

# Terrace Park Trees

February 2004

By Carol C. Cole

First and foremost, this month I must remind everyone that in order to belong to the Terrace Park Historical Society and receive our newsletter "The Tracker" one must pay dues. Our new year started January 1<sup>st</sup> and according to our new treasurer there are in fact more past members who have not paid their dues than those who have. Dues are only \$25 for a family and \$15 for a single member. A corporate membership is \$50 and we'd love to have the support of some local businesses. Of course we always welcome new members! Please send your dues to Carol B. Cole, 725 Wooster Pike, Terrace Park OH 45174.

At our February meeting Helen Tollefsen gave a most informative talk on Terrace Park artists. This was especially appropriate since John Rockaway has made arrangements for us to visit the Cincinnati Art Galleries (225 East Sixth Street downtown). They have invited us and our guests to a preview of their show of paintings by Terrace Park artist Charles Meurer (1865-1955). This is scheduled for March 3<sup>rd</sup> at 5:30 PM. Besides viewing a large selection of Meurer paintings, the staff of the gallery will present a discussion of them and of Meurer's life. If you have paintings by Meurer you are invited to bring them along for appraisal. If you would like to attend this special event (and you don't have to be a member of the Historical Society) please let John Rockaway know at 965-8660 or [jrockaway@cinci.rr.com](mailto:jrockaway@cinci.rr.com). The Galleries need to know how many people to expect. Please also let John know if you need a ride or can offer a ride to others. This Meurer show will open to the public March 5 and run through the beginning of April.

The January issue of Village Views carried a long article entitled "TP Tree Program much more than slash and plant". That article told mainly about what's going on now with Terrace Park's tree program. In fact our interest in trees has been going on for a very long time. Early settlers found this area covered by trees, mainly oaks, but felled most of them for homes and farmlands. However, as early as 1841 the trustees of Columbia Township planted some silver poplars at the intersection of Indian Hill and Given Roads. Later each of the men who laid out subdivisions planted trees. George Washington Corey planted mainly oaks in the area he owned west of the railroad when he was developing Park Avenue. On his own Wooster Pike property (now listed as 723 Indian Hill) he planted pine and silver poplar. Pattison & Iuen planted both hard and soft maples north of Rugby Avenue. South of Rugby, James Sibley planted red maples. The trees on Elm Avenue between the bridge and the bend to the right were set out by the father-in-law of Chauncey Stuntz (625 Elm). Evidently those trees were a gift of Thomas Biggs (Gravelotte 720 Elm) and included maple, elm, ash, cherry, sycamore, poplar and tulip trees. When Terrace Park was incorporated in 1893, one of the first council's accomplishments was planting some 800 ash and maple trees. Last month's Village Views article states that the village planted 1,600 trees between 1896 and 1898. A note in the archives states that one could buy 600 trees for \$200 in 1895. Early pictures of Terrace Park show very few trees so it's easy to see why early developers and villagers planted trees.

Up to the end of the century there was no real plan as to what was planted, nor had care been taken to choose trees that would do well here. In January of 1900 Russell Errett and Lewis Gatch submitted a lengthy report to the mayor and council of Terrace Park on the subject of trees. They noted that “owing to the lack of system, and lack of intelligence in the work thus far done, the condition of our trees is in every respect anything but satisfactory. There is no uniformity whatever in the character of the trees, in the distances at which they are planted, or even in the arrangement of the different varieties.” “In all but a few instances the selection of trees is perhaps the worst that could have been made.” There were more red maples than any other tree and those were in particularly bad condition. All the trees blown down in gales the previous spring were red maples. A definite distinction was made “between trees suitable for Avenues and Streets, and such as are suitable for lawns and Parks. In the former class, uniformity is the desideratum; in the latter, variety.” The report goes on to discuss many trees as to their various characteristics including shape, foliage, rate of growth, eventual size in height and width, general durability and expected length of life. It would be interesting to compare their list of trees with those now on our master plan. A final suggestion in the report of 1900 was “the advisability of introducing in the Village School, in some grade, (preferably the High School grade) a course of instruction on Shade trees, so that the next generation of citizens of the place may give more intelligent consideration to the subject than we have done.”

Thus it can be seen that the Village of Terrace Park has for over 100 years taken enough interest to establish a plan by which trees were planted and cared for. I think we can be proud that this and later efforts have led to our designation since 1985 as a Tree City USA.

