, in Deed Book 15, pp. 229.
22. Deed from Rt. Rev. John Lamy to Rt. Rev. George A. Carroll, 13 June 1867, recorded 25 June 1867, in Deed Book 15, pp. 192.
23. Deed from Edward Purcell to Rt. Rev. George A. Carroll, 19 September 1856, recorded 10 July 1867, in Deed Book 16, pp. 318.
24. Deed from Rt. Rev. John Lamy to Edward Purcell, 20 November 1850, in Deed Book 17, pp. 215.
25. Deed from Charles Henry Hayes to Rt. Rev. John Lamy, 15 July 1850, recorded 25 June 1867, in Deed Book 15, pp. 190.
26. Ryan, *History of the Diocese of Covington, Kentucky*, pp. 115.
27. Deed from Rt. Rev. John Lamy to Edward Purcell, DB 17, pp. 215. Note that the ten acre plot of land was transferred to Edward Purcell and not Rt. Rev. Edward Purcell. I am of the opinion that the two are one in the same because in later documents Edward Purcell is regarded as the Rt. Rev. The Rt. Rev. Edward Purcell was at the time the Archbishop of the Diocese of Cincinnati, Ohio. He is also regarded in the *History of the Diocese of Covington, Kentucky* to be the Archbishop of the Diocese of Covington, Kentucky. However, when this transfer took place the Diocese of Covington, Kentucky did not exist. The Diocese of Covington was not formed until 1853.
28. It is possible that this transfer occurred due to the fact that, according to the *History of the Diocese of Covington, Kentucky* by Rev. Paul E. Ryan. Rt. Rev. John Lamy was named as the first Bishop of the Diocese of Santa Fe, New Mexico. The transfer from Lamy to Purcell ensured that the property would stay within the Diocese of Cincinnati.
29. Deed from Edward Purcell to Rt. Rev. George A. Carroll, DB 16, pp. 318.
30. Ryan, *History of the Diocese of Covington, Kentucky*, pp. 142.
31. Deed from Rt. Rev. John Lamy to Rt. Rev. George A. Carroll, DB 15, pp. 215.
32. A possible reason for the ten acres being transferred so many times might be that the Diocese of Cincinnati realized that none of the prior deeds were recorded or recognized as public transfers by the county. When Rt. Rev. John Lamy left St. Mary's parish he transferred the property to Edward Purcell to keep it in the control of the Diocese of Cincinnati and once the Diocese of Covington was formed in 1853, the property was to be turned over to Rt. Rev. George A. Carroll. It was with the sale to Louise J. Devou that the Diocese realized that they did not own the property, so quit claim deeds were signed by Edward Purcell and Rt. Rev. John Lamy and were recorded before the property was conveyed to Devou. However, there are no written records to support this claim.
33. Archives of the Diocese of Covington, Kentucky, March 7, 1900, Plat of St. Mary's Old Cathedral Cemetery, drawn by Jas L. Gory, Surveyor.
34. *Ibid*.
35. Archives of the Diocese of Covington, Kentucky, March 7, 1900, Plat of St. Mary's Old Cathedral Cemetery drawn by Jas L. Gory, Surveyor.

New Street in Covington

The street that links the new St. Elizabeth Medical Center with Main Street near 12th Street in Covington will be dedicated to James Simpson, Jr., Covington's first African-American city commissioner, and father of Arnold Simpson (D), Covington's first African-American State representative.

The elder Simpson, a funeral director at Jones and Simpson, served on the hospital's board of trustees for more than a decade. James was a Covington Commissioner from 1971 to 1973.

Would You Like To Be Published In The KCHS Bulletin or Northern Kentucky Heritage Magazine?

The Kenton County Historical Society is always looking for stories for its award-winning Bulletin and Northern Kentucky Heritage Magazine.

To submit an article, send a paper copy by mail, or email it as a Word document attachment. Articles for the Bulletin should be no longer than 500 words and must have at least two references. Stories for the magazine should be at least 5,000 words and have endnotes. Related photographs would help greatly in the article's inclusion.

nkyheritage.kchs@juno.com.

P.O. Box 641, Covington, KY 41012
(859) 431-2666

Feel free to contact us with any questions you may have about submitting an article.

Harvey Myers' Dream

Birth of the Twin Oaks Country Club

Robert D. Webster

Harvey Myers had a dream. A former member and frequent player at the Ft. Mitchell Country Club, Myers envisioned a regulation 18-hole championship golf course in Northern Kentucky to accommodate the rapidly growing number of people in the region interested in playing the wonderful game.¹ In the early 1920s, the state of Kentucky was home to many nine-hole courses, including Ft. Mitchell, where golfers would play the nine holes twice to make up the 18 required holes. The Commonwealth, however, had just two regulation courses, both of which were located in Louisville. Two new courses in Lexington had been proposed, as well as a third in Louisville, but all were still on the drawing boards.

By mid 1922, Harvey Myers had talked with other golf enthusiasts in the area and a plan was soon in the works. On December 5, 1922, a name and location had been chosen for the club, and with capitol stock of \$100,000, articles of incorporation were filed in Kenton County for the Twin Oaks Country Club.² According to those articles, the "purpose" of the corporation was to "establish and maintain upon its grounds a golf course and other such outdoor sports or recreation as may be desired, including tennis, boating, swimming and fishing."³

The chosen site was about as ideal as possible for such an endeavor - 140 acres of slightly-rolling terrain extending nearly one mile along the beautiful Licking River and about three-quarters of a mile wide.⁴ The grounds were scattered with magnificent oak and elm trees many centuries in growth. One large lake and several of smaller size also contributed to the beautiful landscape. The course was to be located in the small suburb of Rosedale, a few miles south of Covington, and not far from the popular Latonia Race Track. According to an article in the *Kentucky Post*, the new club would be "...just 23 minutes south of the Dixie Terminal by streetcar."⁵

Charter members, according to the *Kentucky Post* article, "...embrace many of the best known men of the community and attest to the great and growing interest in this clean outdoor sport." Incorporators included: Harvey Myers, B. F. Davidson, F. Michaels, H. P. Colville, Polk Laffoon, John L. Shuff, William T. Stevenson, A. W. Hubbard, J. W. Menzies, M. J. Winn, Maurice L. Galvin, Joseph L. Lackner, U. J. Howard, Frank F. Thorpe, A. B. Thrasher, L. B. Wilson, Joseph F. Pieper, Goerge L. Hill, W. Gordon Stewart, Charles I. Carrico, F. C. Tuttle, Stephens L. Blakely, Hamilton James, William Corey, William H. Chatfield, J. M. Lassing, A. B. Rouse, R. C. Stewart, D. M. Bowman, Dr. George B. McClintock, Thomas R. Morgan, W. S. Groom, Harry L. Deming, Homer J. Northcutt, J. Robert Kelley, J. L. Crigler, G. Eaton, Jr., Andrew Vennie, S. M. Billiter, John Hackmeister, H. E. Cree, W. G. Walker, E. Nelson High, Richard P. Ernst, Lewis B. Lewin, W. M. Perin, Herbert Jackson, T. W. Spinks, B. L. Kilgour, A Clifford Shinkle, Harry E. Walker, Louis Levermann, John Hanauer, Mason Towle, W. Frank Glenn, Jr., Robert Black, J. T. Hatfield, Shelly D. Rouse, Frank J. Bruen, and Luther S. Rose.

Tiny Rosedale was no stranger to sports and recreation. As early as 1900, the Cincinnati Gun Club utilized an area along the Licking River and south of present-day 44th Street as a get-away for its members. A large swimming pool was just one of the many amenities.⁶

The golf course was designed by Arthur G. Lockwood, professional golfer and well-known architect of courses at the time. Lockwood would go on to design nearly one hundred golf courses nationwide.⁷ The course would total 6,600 yards, would include various sand hazards and would incorporate the existing lakes into the design in order to more substantially challenge each golfer. With ten teams

of horses, work began on the fairways in September 1922.⁸ In October 1923, many of the holes were near completion and a committee of Hugh Colville, Joseph Larkner and Harvey Myers held an “open house” at the club. An interesting sidebar was the newspaper article detailing directions to the Twin Oaks Country Club. “*Temporary route, pending construction of Memorial Drive, is south on Madison Avenue to Rogers, left and across the railroad to Decoursey, south to 43rd Street, left on 43rd into the grounds.*” Memorial Drive may have been a proposal in the German street name purge of World War I for what is now James Avenue, which circles past Meinken Field and connects present-day Decoursey Avenue with Madison Avenue near 26th Street.

The design of the new course was ultra modern, providing water supply to every green and tee box and also allowing proper drainage from all fairways.⁹ The large lake, visible on the left side of the entrance to the club, was even supplied with game fish.¹⁰ The course also had what was described as a “quaint little clubhouse.”¹¹

Twin Oaks opened unofficially in September 1924, though only 11 fairways and greens were in place. A formal grand opening was scheduled for the spring of 1925.¹² Archie Simpson, Jr. replaced Harvey Myers as the club’s pro that same year. More importantly, it was determined at this time that while the first 11 holes were laid out wonderfully, the last seven seemed somewhat backward. Several alterations were discussed and quickly adopted. There was no delay in the completion of the course.

The most challenging hole, described as “the cleverest golf hole anywhere in the Cincinnati area,” was number seven.¹³ The hole was a 360-yard dogleg right to a strongly-banked green on the south side of the clubhouse. The green was also heavily bunkered. The tee box sat to the north of the entrance driveway and near the number 10 green, meaning golfers were required to make their initial hit over the driveway to a landing zone just to the south of the clubhouse. It was a challenging hole indeed! Over the years, this hole’s design has changed drastically, not only due to the later relocation of the clubhouse, but likely due to the number of automobiles and pedestrians pounded

by stray drives off the tee. Today this hole is a short par three, with the tee box in the approximate location of the original landing zone.

By December 1924, talk was already underway for a new clubhouse, as the quickly increasing membership had already outgrown the original structure. Though a drawing of a massive English Tudor-style building appeared in the *Kentucky Post* on April 11, 1926, the final design was a much more modest, but still very impressive two-story building with a large wrap-around balcony. A stone double-archway was also erected at the front of the long driveway facing 43rd Street. One small arch on the left provided entrance for pedestrians while the larger arch on the right allowed passage for motorists. The entranceway, too, has changed over the years. Today, only the pedestrian arch remains, with stone pillars on both sides, marking an entrance and an exit for vehicles.

In 1925, the redesigned back nine was finished on schedule and the championship 18-hole course was ready for an official grand opening, held the first week of April. On June 23, 1925, the Kentucky Women’s Golf Championship was held at Twin Oaks. With 52 participants from all over the state, great publicity was given the new course. While the event was one of the most important sporting events ever held in Covington, it would be only a few weeks before it was overshadowed by another big event. On August 5, 1925, world champion golfer Walter Hagen teemed with Telford Gibraski in a contest against English Open champion, Archie Compston, and French Open champ, Aubrey Boomer. Nearly 10,000 spectators attended and the event really put Twin Oaks on the golfing map. Maybe he was just being kind, but Hagan told reporters after the contest that the Twin Oaks course was the best he had ever played upon.¹⁴

With the quick success of the golf course, new life was experienced by the adjacent but by then stagnant pool. In 1925, the tract had been sold and the Rosedale Park Swimming Club was organized. A new pool, 50’ by 150’ was constructed, along with large bathhouses and a restaurant. By the early 1930s, Rosedale Park had become a major amusement attraction. A scenic railway, Ferris wheel, roller coaster and

various carnival-style games joined the swimming pool and Northern Kentucky actually had a facility similar to Cincinnati's Chester Park or Coney Island.

In 1929, several improvements to the golf course were made, at the suggestion of the course's new pro, Alex Baxter. Several tee boxes were enlarged, a practice putting green was laid near the clubhouse, 1,500 black bass were added to the large lake, and two stone walkways were constructed – one leading from the clubhouse to the number one tee box and the other leading from the number eighteen green back to the clubhouse.¹⁵ Jim Brophy became the new pro in 1931. He introduced a reduced-fare, junior division to the club's membership and began a "ladies only" event – including a full day of golf, huge picnic and relaxing swimming.¹⁶ The event was a great success and was repeated for many years.

The early 1930s also saw Twin Oaks shine as a stop for professional golfers on what is now the PGA Tour.¹⁷ With the proximity of the Licking River, various portions of the course were closed many times over the years due to high water. The great flood of 1937 did major damage to the golf course and clubhouse, but more importantly brought the permanent end as its use as a professional tour location. Furthermore, the amusement park, which had changed hands several times by then was all but destroyed.¹⁸

By 1939, the once-picturesque course was described as "neglected" and was "frowned upon by the golfing public."¹⁹ In 1940, the course was taken over by the Mutual Benefit Association, a group fronted by the Union, Light, Heat and Power Company and the Green Line Company. Though open to the general public, the course would serve as a recreation center for employees of the two companies. Many improvements were made to the course, including the addition of tennis and volleyball courts, softball fields and other amenities. The clubhouse received extensive renovations as well. Tom Parker, named club pro in 1939, was placed in charge of overseeing the additions and renovations.

The first annual Twin Oaks Festival was held on July 28, 1940, with five softball games of Green Line employees facing off against those of the



View of clubhouse from top of driveway during 1964 flood

UHL&P. A full children's playground was installed complete with merry-go-round and pony track. Dining and dancing capped off the day's festivities. Advertisements informed readers that the Rosedale Trolley stopped within a block of the entrance.²⁰

In the 1950s, the highlight was certainly when Dwight Eisenhower apparently tackled the course.²¹ During the 1960s and early 1970s, Twin Oaks thrived once again, but by the late 1970s, other courses had opened in the region bringing stiff competition for the golfer's dollar. The vacant amusement park property gave way to a mobile home park. The swimming pool remained open most seasons – under private ownership, under supervision of the YMCA and finally by the City of Covington Parks and Recreation Department.

In the late 1970s, local realtor Jim Huff was told to place the course on the market. While having dinner with friends, he mentioned his new listing to Cincinnati restaurateurs, Jim and Rosemary Swingos. The Swingos family had owned Cincinnati's Loll 43, the Knickerbocker and the Iron Gate eateries. They admit that initially the purchase was seen as simply a good investment, but quickly the beauty of the course and the love of the game made ownership of Twin Oaks their primary attention. Rosemary is credited with the redesign of several holes, making the course more challenging and beautiful than ever.

In 1995, a fungus problem with native bluegrass on the fairways brought a need to reseed the entire course. The following year, due to continued diseases to grass locally, the decision was made to re-



Jim Swingos — Owner of Twin Oaks circa 1980

seed the 18 holes with Bermuda grass. Then came 1997 and another major flood of the nearby Licking River. Renovations to the clubhouse were estimated at between \$300,000 and \$400,000 and construction of a new building was quoted at just over \$1 million. The owners decided a new clubhouse made more sense. Construction began in July 1997 on a 13,000-square-foot facility that would not only house a pro shop, grill and meeting rooms, but also a large banquet facility that could be utilized year-round for wedding receptions and other festivities. The entire structure would be built on an elevated foundation, safe from any future floodwaters. The old clubhouse, one of the oldest buildings in Covington’s southern neighborhood, would be torn down to make room for a larger parking lot. After the flood, holes 12, 13, and 14 were completely re-designed and holes 10, 11, and 12 received a great deal of attention as well.²² Once all renovations and reconstruction was completed, the course officially reopened as the Twin Oaks Golf and Plantation Club.



Clubhouse at the Twin Oaks Golf and Plantation Club

Today, Twin Oaks remains as one of the more picturesque golf courses in the region and continues in the Swingos family. Jim and Rosemary, now in their 31st year, are the owners; son, Glenn, serves as the course superintendent; and daughter, Susie Swingos-Hilliard, is the general manager. Over 120 golf outings will take place this season, and the course will once again host more than 40 leagues. Both Holy Cross and Notre Dame utilize Twin Oaks as their home. The beautiful banquet facility will cater more than 75 weddings and other events through the year and is a favorite venue for Christmas parties.²³ It is clear, the Swingos family made the perfect decision, making Harvey Meyers’ early dream their own.

1. *The Kentucky Post*, September 17, 1924, page 6
2. *The Kentucky Post*, December 5, 1922, page 1
3. *The Kentucky Post*, December 5, 1922, page 1
4. *The Kentucky Post*, December 5, 1922, page 1
5. *The Kentucky Post*, September 17, 1924, page 6
6. *The Kentucky Post*, October 15, 1919, page 1
7. *The Kentucky Post*, December 5, 1922, page 1
8. *The Kentucky Post*, December 5, 1922, page 1
9. *The Kentucky Post*, September 10, 1924, page 2
10. *The Kentucky Post*, September 10, 1924, page 2
11. *The Kentucky Post*, September 10, 1924, page 2
12. *The Kentucky Post*, September 10, 1924, page 2
13. *The Kentucky Post*, September 10, 1924, page 2
14. *The Kentucky Post*, August 15, 1925, page 3
15. *The Kentucky Post*, August 24, 1929, page 14
16. *The Kentucky Post*, July 19, 1931, page 9
17. *The Kentucky Post*, May 6, 1933, page 2
18. *The Kentucky Post*, May 2, 1930, page 1
19. *The Kentucky Post*, March 15, 1940, page 20
20. *The Kentucky Post*, July 27, 1940, page 1
21. John Erardi, *The Cincinnati Enquirer*, July 6, 2000, page B2
22. *Ibid.*
23. Information supplied to the author by Susie Swingos-Hilliard in January 2009.

A Look Back at The Headlines

An on-going feature reliving local headlines

This issue features:

The Kentucky Post – August 15, 1922.

Erlanger Fair

This year's Erlanger Fair promises to excel all others. Erlanger and all of Northern Kentucky is bedecked in gala attire in honor of the time-honored fair, which will open tomorrow at the Erlanger Fairgrounds.

Feature after feature will greet the eye of every visitor as he or she enters the fairgrounds.

This year's fair will be unique, in that there will be "doings" each night. Last year, festivities closed each evening at 6 o'clock.

Good roads leading to this year's fair, it is said, will have much to do with the anticipated success. The Dixie Highway is much improved this year, as are many of the other roads leading to Erlanger.

Advertisements

The full-page Coppin's Economy Days ad includes:

4-qt ice cream freezer.....	\$1.69
men's silk ties.....	.50¢
little girl's dresses.....	\$1.00
10-piece earthenware cook set.....	.98¢

Averbeck Machine Company – 110 East 2nd St
"Let us regrind your cylinders, fit new pistons and rings. This will give your motor life and enthusiasm to whisk you over the hills of Old Kentucky on high."

Other Featured Businesses

Latonia Springs Dairy – 224 East 20th Street
Covington Buick Company – 620 Scott
Retschulte's Dixie Inn – Dixie Hwy., Ft. Mitchell

Rail Car to become Radio Station

Karl Lietzenmayer

After nearly 15 years here, the *Judge Milton Brown* has moved to Jackson, Tennessee. This 85-foot long Pullman Car had been a fixture at the Railway Museum in Latonia since 1994. The car will become the studio home of American Family Radio, which broadcasts on three FM stations in and near Jackson (between Memphis and Nashville). Owner Ed Vieth of Greenhills decided six years ago to donate it to the nonprofit broadcasting company. It took them all that time through grants, etc. to raise the \$52,000 to transport it there.

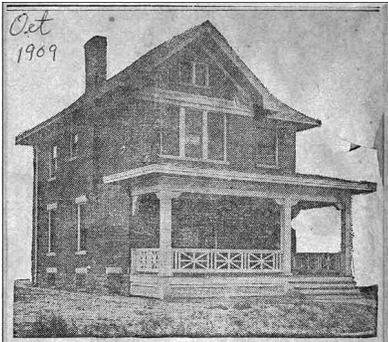
The Pullman was built in 1950 for \$148,000 and named after Judge Brown, a Lebanon, Ohio native who was president of the Mississippi Central & Tennessee Railroad (1854-56) and president of the Mobile and Ohio Railroad (1856-71). He was also a judge in Tennessee, served the state in the U.S. House of Representatives and helped bring the railroad to Jackson, Tennessee.

Only four cars were produced of that model and it ran from Chicago to Mobile through 1958 and from Chicago to St. Louis until 1969. The *Judge* was taken out of service in 1969 and purchased in 1970 by the owners of Eastern Machinery Company, Cincinnati. The owners were friends of the Vieth family and used it to entertain.

"I remember being 3 years old and sleeping in it," said Vieth. One half of the car had a narrow hallway with 3 bedrooms and a compartment with table and chairs. The other half was used to entertain.

As the owners of the car aged, they gave it to Vieth. In 1993 it was moved to the Latonia Museum where it has been ever since until December 2008. Vieth researched the car and Judge Brown, which led him to Tennessee and the suitable recipient.

Then and Now



FOR SALE, \$4000.

This beautiful new brick house, No. 1729 Woodburn-av.; just completed. Six rooms and bath, reception hall, furnace and cement cellar; illuminating and fuel gas; wired for electric lighting. This house is located on one of the prettiest squares in the city, and must be seen to be appreciated.

For terms or other information, inquire of The Woodburn-av. Land Co., John E. Hickey, President; A. E. Moteh, Secretary and Treasurer, 613 Madison-av.

Left and right:
Then and now views of home on
Covington's Woodburn Avenue

Left photo is sale advertisement
from newspaper in 1909. Right
photo was taken in 2009.
Home was advertised as being located
at 1729 but as house numbers
changed over the years, is now
1731 Woodburn.



Many thanks to Ron Einhaus

Mystery Photo

Can you identify the mystery photo below? The answer can be found at the bottom of the page.



ANSWER:

Tower at Trinity Church, Covington.

Kenton County Historical Society
P.O. Box 641
Covington, Kentucky 41012-0641
Web: www.kentonlibrary.org
Email: nkyheritage.kchs@juno.com

NON-PROFIT
ORGANIZATION
U.S. POSTAGE PAID
Covington, KY
41011
PERMIT NO. 297



Dedicated to preserving our heritage as the "Gateway to the South"

KENTON COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

March / April 2009



Behringer-Crawford Museum as seen from the probable location
of the Old Cathedral Cemetery

Feature Story:

**Vanishing into the Underbrush:
Re-discovering St. Mary's Cemetery**

Other Stories Inside:

Harvey Myers' Dream - Birth of Twin Oaks Country Club
New Street in Covington
Rail Car to be Radio Station