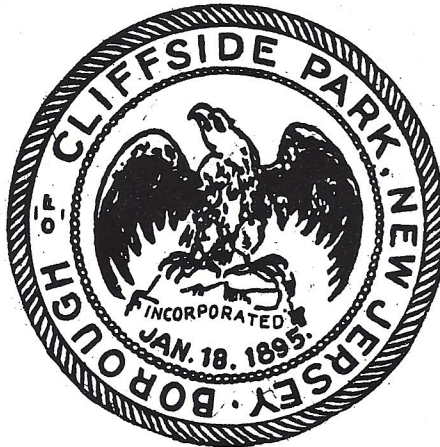


07010

CLIFFSIDE PARK, NEW JERSEY



Written by: Cliffside Park Public Schools' Seventh Grade Search Students:
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1995

The One-Hundredth Anniversary of the
Birth of Cliffside Park

We thank the following people for helping us produce this book.

Mayor Gerald Calabrese

Hon. James Madden

Constance Favara

Brian McGuirt

Thomas Fox

Bart Raffaele

Edward Kochanski

Bart Talamini

Robert Amarante and Salvatore Mastroeni
(Bergen Technical Schools, Teterboro)

Buzz Roth and the people at the Nutrition Center

The people at the Cliffside Park Library



This book is dedicated to all the people who have given so freely of themselves to make our town and our schools great. Some are mentioned in this book, many are not.

We would like to specifically mention two special people, Superintendent of Schools James Colagreco, and Mayor Gerald Calabrese. Mr. Colagreco has served our school system since 1953. He became Superintendent of Schools January 1972. Mayor Calabrese has been Mayor of Cliffside Park for thirty years. We wish them health and many more years of community service.



The Land

Cliffside Park is located at 40 49' North Latitude, 73 59' 50' West Longitude, which is near the Palisades of the Hudson River. Elevations range from 200 to 282 feet above sea level. Underneath the land is a layer of diabase and shale. Cliffside Park has the rockiest land in all of Bergen County. Exposed rock beds found in Cliffside Park show that glaciers were once in this area. It is estimated that this land was probably once covered with hundreds of feet of ice.

The Palisades were first seen by Europeans April 1524, when Giovanni da Verrazano sailed his ship, La Dauphie, up the Hudson River. He called this region "the Country of the Great Rocks". Robert Juet, a member of Henry Hudson's ship the Half Moon wrote, "This is a very good land fall and a pleasant land to see" . . . "There are cliffs that looked the color of white green, as though it were either copper or silver mine" . . . " the land is full of great tall oaks."

The "Great Rocks", the cliffs we call the Palisades, were in danger of being destroyed by quarrymen in the late 1800's. This was a period of intensive blasting. Quarrying was good in this area because it was so close to the water and shipping. Modern buildings and highways created great demand for the trap rock of the Palisades. Public opinion in the opposition to this defacement began to develop about 1890. Major S. Wood McClave was one of those who fought to stop the quarrying. In 1900, the New Jersey and New York Commissioners of the Palisades Interstate Park was established. It had the power to acquire territory along the Palisades. With \$122,500 from J. Pierpont Morgan, the commissioners purchased the Carpenter Brothers Quarry in Fort Lee, thus stopping the defacement of the Palisades.

This area was once described as a dense woodland with many swamps. Part of the northern section of Cliffside Park was quite marshy and was once called "Frogtown" because of the frogs that were often caught there.. This section was later named the Grantwood section by real estate developers because it is located directly across from Grant's Tomb in Manhattan. There was once a large pond called Silver Lake in the area of what now is Florence Place. The area southeast

of Grantwood, by the edge of the cliff, was called Grantwood Heights. The neighborhood near Greenmount Avenue was named the Greenmount section, and the southern section of town was called Hudson Heights.

First Settlers

Because of its rocky and marshy topography, this area was not an agricultural area, as was much of Bergen County. The Indians never had a permanent home in Cliffside Park, but artifacts found here indicate the use of this community as a hunting ground.

On April 13, 1671, Indian Sachems, Chiefs of the Tapaan and Haverstroo Indian Clans, signed a deed in Dutch, which sold the land from Union City north to Tappan and from the Hudson River west to the Overpeck Creek to Isaac Bedloo and Belthaser De Haert. During the American Revolution, only three or four cabins were built in what is now Cliffside Park.

The first settlers were large land owners who came for the beauty of the area. Some of the early land owners, according to the 1876 Bergen County Atlas, were the Gomez Estate, Ezra R. Miller, George W. Laird, William H. Kemp, The Bullard Estate, William Key, James McMichael, J. Collyer and M. Collyer, J. Lyon, T. Larkin, P. Horan, J. Hollyer, The Burbanks, and B.B. Marks.

According to a map published in 1891, owners of this land were William H. Kemp, The Ridgefield Land Co., The Al Gomez Estates, George W. Laird, The Miller Estate, The properties of Wheeler, Lyons, Larking Diegel, A. Rusch, Mrs. Cowdrey, McMichael, Declyn, F.R. Dillingham, Mrs. Baldwin, Wm. Key, James Day, The Cronell Heirs, Isaac Martin, J.O. Smith, J. Ellis & Co., S.W. McClave, J. Winterburn, Chamberlane, N. E. Sammis, Kearney, Neadler, Bullegent, Fearing, Emily Winterburn, T. Roach, Edsall and W. Roach.

In 1855, a member of the Sammis family purchased property on "Winterburn Hill." Warren E. Sammis, Sr. married Lillian G. Hallock in 1876, and the Sammis home at 50 Edgewater Road was built. Sammis was a member of the first Mayor and Council to govern the town. Mrs. Sammis founded the Cliffside Park Women's Club "to better the schools of Cliffside Park."

Another early family of Cliffside Park, the Raas family, was a family of firsts. The first person born in the town of Cliffside Park was Alice Raas. She was born only two hours after the town came into being. The Raas home at 217 Grant Avenue was the first house in the state of New Jersey to have hot and cold running water and a bathroom on the second floor. It was Jean Henri Raas, along with Rosco P. McClave, J. Fletcher Cramer, and two others who first surveyed the land that separated Cliffside Park from Fairview, Fort Lee, Ridgefield, and Edgewater.

Incorporation of Cliffside Park

Originally, all the land between the Hudson River and the Hackensack River, the New York stateline and Constable Hook on the Newark Bay, was Bergen County. In 1693, this land was divided into two townships, Bergen and Hackensack. The area we know today as Cliffside Park belonged to the Township of Hackensack. In 1872, the township of Ridgefield was formed. It included the present boroughs of Bogota, Cliffside Park, Edgewater, Fairview, Fort Lee, Leonia, Palisade Park, Ridgefield, and the Village of Ridgefield Park. Residents of the area first attempted to form the Borough of Cliffside Park in 1893. They were dissatisfied with the way the Ridgefield Township distributed funds and felt they would progress more rapidly as a separate municipality. Numerous meetings were held.

The first petition included almost all of Edgewater and the cliff-top portion of Fairview and part of Ridgefield. The desired west boundary was Bergen Boulevard, then called Dallytown Road. This attempt and a second attempt in 1894 failed. A large landowner, C.W. Kearney from the Greenmount Avenue area, avidly fought the separation because he believed that school taxes would become too high. In the meantime, residents from Bogota, Edgewater, Fairview, and Leonia successfully voted to secede from the Township of Ridgefield. Areas were rushing to break away from the larger township because of the passage of the Township School Law in 1894. This law intended to consolidate all school districts into one district, under one Board of Education, to equalize educational opportunity for children in the poor and wealthy areas. Twenty-six boroughs were formed in Bergen County in 1894.

A third attempt was made. On January 15, 1895, residents voted 81 to 13 for the formation of a new borough, and on January 18, 1895, the Borough of Cliffside Park was incorporated as a separate municipality. Before incorporation, landowners in this area would say they came from the cliffside part. It was Major S. Wood McClave who suggested Park be part of the name of the new borough. And so it was named.

The first ordinance said there should be a Health Board made of five members who are residents of the borough.

The second ordinance was made to prevent horses, cattle, sheep, goats, or swine from being pastured on any street, avenue, public park, or sidewalk within the borough.

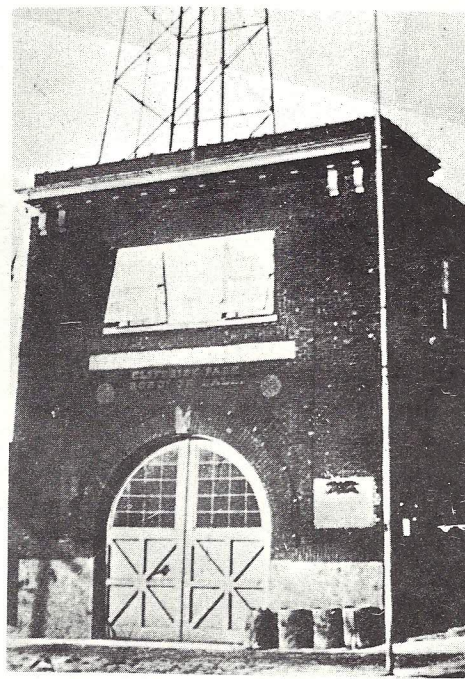


The third ordinance established annual license fees for auctioneers of real estate (\$25), auctioneers of personal property (\$10), hawkers, peddlers, or itinerant venders of merchandise, junk and rag dealers, each wagon with one or two horses or other animals (\$10), traveling and other shows (\$5), and circuses (\$5) per day.

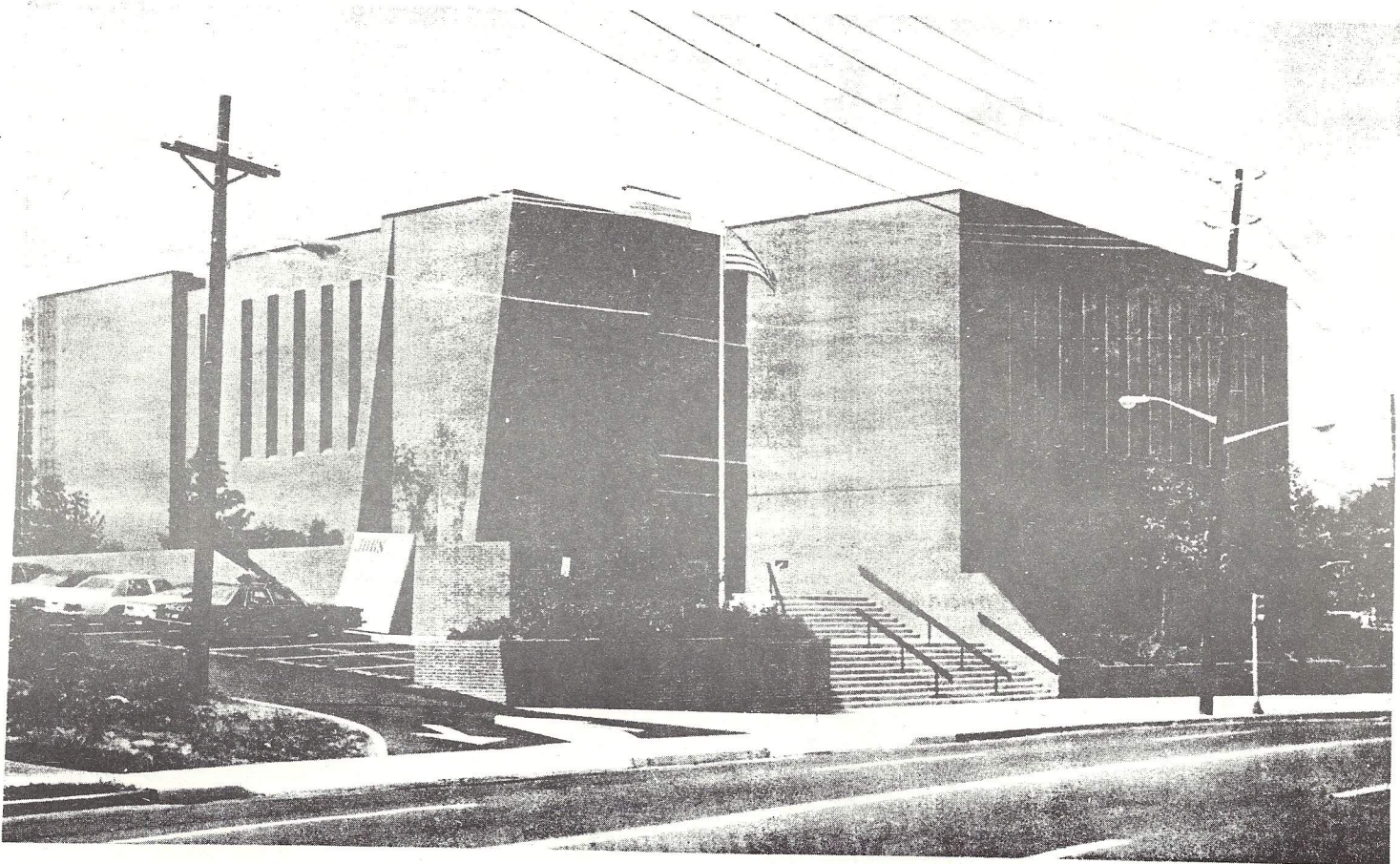
The fourth ordinance was "Providing for the prevention of disorder by conduct and prohibiting reckless driving and field sports in the public streets."



The first Borough Hall was located on the east side of Gorge Road at Adolphus Avenue. It was once Cliffside Park's P.S. #1. It was demolished. Today, Zalewski Park is located on the site.



The second Borough Hall was located at Jersey and Palisade Avenues.



Construction for the present Municipal Complex began in 1978.

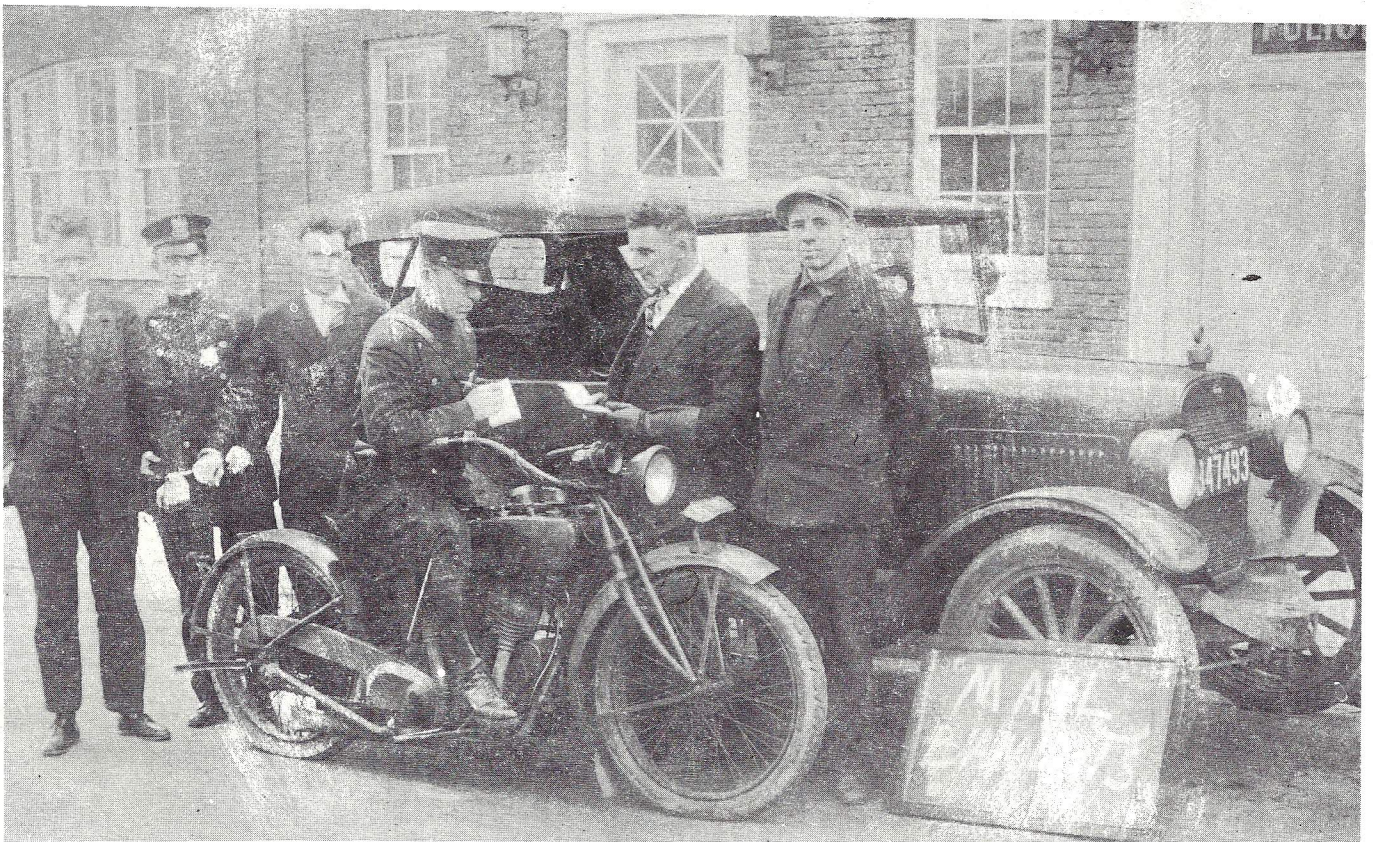


The Police Department

The first police in Cliffside Park consisted of three marshals who were appointed by the mayor at the Borough's first Council meeting in 1895. They were paid only for special duties performed.

The Police Department was organized in 1908. Robert Weiss and John Rouan were the first paid policemen. They patrolled on bicycles. The chief was William Kelly. The station was located in School #1 at the foot of Gorge Road and Adolphus Avenue.

One of the first policemen on the force, Thomas King, was known all over for his exceptional night stick throwing. He could throw a night stick over fifty feet and catch a crook right between the legs. Because of him and several others, our town was a very safe neighborhood. People would leave their doors unlocked and not even think about people robbing them. If they went out somewhere, they would leave their key under a mat or on a door ledge.



CAPTURED MAIL BANDITS IN 1920'S LEFT CAPTAIN THOMAS MARSDEN
ON MOTORCYCLE LIEUTENANT MICHAEL HOZER



The Fire Department

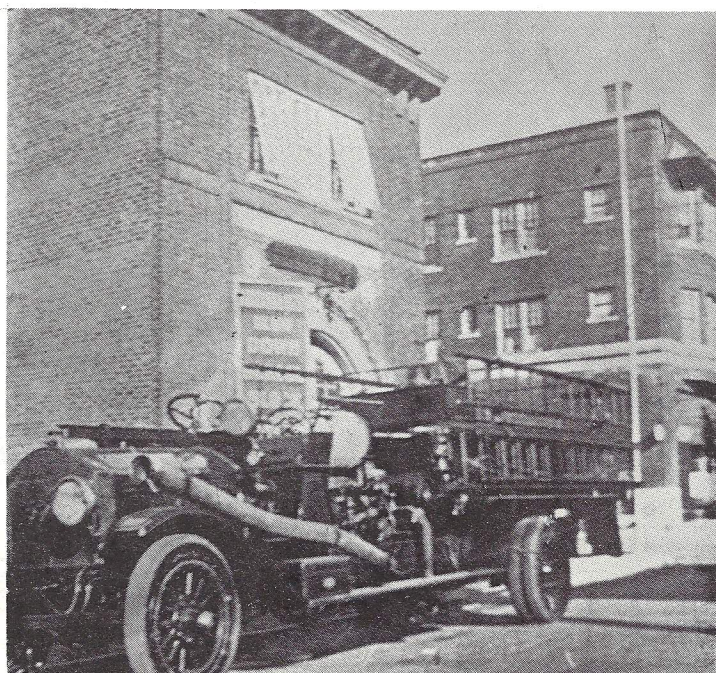
The first fire company of Cliffside Park was formed in 1892. August E. Neumann was the first chief. There were 25 volunteer members. It was located on Palisade Avenue near Walker Street. In 1912, this building became a movie house called Kubli's.

Fire alarms were sounded by striking huge iron rings which were located in various parts of the borough. When an alarm was sounded, people stopped what they were doing to help pull the two wheeled hose cart and four wheeled hook and ladder cart. A four wheeled pump was also used. One end of the hose was placed in a well.

July 17, 1917, William T. Michaelson, owner of a garage in town, donated the first motorized fire unit. It had been purchased by him the year before from the Hartdale Fire Department for use as a tow and wrecking truck.

As Cliffside Park became more populated, the borough felt the need to have a paid fire department. Two men were hired in 1925. In 1990, Cliffside Park reestablished its volunteer fire department, for although the fire loss in this area is low, the paid men need aid when there are very large fires.

Today, Cliffside Park has a 3-way radio communicator and serves as the fire dispatching center for the East Bergen area. When necessary, the emergency and disaster equipment are in constant radio contact.





The Trolley Line

Before automobiles and busses came to this area, a popular form of transportation was the trolley. In 1894, steam trains began operating from the West Shore Ferry in Hudson County north through Cliffside Park to Palisades in Fort Lee. In 1895, electric streetcars replaced the train and the line was extended to Coytesville, Fort Lee.

The Palisade Car Line service was the only streetcar service from northern Hudson County into Bergen County. Planning for this line was begun early in 1895, and the first trolley ran in August of that year. The trolley ran on electricity and received its power from an overhead wire. From the beginning, the trolley ran seven days a week and offered all night service.

A trip on the trolley might begin at the West Shore Ferry. Here the riders boarded one of two elevators, each having a capacity of 200 people. These elevators carried the passengers to a platform at the top of the Palisades where the cars were entered. The trolley then traveled through Union City, then through Dewey Avenue in West New York, along Broadway in Guttenburg and North Bergen, then through Fairview, Cliffside Park, then to Palisades Junction and Coytesville in Fort Lee. The tracks in Cliffside Park ran parallel and in between Anderson and Palisade Avenues. There was a trolley trestle which crossed over Gorge Road. The trolleys stopped running in 1938, and the trestle was torn down in 1940.

The construction of the trolley line was probably the single greatest force in hastening the development of Cliffside Park. There was much building in the borough between 1895 and 1930. Many real estate developers divided the area into building lots and helped change Cliffside Park from a wooded area to the most populated community in east Bergen in just thirty-five years.

Streets

Walker Street was the first commercial center of Cliffside Park and Fairview. This was because of the arrival of the trolley in the mid 1890's.

Grant Avenue was the first street developed in 1895. A boardwalk was constructed on one side. It was so named because directly across the Hudson River is Grant's Tomb.

Cliff Street, Knox Avenue, Lawton Avenue, and Columbia Avenue were others that were some of the first streets to be developed.

In 1906, an ordinance was passed that provided for a concrete sidewalk with curbs, the full length of the west side of Palisade Avenue.

Anderson Avenue and Palisade Avenue were nicknamed "the bumps" when they were bumpy dirt roads.

The width and grade of Palisade Avenue was established in 1896 and provision for widening it was made in 1897.

Palisade Avenue was macadamized in 1916 and became a county road in 1917.

Hilltop Terrace was once called Mahroomar Place.

Knox Avenue was named after Frank E. Knox, the head of the Columbia Company, a real estate firm that developed parts of Hudson Heights, Grantwood, and Grantwood Heights.

Herman Walker was the original owner of the lots along Walker Street.

Old family names active in organizing the borough were Dana, Winterburn, and Nagel.

C. W. Kearney was a large land-owner in the Greenmount Avenue section of Grantwood. Other early land owners were Laird, Wheeler, and Day.

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Anderson Avenue

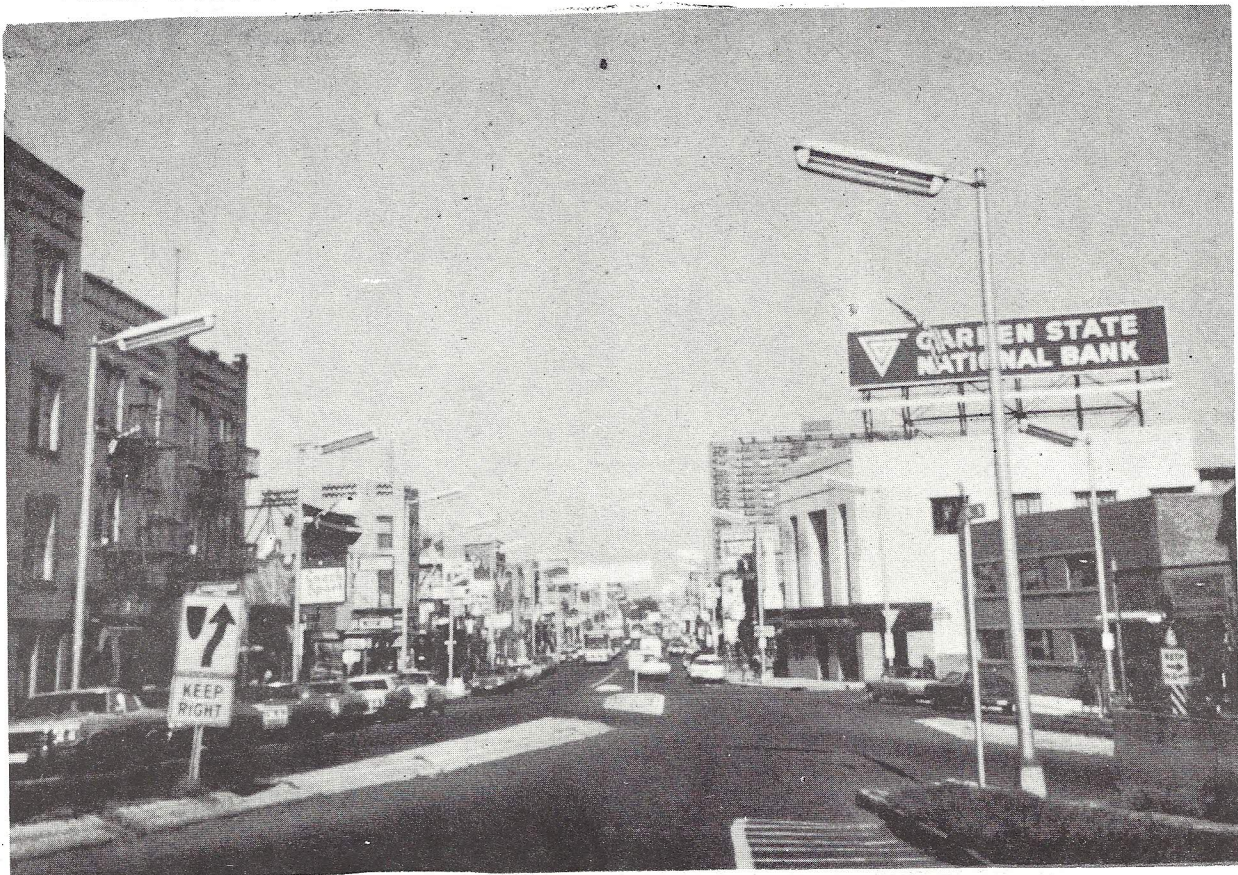
Anderson Avenue was originally named Central Avenue. It was renamed after Dr. Anderson, a Fort Lee civic leader. The grade for this street was established in 1910, and it was first paved with macadam in 1913.

Once there was a hotel on Anderson Avenue. It was called Burgel's Hotel and was located on the west side of the street near Knox Avenue. The hotel was the site of many social events. It burned down on January 18, 1918.

In 1922, the Anderson Avenue business district began to develop with the building of several stores - an A & P, a butcher shop, and a candy store. In 1923, additional stores were added. The business block now included a bakery shop. In 1925, Anderson Avenue was widened from 24 feet to 40 feet and became a paved road. Prior to this time, both Anderson Avenue and Palisade Avenue were known as "the bumps".

In August of 1927 the apartment house at 755 Anderson Avenue was built at a cost of \$180,000. It had 42 apartments and 122 rooms. In 1928, the telephone building on the southwest corner of Washington and Anderson went up. In 1936, the old Grantwood Lumberyard located at Anderson and Oakdene was destroyed to make way for new homesites.

Anderson Avenue has been a popular cruising spot for many decades. It was named one of New Jersey's hottest cruising spots in 1987 by MTV, the cable television music video station.



THE SCHOOL SYSTEM

Before any school was built in Cliffside Park, the children had to attend a two-room frame building in Edgewater. Of the following seven schools, five are still standing today. The construction for these schools originated between the years 1907 and 1929, a period of rapid growth in this borough.

School #1

The first Cliffside Park school was School No. 1, built in 1892 on Gorge Road and Adolphus Avenue. The first principal was Washington J. Bray, and the first teachers were Miss Collins and Miss Wiley. This school later served as Cliffside Park's borough hall. This building is no longer standing.

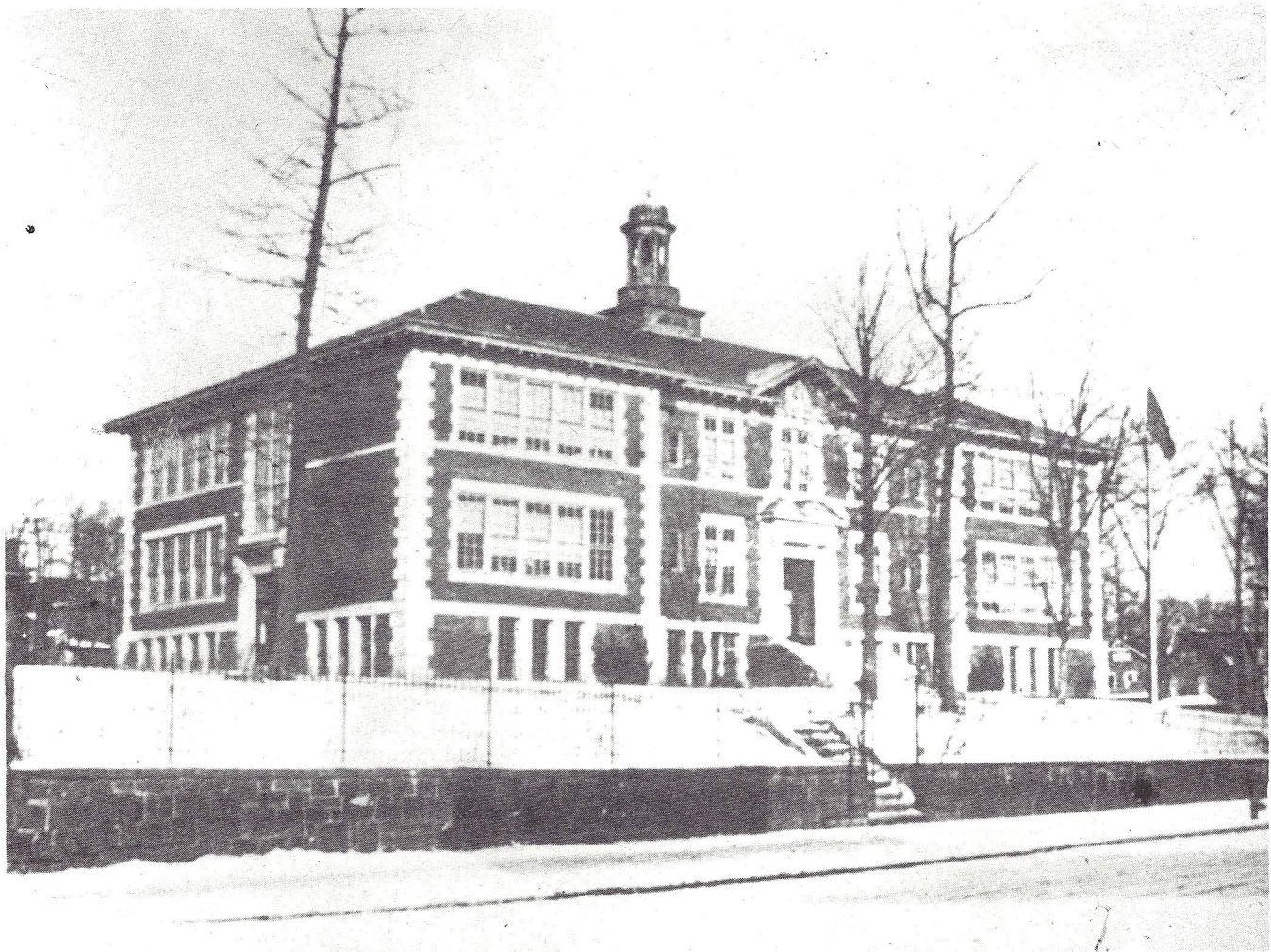
School #2

When School No. 1 couldn't hold the school children of Cliffside Park, School No. 2 was built. It looked like a house and was built on Columbia Avenue in 1903. It cost \$34,000 to build. This school was later extended and became No. 4 School.



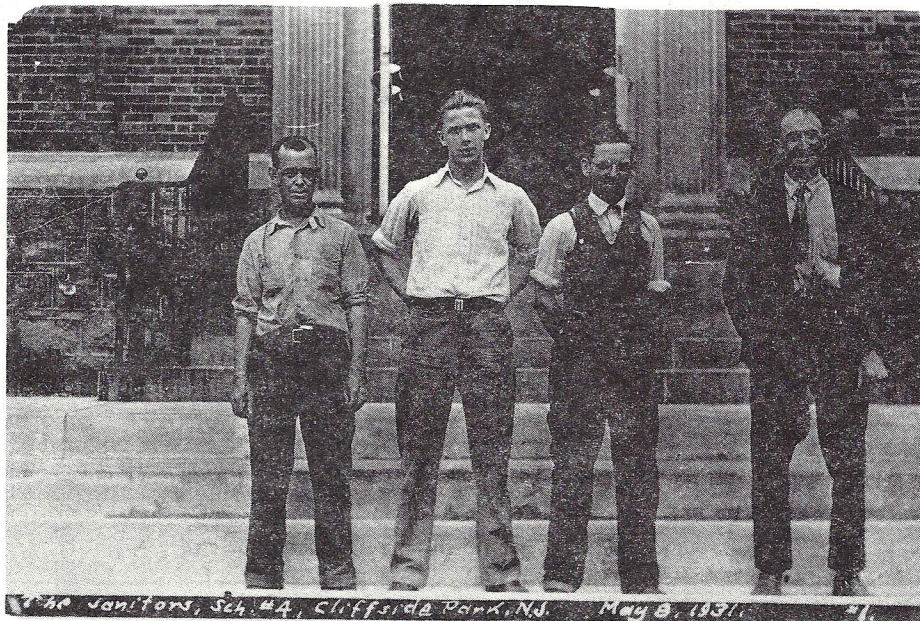
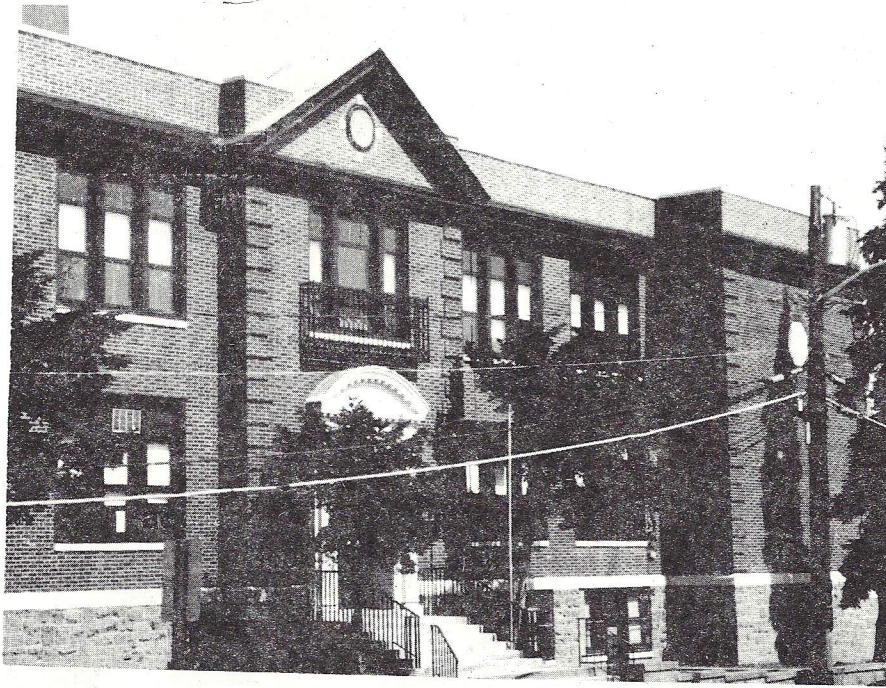
School #3

School No. 3, the oldest school building in Cliffside Park today, was built in 1907 and cost \$125,000. It was designed by Ernest Sibley. The first principal was Mrs. Jane Coulter. For many years this school housed the Cliffside Park Library.



School #4

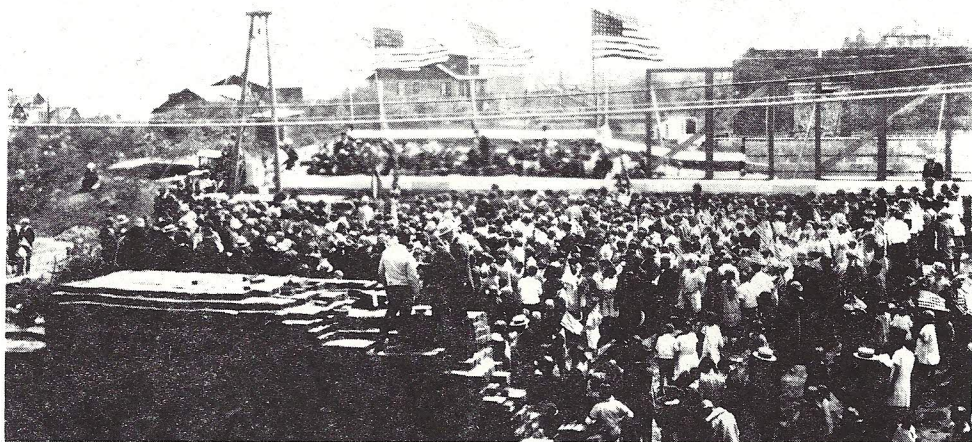
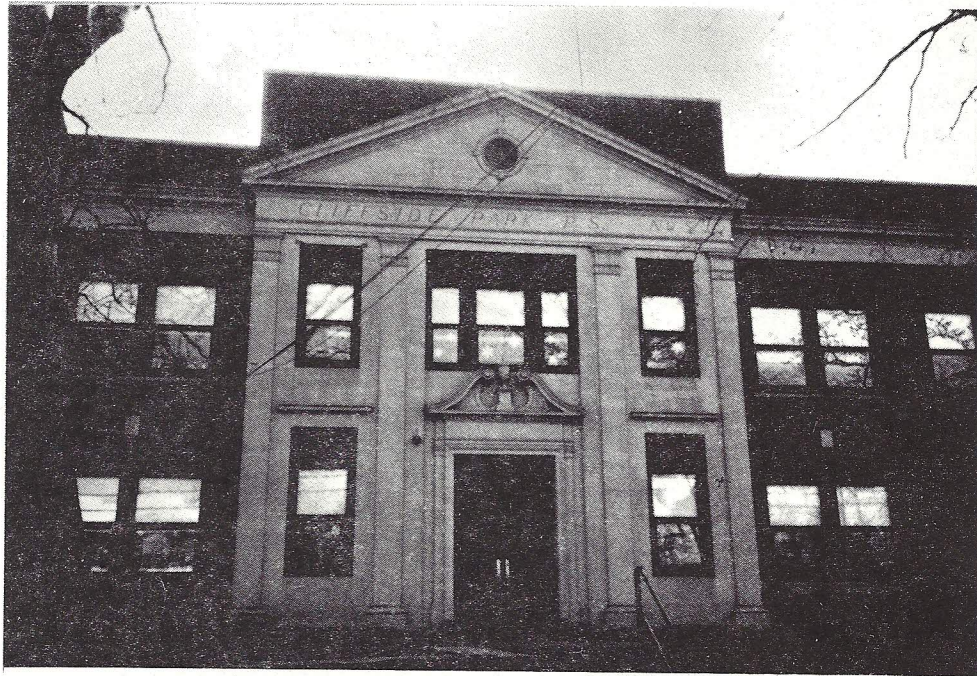
School No. 4 was built in 1911 on Columbia Avenue and cost \$100,000. In 1929, the old School No. 2 was demolished and in its place was erected a fourteen room addition to School Number 4. This school housed Cliffside Park's high school students from 1912 to 1915.



The Janitors, Sch. #4, Cliffside Park, N.J. May 9, 1931. #1

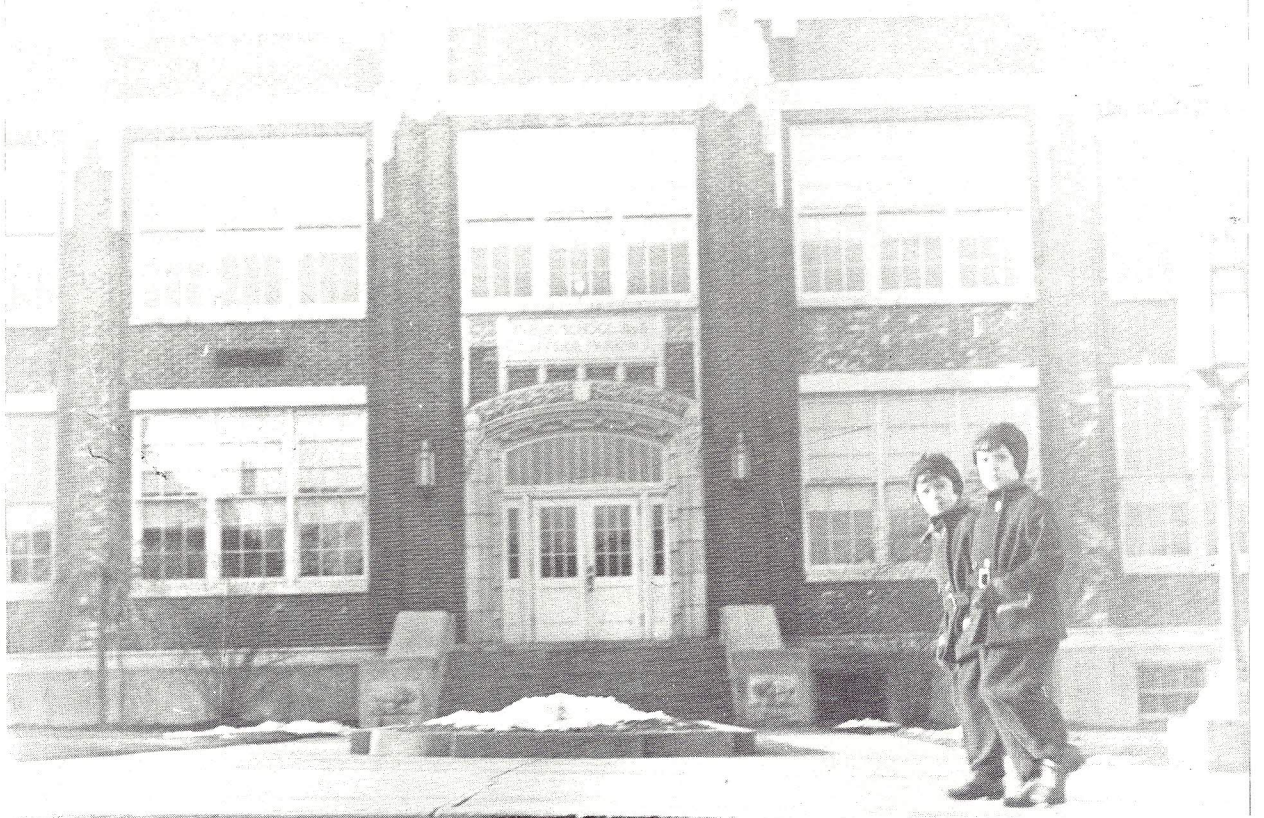
School #5

School No. 5 was built in 1926 and is located on Day Avenue. It was designed by the architectural firm of Mayer and Manahan.

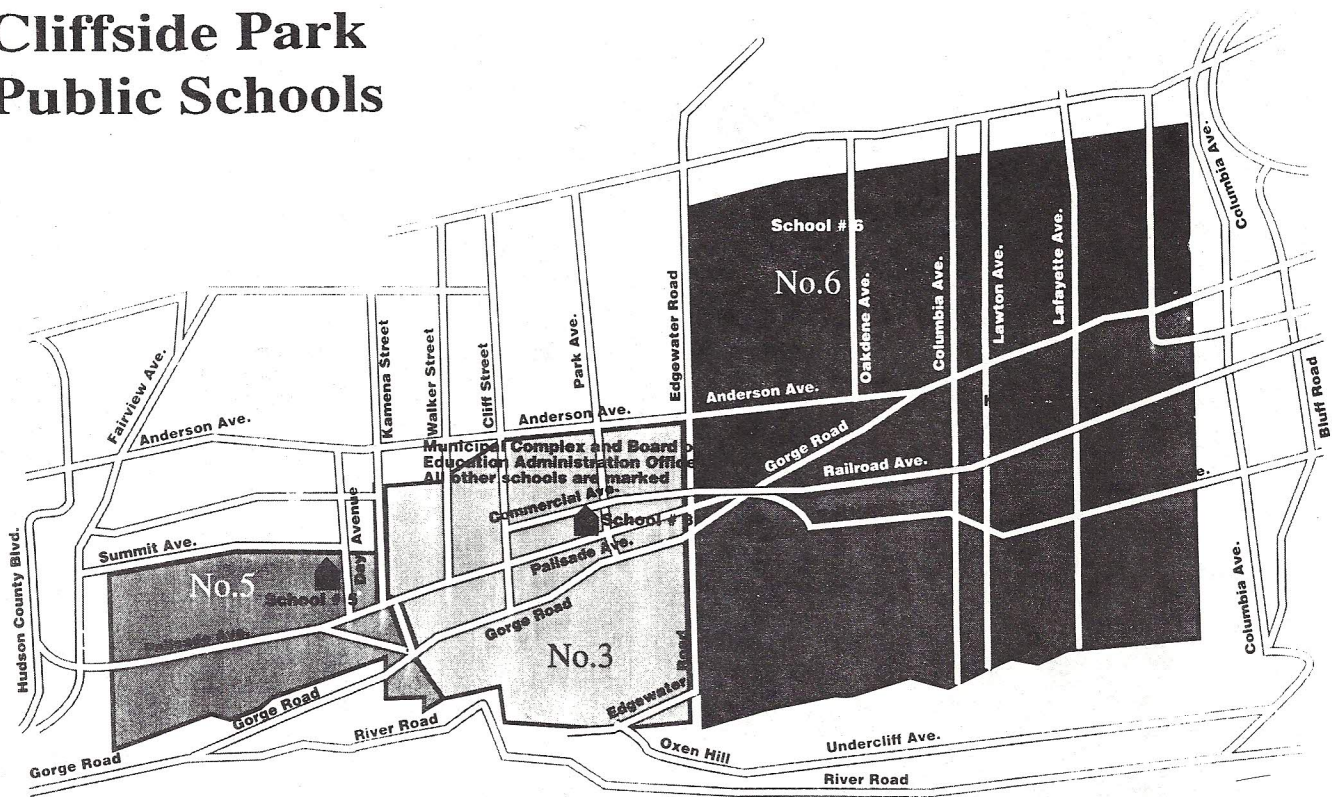


School #6

School No. 6 was built in 1929 on Oakdene Avenue. It was designed by Aylin Pierson and Robert J. L. Cadien, a resident of Cliffside Park. It opened on February 3, 1930.



Cliffside Park Public Schools



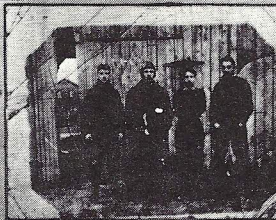
Cliffside Park High School

In 1912, Cliffside Park's first high school was housed on the second floor of No. 4 School. The high school on Palisade Avenue was erected in 1915. It cost \$150,000 and was designed by Ernest Sibley. There were nineteen students in the first high school graduation class in 1916. A north wing was added to the high school in 1926. In 1963, a gymnasium and classrooms were added.



THIS GANG NEEDS NO INTRODUCTION - FAT VELSEY IS THE ONLY MEMBER OF THIS GANG OF WORLD-BEATERS WHO WAS ABSENT AT THE TIME THE PICTURE WAS TAKEN - TUBBIE'S ABSENCE WAS DUE TO THE FACT THAT HE INSISTED UPON WEARING YOUNG COUNTS' JERSEY, WHEREUPON MR. BURNS SAID, "VELSEY, GO HOME!" AND VELSEY WENT. AT ANY RATE TUBBIE PLAYED IN THE BIG GAME.

**THERE NEVER WAS
A TEAM LIKE IT. -
(IN MORE WAYS THAN ONE)**

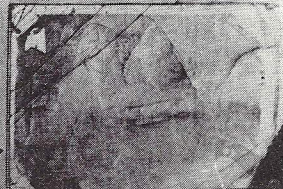


THIS PICTURE SHOWS THE "BIG" BACKFIELD THAT PLAYED AGAINST HACKENSACK WITH THE AID OF THE WONDERFUL LINE, WHICH WORKED LIKE A MACHINE, THIS BACKFIELD WENT THROUGH HACKENSACK FOR THREE TOUCHDOWNS.

THE PICTURE AT THE RIGHT SHOWS THE THREE WHO MADE THE TOUCHDOWNS - THE PICTURE WAS

ON NOV. 20TH, 1915 THIS TEAM FACED HACKENSACK H.S. IN WHAT PROVED TO BE THE GREATEST GAME IN THE HISTORY OF THE HIGH SCHOOL.

THAT GAME MARKED THE FIRST DEFEAT OF HACKENSACK AT THE HANDS OF A CLIFFSIDE. THE RESULT IS WELL KNOWN - CLIFFSIDE - 19 - HACKENSACK.





Epiphany School

This school opened on September 7, 1930 with only four grades. The first graduating exercises were held in June of 1934. In 1960, an addition was built.

Parks and Playgrounds

Memorial Park is located in the triangle formed by Palisade Avenue, Gorge Road, and Edgewater Avenue. There is a monument at the west end of the park, dedicated to those who died in World War I and World War II. The statue of the "doughboy" stands in this park. Nick Borrell, a former physical education teacher at the high school was the model for this statue.

The West Grantwood Playground located on Oakdene Avenue near School Six is the largest park and playground area. It has two basketball courts, four tennis courts, a softball diamond, a baseball diamond, and playground equipment.

Zalewski Park is located on Adolphus Avenue near Gorge Road. It was named in honor of two brothers who died during World War I, Corporal Anthony Zalewski and Private Stanley Zalewski.

Honor Park is located on Gorge Road and Palisade Avenue near the Senior Citizens Complex. This park was dedicated to Phil Farraro and Michael Chormanski, two firemen who died while helping put out a fire at an establishment on Palisade Avenue, The Playpen, on November 4, 1973.

The park up on the hill by the High School is named Gus Lesnevich Park. It has a baseball diamond, tennis courts, and a bocce court.

Columbus Park is located on the north end of Anderson Avenue and the Little League Field is located on Florence Place.



Library

Cliffside Park's first public library was dedicated on June 11, 1913. Mrs. Jane Coulter, Principal of School 3 at the time, was a major influence in establishing a library for the town. She had been a member of the Edgewater Library Club, which was located in the Edgewater Heights part of Cliffside Park. This club served the intellectual need of the community from 1897 until 1911.

The Cliffside Park Free Public Library opened with 1,435 books. It was located in a small room in School 3. Subscribers donated 50 cents a year towards the library and donated the books. The shelves were built by students from the high school, and the chairs and tables were bought. In 1926, a Grantwood branch was built in School 4. Then in 1934, the main library was moved to the basement of School 3. It remained there for thirty-two years.

As early as 1929, when the library occupied space in School 3 and School 4, the borough officials met with library trustees to discuss the possibility of building a separate building for the library. The property opposite Memorial Park on Gorge Road in the rear of the high school was considered.

In 1934, the main library was moved to the basement of School 3. It remained there for thirty-two years. Then finally, the present library was built. It was dedicated on October 15, 1967. In 1994, it had 53,821 books.



Palisades Amusement Park

Palisades Amusement Park was located on 75 acres of land in the northeastern corner of Cliffside Park, extending into the town of Fort Lee. The park sat majestically atop the New Jersey Cliffs until its destruction in 1971. It was a paradise where people from all over the country went to enjoy everything from the world's largest saltwater swimming pool to the thrill of the cyclone.

The park property was bought by the Bergen County Traction Company in 1898. It was a dense woods which was used as picnic grounds from 1900 to 1907. An open-air theater and walks were added. Here grandstands were set up for grade school graduations and opera performances were held. In 1905 the first electric lights were strung overhead, and Pearl White appeared on the scene for the beginning of the "Perils of Pauline" series. The ice-cream cone made its Eastern debut in the park that year.

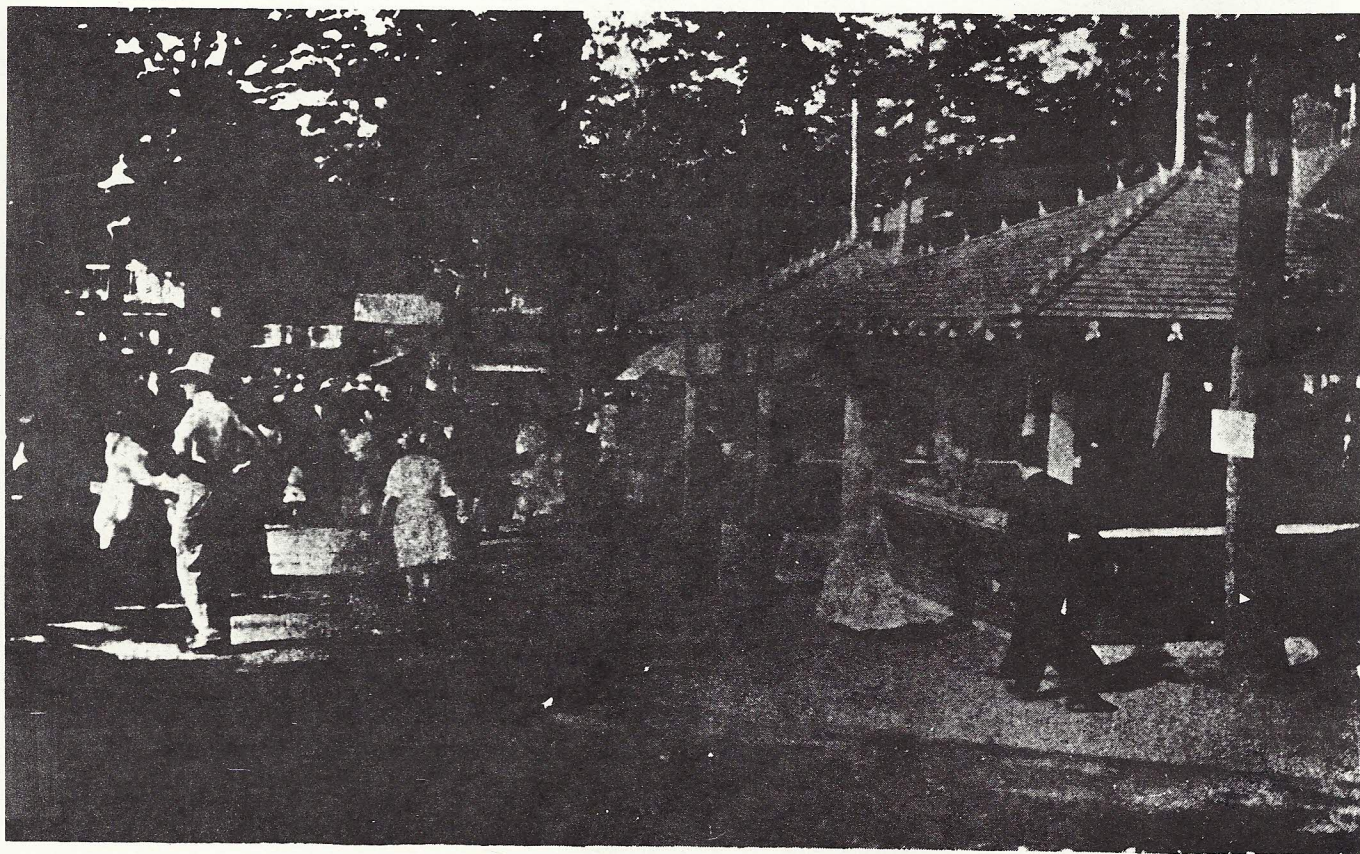
In December 1909, announcement was made of the purchase of the property by the Realty Trust Company, headed by Frank Knox and August Neumann, first mayor of Cliffside Park. The property was to be divided into lots and developed as "West Manhattan." Residents became aroused at this announcement, believing such a development would be built up with "cold water flats." Granville Dexter convinced the Realty Trust that the woodland tract was suited best for park purposes and a few of the lots which had been sold were repurchased and the place opened as Dexter Park. The only amusement at this time was a carousel.

Nicholas and Joseph Schenck took control of the park in 1909 and added many rides. The Ferris wheel was installed that year. They built the pool in 1913. They managed the park until 1935 when it was purchased by the Rosenthal brothers, Jack and Irving. Joseph Schenck then went to Hollywood to produce movies.

In 1944, the worst fire of the park's history broke out. It started out in the Virginia Reel Ride and destroyed most of the park. Seven people were killed and 150 were injured.

It was the Rosenthal brothers who heavily promoted the park and made the park a huge attraction in the metropolitan area. They built the famous Cyclone roller coaster. At the time of the closing of the park, it was the fastest in the world. They brought the first man-shot-out-of-cannon into an amusement park, were first to conceive of the Parachute Jump as a thrill ride, and introduced a daredevil to dive 150 feet into a five foot tank of water. They had various promotional stunts such as the first wedding to take place on a Merry-Go-Round, the Annual Triplets Convention, the Diaper Derby, the Mrs. America contest. There was dancing and free stage

As much as the park was loved by the residents in the area, it was disliked. Traffic jams and parking problems were abundant all summer long. The area became too congested. Today, in its place, sit Winston Towers, the Carlyle, and The Palisadium Restaurant.



The Midway—Palisades Amusement Park.



Last night I took a walk in the dark,
A swingin' place called Palisades Park

Palisades has the rides,
 Palisades has the fun,
 Come on over,
 Shows and dancing are free,
 So's the parking, so Gee!
 Come on over,
 Palisades from coast to coast,
 Where a dime buys the most,
 Palisades Amusement Park,
 Swings all day and after dark,
 Come on over.



Marie Biggio's kindergarten
 class from School #6, June 1956



A class from School #3
 marches, June 1955

For many years the students of Cliffside Park marched to Palisades Amusement Park in June. School bands would play, twirlers would twirl, and children would wave to parents and neighbors who lined the streets. Students were admitted into the park free and got free tickets for food and rides. This practice of marching to the park every year lasted for over fifty years.



Roller Coaster Joe

"Roller Coaster Joe" McKee, a skilled carpenter and resident of Cliffside Park, built and designed the cyclone at Palisades Amusement Park. McKee invented many safety devices for the roller coaster and other rides. He was the acknowledged expert on roller coasters and was a consultant to Lloyds of London on thrill-ride insurance. Joe McKee built roller coasters in other parts of the world. He was a superintendent of the park.

The Post Office

The borough's first post master was August Neumann, and the first Post Office was at 319 Palisade Avenue. It then moved to Goemann's Drugstore and then to Carney Hall, a social and business center located at the corner of the car tracks and Columbia Avenue. Next, the post office moved to the Grantwood Fire House and then to Columbia Avenue, just east of the car line.

From a period beginning with the organization of Cliffside Park into a borough of its own until October 1, 1931, there were two post offices in Cliffside Park. One was located in the northern or Grantwood section, the other in the Cliffside or southern part of the borough.

The first Cliffside Park office was located on Palisade Avenue near Walker Street. Then it was moved to Palisade Avenue near the Cliff Street intersection and then to Palisade Avenue, just north of the old borough hall.

In Grantwood, the first post office was at 319 Palisade Avenue, the Raas Building. It then moved to Goemann's Drug Store on Lawton Avenue and the car line, then to the Carney Building on Columbia Avenue and the car line, then to the old Grantwood firehouse on the car line between Columbia and Lawton Avenues, then to a structure on Columbia Avenue just east of the car line.

In 1931, the Cliffside Park and Grantwood Post Districts were consolidated into the Cliffside Park postal district. This district embraced all of Cliffside Park, most of Fairview, and the heights section of Ridgefield. Consolidation of the two districts was bitterly opposed by some residents of the upper section of the borough, who disliked the thought of losing their Grantwood address.

The post office we have today is located at 160 Edgewater Road across from Memorial Park. It was dedicated in 1935 and finished in 1936. It was funded by the WPA. On January 1, 1937, the Grantwood station of the post office, at 685 Anderson Avenue was discontinued. A sub-station was located in a store on Anderson Avenue, just north of Lawton Avenue.

The psychological differences between Grantwood and Cliffside were wittily analyzed by the rhymes of Mrs. Thomas R. Evans who read them before the Cliffside Park Women's Club.

Who cares whether Grantwood or Cliffside
Is the letter's postmark
If delivered on time
To whom's concerned in Cliffside Park.

Grantwood has "policemen,"
Cliffside Park has "cops,"
Cliffside Park has "stores,"
While Grantwood folk have "shops."

Cliffside Park has "babies,"
In Grantwood they "give birth,"
Cliffside has big "stomachs,"
While Grantwood folk have "girth."

Cliffside Park says "mesmerism,"
Grantwood says "hypnosis",
Cliffside says "bad breath,"
Grantwood says "halitosis."

Cliffside Park is "sick,"
In Grantwood they are "ill,"
Grantwood takes a "physic,"
While Cliffside takes a "pill."

All Grantwood wears "pajamas,"
While Cliffside wears a "nightie,"
Grantwood says, "Oh, very well,"
Cliffside says, "All rightie."

Grantwood has a "cute depression,"
Where Cliffside has a "dimple,"
Grantwood has an "eruption,"
Where Cliffside has a "pimple."

Grantwood men wear "trousers,"
Cliffside Park wears "pants,"
Grantwood folk have "sentiment,"
Cliffside Park "romance."



The American Legion

Cliffside Park Memorial Post, 126, was organized on September 25, 1919. Originally named The Alan Nutt Post in honor of Alan Nutt, who had been killed in action in 1938, this veterans' organization has dedicated itself to community service for seventy-five years.

The post headquarters was at Gorge Road and Oakdene Avenue. After World War II, legionnaires began to raise funds for the building at 444 Palisade Avenue through donations, collecting salvage, car raffles, bingo games, dances, and card parties. Residents and business firms contributed both services and funds. More than 150 Legion members contributed to the labor necessary to build the two-story brick headquarters.

On December 4, 1929, a group of ladies assembled to organize an Auxiliary to the Alan Nutt Post. These women gave much of their time to visiting hospitalized veterans and visiting their families when help was needed. During World War II, members signed for Emergency Volunteer Service in cooperation with the local Civil Defense Organization. Many served as Air Raid Wardens, Police Reserves, Ambulance Service, Ration and Draft Boards, Registration Service, and organized First Aid Groups. They also assisted in the sale of Bonds and assisted in Bloodmobile drives.



Senior Citizens Complex

Cliffside Park was one of the first towns to apply for Senior Citizen Housing. The first of the two Senior Citizen Buildings was opened in July of 1971. These buildings are federally subsidized.

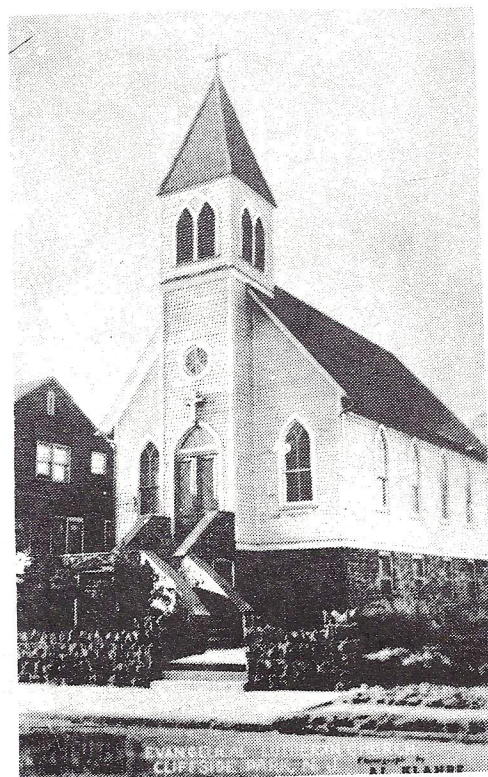
Senior Activity Center

On June 7, 1976, the doors to the Cliffside Park Nutrition Center (now known as the Cliffside Park Activity Center) in the Senior Citizens' Complex opened. This center serves the senior citizens of the community by providing them with nutritious meals, information, and referrals. This is not only a nutrition center, but also an activity center. The list of activities is extensive. The center offers dancing, acrylic painting, exercises, crochet and craft classes, choral singing, bingo sing-alongs, help with food shopping, trips to the mall, holiday parties, speakers, health screenings, picnics, and card games. The center is under the direction of Bernice "Buzz" Roth and has been so since its inception in 1976.



Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church

Cliffside Park's oldest church is located on Columbia Avenue. In 1900, Pastor William Dallman began mission work in Cliffside Park. The first services were held in a home on Palisade Avenue. Then in 1901 services were moved to a large stone barn on the Cowdrey Estate. The present church on Columbia Avenue was dedicated on September 22, 1901 and cost \$1,600 to build. The first full time pastor was Rev. Richard Oehlschlaeger. He was guaranteed the salary of \$200 a year and the promise of bed and board in New York City.



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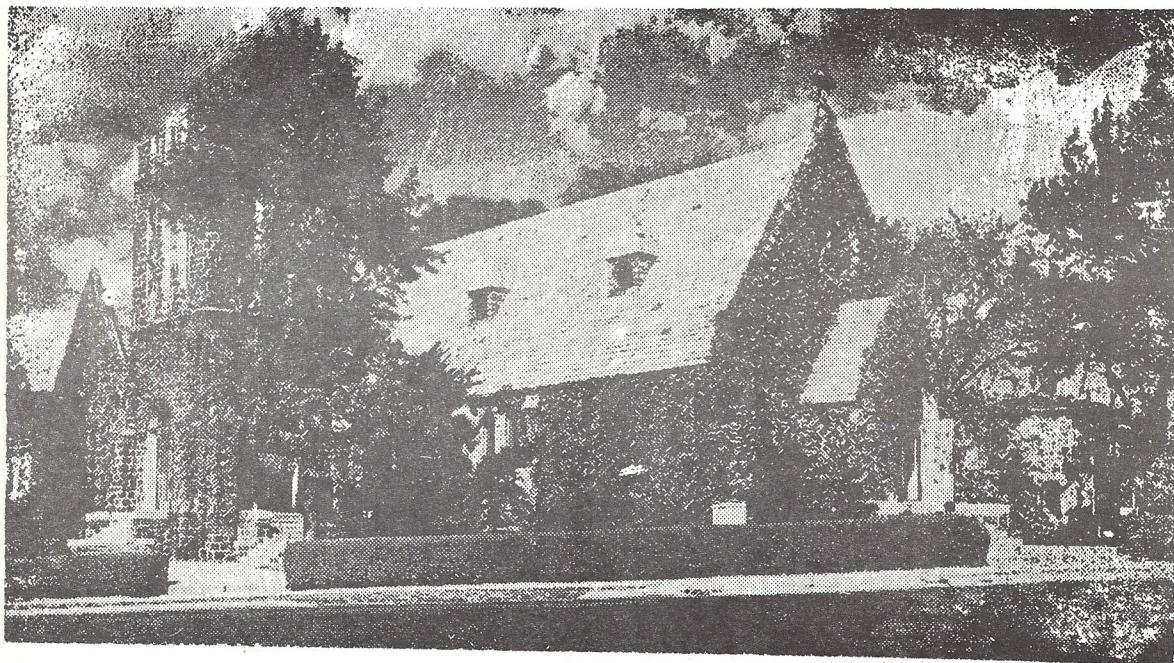
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Trinity Episcopal Church

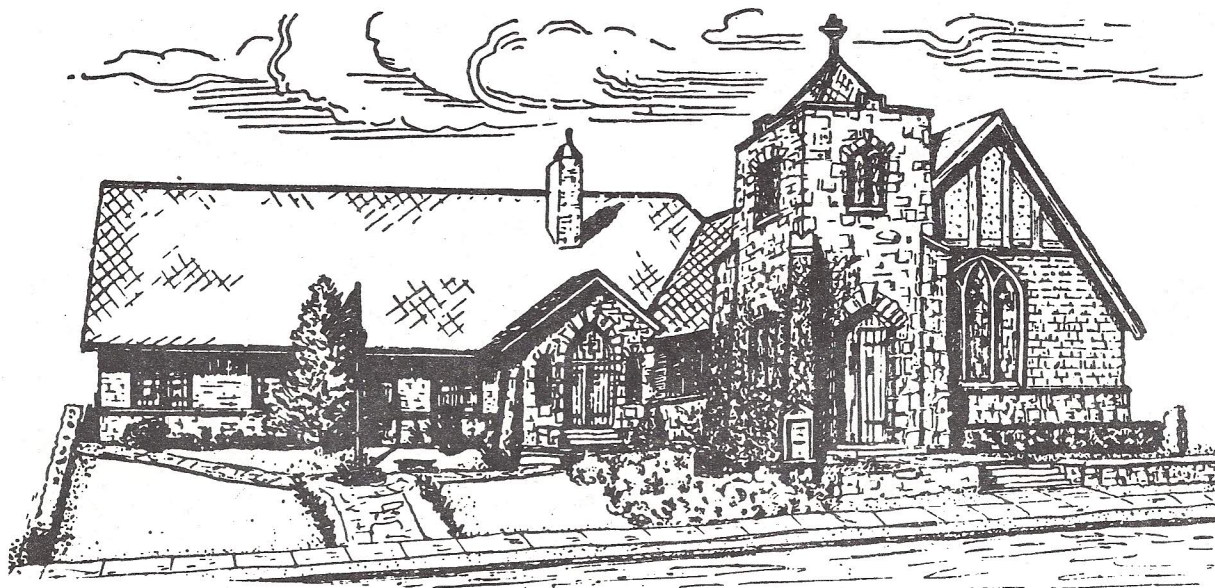
The Episcopal Church is located on Palisade Avenue and Riverview Avenues. The church was built in 1902. It began as a mission school in the one-room school-house on top of the hill on Gorge Road, in 1893. Major S. Wood McClave gave a generous gift of land on Palisade Avenue, the present site of the church.

Early in the morning of January 25, 1927, the church was swept by fire. Only the walls were left standing. The congregation rose \$100,000 to rebuilt the church.



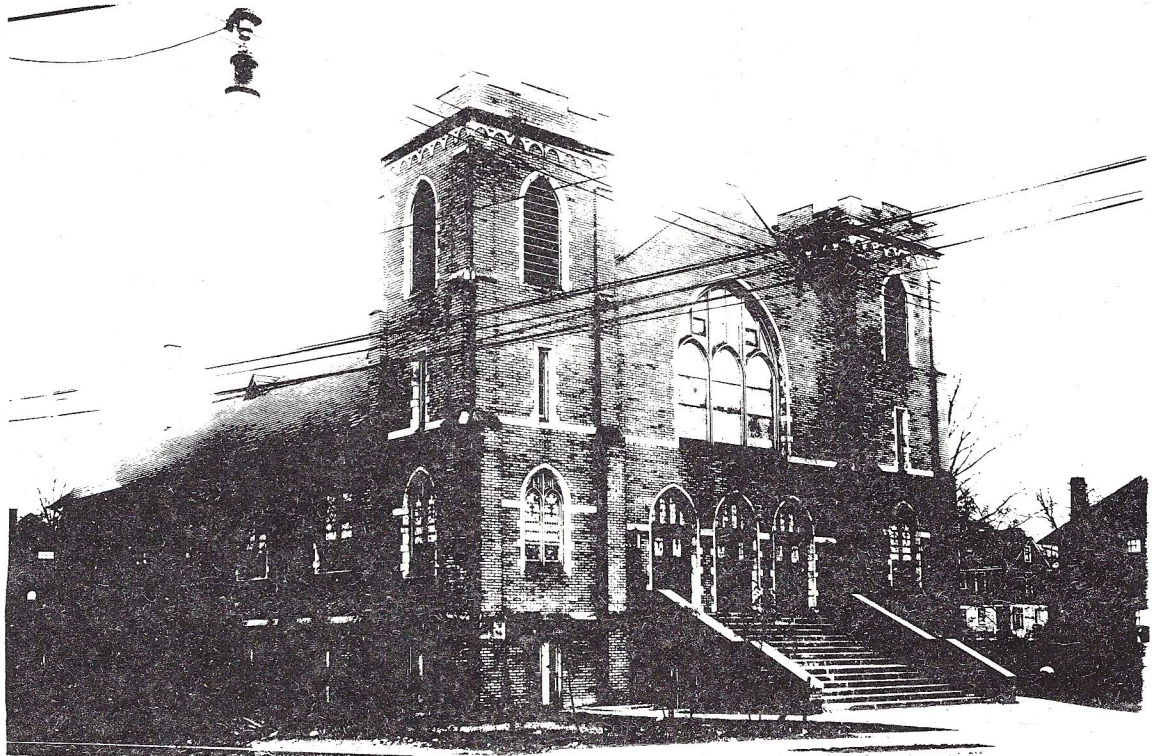
Grantwood Congregational Church

The Union Congregational Church of Grantwood was organized in August, 1907. It was reorganized in 1908. In 1909, the name was changed to the Grantwood Congregational Church. The Rev. G. Herbert Ekins served as the first regular pastor from 1908 to 1912. In 1910, the church on Columbia Avenue was dedicated.



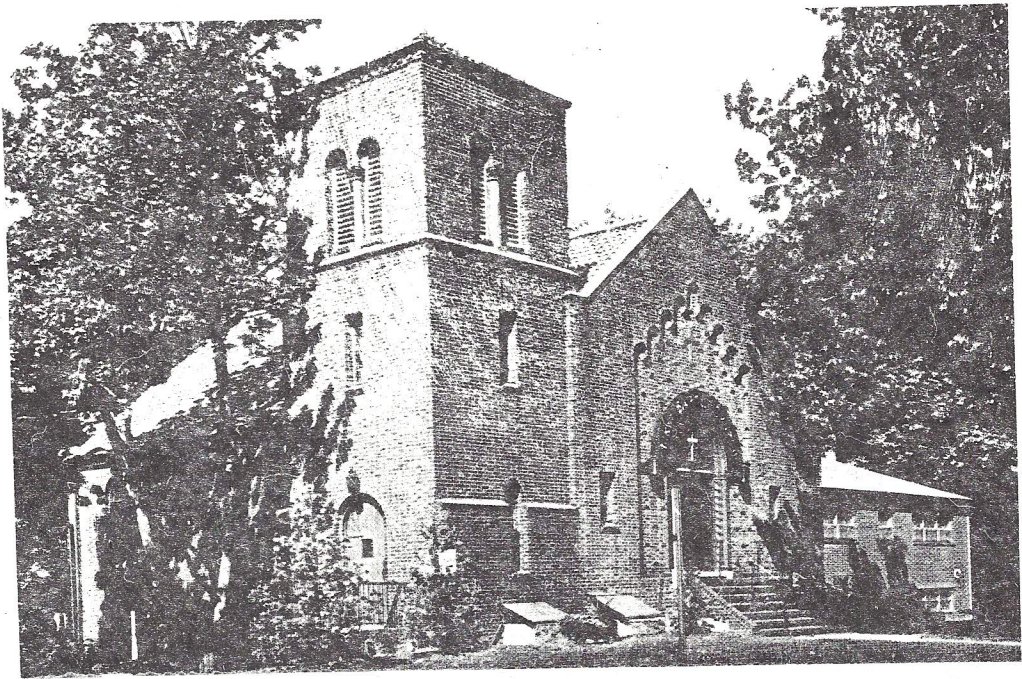
Church of the Epiphany

The property for this church was obtained on January 6, 1915, the feast of the Epiphany, the festival commemorating the coming of the Magi to Jesus at Bethlehem. The first mass was offered for this new parish in May 1917. The Rev. Anthony Ferretti, then Pastor of St. John's in Fairview, took responsibility for the care of this church, and he moved from St. John's on May 1921, to become the permanent resident pastor of this church.



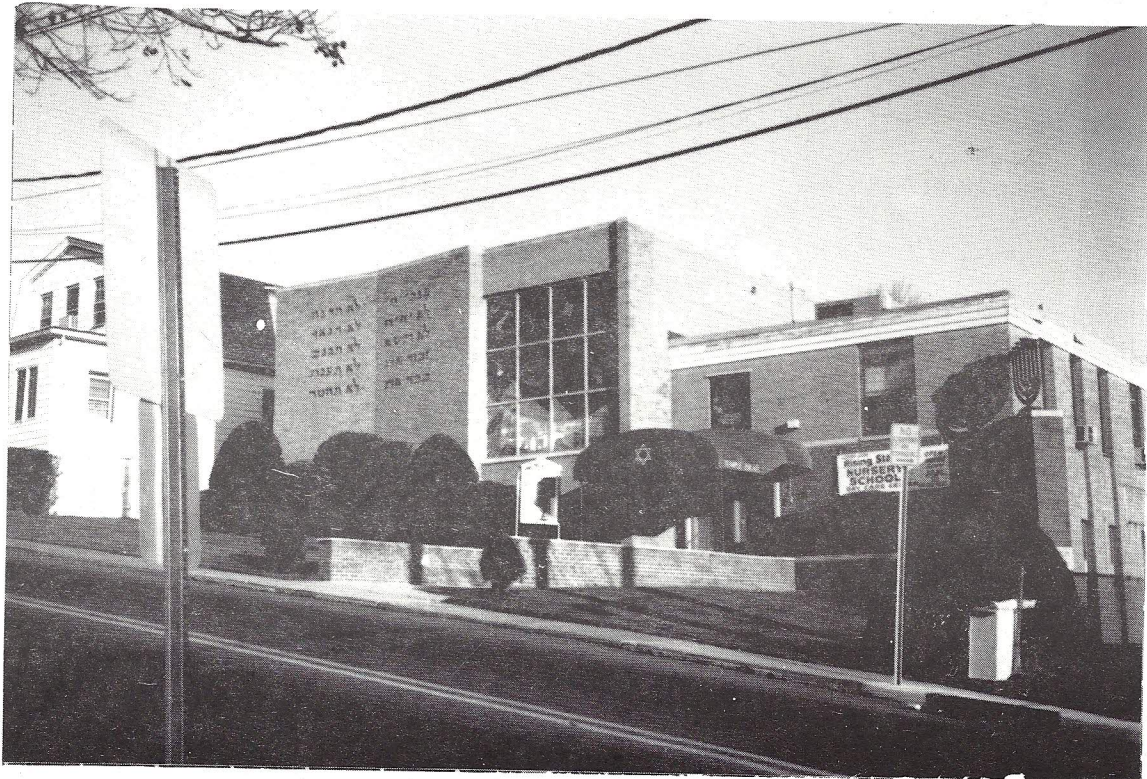
First Baptist Church

In 1924, the Baptists started a church in a store on the trolley line, between Columbia and Lawton Avenues. It was founded as a mission by the Calvary Baptist Church. The Rev. Robert H. Rollins was pastor. In January of 1930, the church at the corner of Anderson and Aurora Avenues was dedicated.



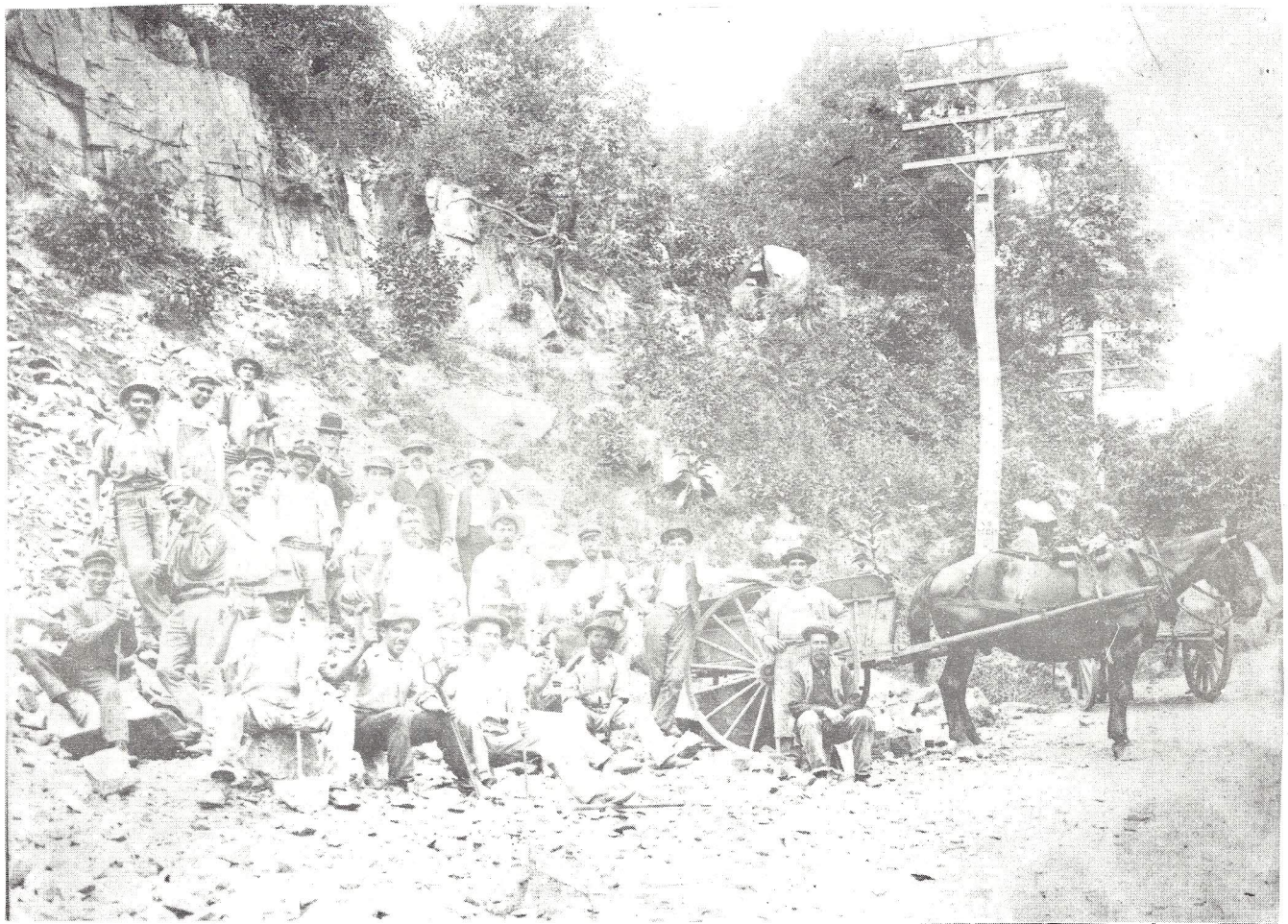
Temple Israel Community Center

In 1940, The Congregation of the Sons of Israel purchased a building for a synagogue on Edgewater Road near Anderson Avenue. Ceremonies dedicating this house of worship were held in September 1941. In November 1941, Rabbi Leo Geiger was installed as spiritual leader of the Temple Israel Congregation. The building represented a merger of the younger group who had conducted services at the Republican Club on High Holidays, and the older Orthodox Jews who had their Congregation in a two story house at 191 Jersey Avenue. In 1956, a new center was built at 207 Edgewater Road.



Stone Quarries

From the late 1800's to the mid 1930's stone quarries were operating on Gorge Road. They were owned by Nicholas Scioli, John McGarry, and the Browning Brothers and were located near where the Briarcliff stands today. They first began operating for the purpose of taking out foundation and building stone. Addition of a stone crusher created business in crushed stone and gravel for road construction as well as ballast for railroad tracks in the area.



Carney Hall

Carney Hall was dedicated on December 20, 1912. Located on the southwest corner of Columbia Avenue and the Palisades Trolley Line, Carney Hall became a business and social center for the Grantwood part of the community. The post office, an A & P, a bakery, a bank, and a tobacco shop were located in this building. Many dances, concerts, and social events were held in the auditorium of Carney Hall. Today, Carney Hall is an apartment house.

The Reservoir

On the southwest corner of Anderson Avenue and Edgewater Road, there once was a beautiful open reservoir. It was built in 1901, by the Hackensack Water Company. This site was chosen because of its high elevation. The reservoir was changed from the once open reservoir to the seventy foot tank that now sits there. The construction began on December 12, 1983 and was completed twelve months later. The size of the tank allows a ten million capacity, while the pumping station's capacity is twenty-five million gallons. Areas serviced by this tank include Cliffside Park, North Bergen, and West New York.

Throughout the years, the reservoir had been an attractive site to many people, especially to youngsters. Many would sneak through the fence in the evening to go swimming.

Scioli Hall

In 1904, Nicola Scioli, an Italian immigrant who came to Cliffside Park in the late 1800's, built the building at the corner of Gorge Road and Oakdene Avenue. For about six years, it was maintained a bank and real estate office. Many of his customers were his employees, Italian immigrants who worked at his stone quarry on Gorge Road, located where the Briarcliff high-rise apartments now stand. The bank was converted to a bar which became a speak-easy with slot machines during Prohibition.

A large hall was added in the rear and was used for dances, movies, and plays. It was also used as a gymnasium for prizefighters. From 1940 to 1948, Gus Lesnevich worked out at this hall. The American Legion rented first floor of the building from the late 1940's to the late 1950's.



Movie and television shows have been filmed in Cliffside Park for many years. At first, silent movies were filmed here, and later, television shows and films such as the film Big, a very "big" box office hit.

The movie business found Cliffside Park near the turn of the century. Kaelin's Moving Picture Studio was located on Palisade Avenue and Laird Place. Many scenes were shot in Cliffside Park. Such stars as Pearl White and Clara Kimball Young were on location here. A favorite spot for shooting action scenes was on the trolley trestle which crossed over Gorge Road at Palisade Avenue. In 1919, Kaelin Moving Picture Studio burned down.

In 1912, Kubli's, the community's first movie house, began operation. It showed silent movies and was located on Palisade Avenue near Walker Street. At one time there was a movie theater called the Star Theater on Walker Street. That theater was nicknamed "The Rats" (Star spelled backwards).

In 1987, scenes from the movie Big were shot on Greenmount Avenue, at Kwik Stop Foods (now Garden State), on Anderson Avenue, and at School Six on Oakdene Avenue. The movie Baby It's You was shot at the Cliffside Park High School during the 1981-1982 school year. Some the the students were used as "extras". A television series, Dream Street, was also shot here.



Joseph Dunninger

(1892-1975)

Dunninger was a well known magician. Though he began his career specializing in sleight of hand card tricks, he was best known as a mind reader.

He was the inventor of the addition slate. This was a mechanical slate, with a hinged flap in the center, which could cover the upper or lower half of the slate. The slate produced, erased, or exchanged writing.

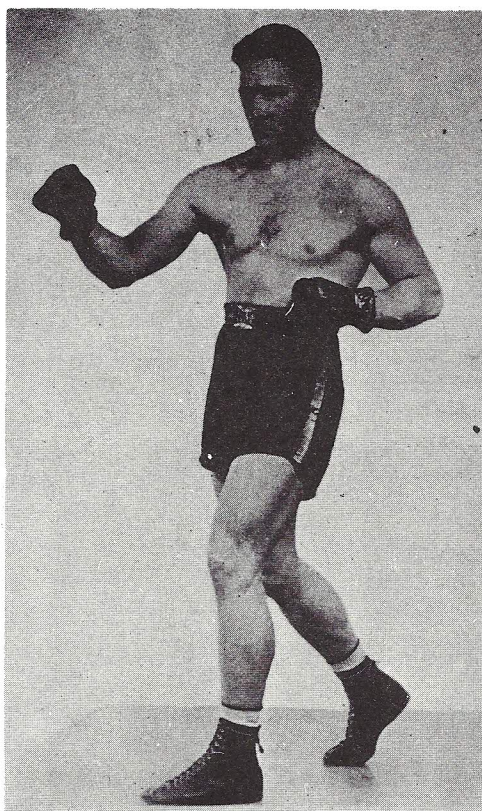
Dunninger had a successful career. He had both a radio and a television show, toured with a show, and wrote several books. His final book was Dunninger's Secrets.



Gus Lesnevich

(1915-1964)

The world's light-heavy weight boxing champion of the world lived on 48 Lawton Avenue. He won the National Boxing Association's light-heavy weight title in 1941 and the crown in 1946. He was named "fighter of the year" by Ring Magazine and "boxer of the year" by the Boxing Writer's Association for his defense of his title in 1947. In 1948 he lost his title. Gus won 57 of his 76 fights. After boxing, he worked in public relations for a Carlstadt trucking firm. He also worked as a boxing referee. Gus Lesnevich lived in Cliffside Park all of his life.



John Marin

(1870-1953)

John Marin, possibly the greatest painter ever to come from New Jersey, was a resident of Cliffside Park. He moved to Cliffside Park with his wife to 249 Clark Terrace in 1920. He spent his winters in Cliffside Park and his summers in Maine. For a long time he was considered one of the most important of the American modernists. Most of his paintings were water colors. He is mostly known for his paintings of Maine and Manhattan.

Charles Henry Niehaus

(1855-1935)

Charles Henry Niehaus was an internationally known sculptor. Among his greatest works are the statue of President Garfield and the Hahnemann statue and monument in Washington D.C. He made statues of Moses and Gibbon which are in the Congressional Library and he sculpted an equestrian statue of Saint Louis which was commissioned for the Louisiana Purchase Exposition at St. Louis in 1904. In 1927, he presented his "Bust of Lincoln" to the Cliffside Park High School.

He lived at 44 Grant Avenue. There was a barn on his property, originally a barn of the Cowdrey Estate. It was used as a studio and housed many of his noted works. He often allowed neighborhood boys, Mayor Calabrese being one of them, to play basketball in this barn.

The McClaves

Major S. Wood McClave
(1859-1924)

Major McClave moved to 49 Edgewater Road, Cliffside Park from New York City with his wife and ten children in 1884. His residence was called "The Wilderness", because at that time there were only two other houses in the neighborhood.

Major McClave was a leader in the movement to create a separate borough of Cliffside Park. He was a member of the borough's first board of health and served as mayor from 1908 to 1911. During this term, he composed a book of Rules and Regulations for the Cliffside Park Police Department. Major McClave donated the land on which Trinity Episcopal Church was built.

He was the Deputy Treasurer of the New York City Police Department and served without getting paid. He was the first citizen of New Jersey to start a campaign for the preservation of the Palisades and was one of the first to advocate building a bridge across the Hudson River.

S. Wood McClave, Jr.
(1880-1953)

S. Wood McClave, Jr. was born in New York City, but lived for many years in the McClave homestead. Though he moved to Englewood in 1927, he came to Cliffside Park almost every day since the office of his firm, McClave & McClave was located on Gorge Road in Cliffside Park.

Mr. McClave was a registered engineer in New York and New Jersey. He helped design the approaches for the Lincoln Tunnel and the George Washington Bridge.

Roscoe Parke McClave
(1881-1961)

With his brother, S. Wood McClave, he founded the engineering firm of McClave & McClave. He also founded and was the first president of the Association of Professional Engineers, which named him Engineer of the Year in 1957. Mr. McClave held civil engineering license No. 1 in New Jersey. He was engineer for the County of Bergen from 1917 to 1961.

Mr. McClave was a member of the New Jersey Legislature and twice served as Speaker of the House of Assembly. He was a member of the State Department of Conservation and Economic Development and a member of the Water Conservation Commission for Bergen County.

He served as president of the United Bank of Cliffside Park which he helped organize and president of the Bergen County Bankers Association.

George H. Shorey
(1870-1944)

Another famous artist to live in Cliffside Park was George H. Shorey, Sr. He resided at 38 Grant Avenue for forty-two years. He was known for his oils, water-colors, sculpture, and special process for making etchings. His paintings had been exhibited in the New York galleries and a painting of his hangs in the Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

George Shorey took an active part in community life. He played the violin and organized a community band. One of his pictures hung near the altar of the Episcopal Church until a fire there destroyed it.

Madame Blanche Arral Wheeler
(1876-1956)

Madame Blanche Aral Wheeler moved to Cliffside Park in 1915, after her marriage to George B. Wheeler, former principal of School Five and then School Six. She resided at 224 Lawton Avenue.

Famous all over the world as opera singer, she sang for many of the crowned heads of Europe and could be heard on many recordings. When in Russia she sang at the invitation of the czar and was decorated by him with the Order of Oldenbourg. She formed her own company and toured Europe and Egypt, where she attended the ceremonies for the anniversary of the coronation of the khedive and was decorated by him with the Order of the Medjediah. She also toured the United States, Australia, and the Far East and wrote a book about her eventful life entitled Bravura Passage.

She maintained a voice studio in her home when she retired. Mrs. Wheeler was a member of the Woman's Club of Cliffside Park and a member of Court Grantwood No. 803, Catholic Daughters of America. She was a member of the Epiphany Roman Catholic Church and sang in the church choir.

This is a Cliffside Park Public Schools Publication

Cliffside Park Board of Education

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