

Reminiscences of Earlier Days in Terrace Park by Virginia Marquett and R. J. Vilardo

September 2002

By Carol C. Cole



On Sunday afternoon September 8th at 4PM over 40 enthusiastic people met at the Terrace Park Community House for another most interesting program. Virginia Marquett and R. J. Vilardo were our speakers. Both told about their memories of growing up in Terrace Park, but I am sure there is more to tell that we should record in our oral histories. Both Virginia and R. J. are graduates of Terrace Park School before the High School moved to Mariemont. They are responsible for the Terrace Park School Alumni Association which holds wonderful reunions for those fortunate enough to be graduates.

Virginia Marquett spoke first about her family's roots and how they came to this area. Her maiden name was Iuen and it is that family who came originally from Austria through France to Ohio and eventually to Terrace Park where they ran the Walnut Creek Dairy Farm. This was located on the north side of Wooster Pike with the family home on the hill overlooking the farm. Virginia writes in her family history, "Before the days of bottling milk, James (her grandfather) had milk routes in Cincinnati and sold milk to the housewives by the dipper. The butter churns were turned by horse power. An excellent spring on the property kept the milk and butter cold at all times. Men were hired to milk the cows and drive the horse-drawn milk wagons, but the older children were responsible for bringing in the cows and often helping with the milking. Daughter Edith Iuen Cook (Virginia's mother) told of riding her horse and driving the cows up to a farm in Monterey, Ohio, which was used as summer pasture."

Another Iuen relative, important to Terrace Park, lived in Milford. He formed a partnership with John M. Pattison, former Governor of the State of Ohio. Together they planned "a subdivision along the Little Miami River near Oxford and Miami Avenues...The lots were 50

ft x 190 ft with a six room house to cost about \$2,000. The interest rate was six percent. The paper streets were later vacated to become a country club for Terrace Park with a club house, nine hole golf course, and tennis courts. When the Terrace Park Country Club was later moved to its present location, this property was sold and subdivided” (again from Virginia’s family history).

On the south west corner of the Elm and Wooster Pike crossroads stood the Terrace Park Tavern, also known as the Iuen Tavern and later the Vilardo Tavern. It was built in the 1870s. The two story tavern of hand fired bricks, an addition to the original frame tavern/inn, was built by Virginia Marquett’s great grandfather. Travelers could spend the night at the inn and lodge their animals across Wooster Pike in Iuen barns before going on to markets and slaughter houses in Cincinnati the next day. After the Iuens the Inn was owned by the Kuntz family. R. J. Vilardo then told us the very interesting story of how it came in to the hands of the Vilardo family via the Fresh Air Farm on Given Road.

In 1984 what has now become Stepping Stones Center celebrated it’s 100th year of “serving the community”. The original idea of the Fresh Air Society was to provide a place “where the indigent could go for a rest and recuperation”. This Society “placed women and children (called beneficiaries) in various lodgings for short periods during the summer months”. At first housing was in the Tusculum area. Later an anonymous gentleman, who turned out to be Thomas Emery, offered to buy the Society a place of its own. He bought a farm and residence from Nora Spooner in 1897 to serve the Society’s purpose (information from Stepping Stones materials). It was to this Fresh Air Farm that R. J. Vilardo was sent one summer from the Camp Washington Area of Cincinnati. R. J. showed us slides of what the Fresh Air Farm was like before he came there and then told us about his life changing experiences at camp and after his father managed to buy the tavern business.

Terrace Park has meant a great deal to these two speakers and they certainly conveyed that to us. The same is true for a great many more of us and we hope in the future to hear many more stories of earlier times in Terrace Park. The next general meeting of the Terrace Park Historical Society will be on Sunday afternoon November 3rd at 4 PM in the Community House.