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**The Cleveland Heights Historical Society**

2721 Colchester Road • Cleveland Heights, Ohio 44106-3650

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*\*The Deming and Severance Memberships include one free admission to the Historical Society's annual fundraiser and periodic acknowledgement in "View from The Overlook."*

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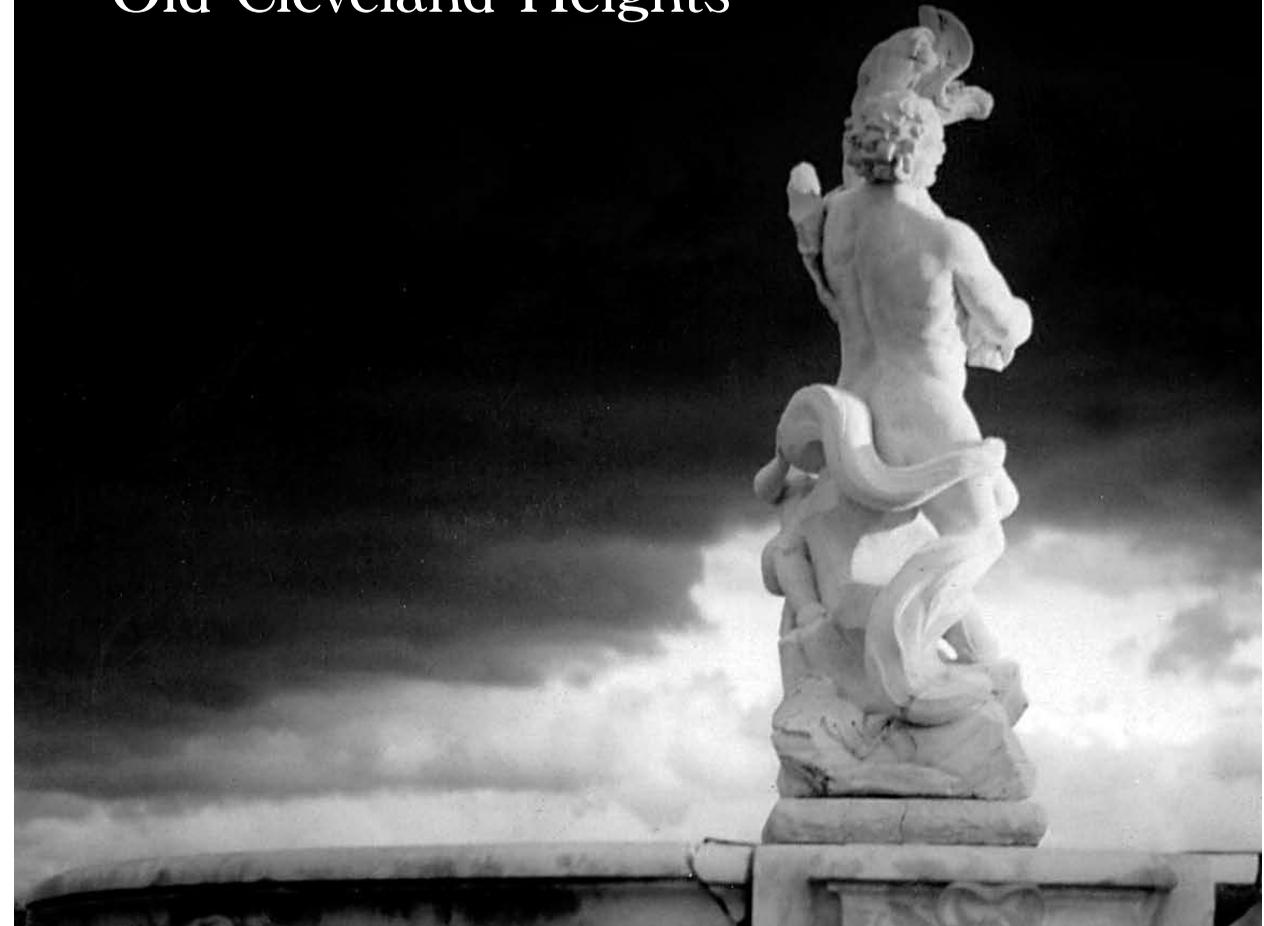
**View from  
The Overlook**  
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Remnants of  
"Old Cleveland Heights"



# The Cleveland Heights Historical Society



2721 Colchester Road  
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The Cleveland Heights Historical Society, founded in 1983, is a state-chartered, 501(c)(3), not-for-profit organization.

#### Our Mission

The Cleveland Heights Historical Society is dedicated to preserving and promoting the diverse character and traditions of Cleveland Heights.

As a community-based historic organization, the Society encourages and facilitates greater knowledge, understanding and awareness of the heritage of Cleveland Heights.

## Historic Images of Cleveland Heights Available Online

Over a year ago, staff from the cities of Cleveland Heights and University Heights, the CH-UH City School District, the CH-UH Public Library, the Cleveland Heights Historical Society and Cleveland State University met to discuss how the archives of these organizations could be pulled together and shared with the public. Through a collaborative effort of the City of Cleveland Heights, Cleveland State University and Cleveland Heights resident, Steve Titchenal, the City is proud to unveil the first phase of a "web exhibit," entitled **Cleveland Heights & University Heights, Ohio: A Collection of Historic Images**, highlighting historic Cleveland Heights photos at [www.ClevelandMemory.org/chuh](http://www.ClevelandMemory.org/chuh).

The photos in the online collection are primarily from the Cleveland Heights Historical Center at Superior Schoolhouse where the city's Historic Preservation Planner, Kara Hamley O'Donnell, has gathered, cataloged, databased and digitized more than 700 historic images of the city.

### Searching for images

Log on to [www.ClevelandMemory.org/chuh/](http://www.ClevelandMemory.org/chuh/) The default search box will match any of the words you enter with any field identifying the images in the CH-UH Collection. The advanced search link allows you limit your search to specific fields and collections. You can also search for phrases such as "Heights High" or eliminate words.

When you click on the thumbnail image, you will be taken to a larger image and additional fields of information about the image. Any field term in blue will link to all the images in CH-UH collection for that term. At the bottom of the field list are links to the image location using two online mapping services. You can compare the past and present of the location using the services' building views in addition to the overhead satellite view. Microsoft Virtual Earth's link includes the "birds eye view" feature with views of the location from four directions taken from a low flying airplane. Google Maps' link includes the "street view" feature for much of Cleveland Heights with views of both sides of the street taken from a van.

### Help expand the collection

The CH-UH Archives Group hopes to update this Cleveland Memory web exhibit bi-yearly, so there will always be new photos to explore. If you are in possession of historic images or items related to Cleveland Heights or University Heights history, it is hoped that you will consider donating or loaning these items so they may be added to the Cleveland Memory website. For information, contact Kara Hamley O'Donnell at the Cleveland Heights Department of Planning and Development, 216-291-4885 or [kodonnell@clvhts.com](mailto:kodonnell@clvhts.com)

# Remnants of "Old Cleveland Heights"

By Ken Goldberg

Cleveland Heights is a vibrant community with an exciting present, a bright future and an intriguing past. About the present we're cautious but upbeat. The future we obviously know little about, but again are confident. Of the past, however, we understand quite a bit since much is captured in photos, books, maps and personal recollections. Still, a lot of Cleveland Heights' past exists only as remnants—small physical pieces or fragments that offer hints, clues or clear evidence of a bygone era. Cleveland Heights is full of them: tell-tale signs of long-gone farms, and century-old settlements, mansions, and estates. Think of this story as a figurative walking tour of another time—man-made verifications of what came before.

## Water Marks

The two northern Shaker Lakes – Lower and Horseshoe – border Cleveland Heights on the north and Shaker Heights on the south. The lakes themselves are owned by the City of Cleveland and leased to the City of Shaker Heights for \$1 for 100 years. They also are the area's largest manmade reminder of the once vibrant Shaker settlement that existed here in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. The most extensive structural evidence is at the western edge



Figure 1: The old Shaker Canoe Club on the south bank of the Lower Lake.

of Lower Lake, where the Shakers created a dam to power their sawmill. The bridge just south of North Park Boulevard and east of Coventry Road has been largely rebuilt, but the first structures in this vicinity were created by the Shakers. Stand on the bridge and look west toward the city; the foundation stones that define the ravine are Shaker creations. Now head down the path just south of the ravine. Right before Coventry you can look down into a deep gully and see several large stone structures, one of which looks like a giant couch. At one time, these were part of the Shaker sawmill. Viewing the site from the

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Coventry sidewalk you can see an entranceway to the mill framed by two giant stone posts—probably also Shaker made.

Now observe the southwest corner of Coventry Road and North Park Boulevard. Largely denuded, this space was once the site of the Shaker West family’s wash house, milk house and work shed. While very little remains in this area, a variety of possible foundation stones can be seen embedded in the ground. Looking north across North Park (the northwest corner of Coventry Road), the heavily forested front yard of a private residence contains the likely remnants of a Shaker workshop and cow barn. Most of the stones are part of a large hump in the front yard, about 50 feet from the sidewalk. Since this a private residence, we cannot encourage close inspection, but the mound is quite visible from the street, especially during the winter months. Just to the west of this property (towards what is now Demington Drive) there was an apple orchard in the Shaker era.

Technically in Shaker Heights, but still of interest to Cleveland Heights history sleuths, are a partial building foundation and boat ramp on the south shore of the Lower Lake. These are all that remain of the Shaker Canoe Club which was operational into the 1970s (Figure 1). The club stood near the giant mulch pile, in the parking lot where Leighton Road intersects with South Park and Larchmere Boulevards.

## Wall-to-Wall Walls

As we’ve already seen, history’s best remnants are often made of stone, and Cleveland

Heights is no exception. Upon entering Cleveland Heights from the west, one of the first and finest examples is the stone wall bordering the Overlook Park Apartments at Euclid Heights Boulevard and Overlook Road. This is almost all that remains of the Howard Parmelee Eels mansion that stood on the site until the early 1940s. Eels’ father, Daniel Eels, was president of Commercial National Bank of Cleveland, a director of 32 firms,



*Figure 2: The developers of Overlook Park Apartments incorporated the front door of the old Eels mansion into their design.*



*Figure 3: Coeds hang out in front of the Ursuline Library, formerly the Harmon Kelley House at Cedar and Overlook Rd., c., 1966.*

and held interests in oil, iron, steel, cement, coke, gas, and railroads. Other remnants of the Eels era include the stone gates that link various segments of the wall, additional stone and stair segments behind the building, and the fascinating placement of the mansion’s original front door into the existing building (Figure 2).

Look west from the apartments to the other side of Overlook Road and you’ll see the Carlton tennis courts. Long before these were built, this was the property of Harmon Kelly, whose home (technically part of Cleveland) became the Ursuline College library when the institution moved to Overlook from Euclid Avenue in 1927 (Figure 3). Walk between the tennis courts and the ridge overlooking Cedar Glen, About 100 yards from Overlook you’ll see a several free-standing walls. Could these have been part of the Kelly estate’s back yard?

Now head up Cedar Hill to where it branches at Fairmount Boulevard. Right at the corner is a squat stone wall. This is all that remains of the Frank Lloyd Wright-influenced Miller home, “Wildwood,” which had been set further back and designed to be integrated within a natural setting. Consider also that the entire channel created to construct the first stretch of Fairmount Boulevard was chiseled out to allow traffic flow up the hill. On either side, natural stone layers can be seen; however on the left (north) side, the foundation wall erected by Barton Deming to contain his fantastic (still standing) home is on display, along with an arbor wall behind the house adjacent to the new condominiums.

More Cleveland Heights wall remnants abound further east. One is the lengthy partition that borders The Beaumont School, inside of which is the former estate of Kenyon V. Painter (now the Beaumont nunnery). The high stone-and-stucco wall along Fairmount was part of Painter’s garage, stable and aviary. Looking west from Beaumont across Lee Road, a newer wavy brick wall incorporates a segment of the original stone wall of the Rollin H. White property, which now houses the Carmelite monastery.

Among the best known of all Cleveland Heights walls is the stone structure along Mayfield Road, east of North Taylor. As many readers know, this is a holdover not from the Jewish Community Center, but from the Julia Severance Millikin family’s Ben Brae and the Dudley and Elizabeth Severance Allen

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family’s Glen Allen estates. No walls remain from John L. Severance’s estate across the street (southeast corner of Mayfield and South Taylor Roads). However, one can observe the estate’s fountain which now graces the side lawn of Cleveland Heights City Hall (cover photo). Other leftovers from the John L. Severance days include the stables that still stand between Severance Town Center and Crest Road (more or less behind the post office), most likely the small lake adjoining the Courtyards of Severance townhouse project—which also complemented the Austin Company headquarters (Figure 4)—and a row of trees at the mall property’s south border. The latter lined part of an old lane that graced the estate’s western entrance.

The North Taylor walls seem quite plain compared to the magnificent stone and brick



Figure 4: The small lake adjoining the Courtyards of Severance previously enhanced the Austin Company landscape.

wall and wrought iron fence along East Overlook Road, Mornington Lane and Edgehill Road. These massive structures and their accompanying gates are not all that are left of the fantastic John Briggs estate, whose main house was mostly torn down in the 1960s (Figure 5). Still standing are the former ballroom at the property’s western edge, a beautiful tile-lined swimming pool (Figure 6), a children’s playhouse, and numerous free-standing walls—all cleverly incorporated into the Mornington Condominiums.

### *A Few Bridges*

Take a walk on the south side of North Park Boulevard west of Coventry or down into the Roxboro Ravine (Doan Brook) and you’ll soon see the remnants of a suspension bridge that linked Fairhill Road and North Park Boulevard. We believe that the bridge may have been used at the beginning of the 20th Century to transport stone quarried from the ravine or from near what is now Baldwin Reservoir. It could also have been built by the Shakers to move grain from the 19th-century gristmill that once stood in the vicinity of what are now Kemper Road and Stokes Boulevard. Comparatively miniscule in contrast, a small, ornamental bridge behind a home

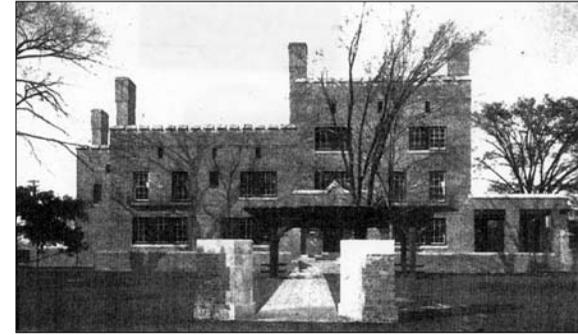


Figure 5: The Briggs Estate shortly after its completion.

on Glen Allen Drive is the only holdover from the extensive gardens surrounding the aforementioned Glen Allen mansion that faced Mayfield Road.

### *Wood-be Remnants*

While wood remnants are few, several do exist. One is the gateway to the Forest Hill development, partly in Cleveland Heights. It is the smallish, gray-blue-shingled cottage at Lee and Monticello Boulevards. This was once Abeyton Reality—the Rockefeller developers’ real estate office. It now serves as the headquarters of the Forest Hill Homeowners Association. Until relatively recently, the Rockefeller family stables stood not far from the Forest Hill



Figure 6: Bathers enjoy the Briggs Estate swimming pool, c., 1960.

ball fields. Another wooden symbol of bygone Cleveland Heights—and also connected with Forest Hill—is the austere set of buildings that often surprise visitors to Park Synagogue. These structures (which will soon be razed) remain from a grouping that once was the Park School. Founded in 1918, the School moved into them in 1929.

### *Many More Remnants*

The remnants mentioned in this article are hardly an exhaustive list. There are many more that we know about, including the main entrance to Cleveland Heights’ City Hall, now incorporated into the Motorcars building on Mayfield Road, and the City Hall entrance-light fixtures that now decorate the Police Academy on Noble Road near Monticello Boulevard. One could also cite Herrick Mews—the Landmark enclave off Overlook Road—whose beautiful private residences used to be the stables that served several mansions lining Overlook Road in the early 1900s. There also remains a smattering of 19<sup>th</sup>-century houses along Bluestone road—holdovers from Bluestone village. And lastly, there are prominent and subtle remnants of the many intra-urban trolleys that once graced Cleveland Heights. Always visible are the many median strips on Fairmount, Euclid Heights and Washington Boulevard where streetcars or “dingies” once ran. Less obvious are the occasional pipes through which power to the transit lines was passed (e.g., the strange black structure jutting out of the tree lawn on Hampstead Road near Cedar).

Are there more remnants? Absolutely! Perhaps you are aware of some that we could cite when this consummately updatable article is republished in the future. Thank you in advance.