



Forest Hill Home Owners, Inc. is a non-profit organization established more than sixty years ago to benefit the nearly 1000 homes in the Forest Hill neighborhood and to enforce the protective covenants applicable to each property in Forest Hill.

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INSIDE!

Learn about Forest Hill residents, Virginia Colville (shown here with her companion Kitchie), Ruth Kay, and Marguerite Opaskar, who have lived in FH for a total of 190 years!



A Message from the FHHO President:

Fall is the time when we start coiling up our hoses and getting the storm windows back in place. For me, it's time to put away the garden gloves and get out the knitting. But before thoughts of hibernation intrude, I like to take a moment to relive the successes of the summer and remember the glory of Forest Hill during the green months. This was an exceptionally lovely summer.

Unfortunately, I now have to move on to talking about what happens when that greenery comes down, sometimes revealing some problem properties that don't look the way we all would like. You know the ones I mean.

I'm guessing you bought a home in this neighborhood because you liked the way it looked, and you were counting on your neighbors to keep their properties looking as good as yours. And yet, there seem to be folks who have forgotten that there are Forest Hill requirements restricting certain changes that can be made to the property.

So I am writing to remind you that you need to have the permission of the Forest Hill Standards Committee before you can make exterior changes to your home and property. The rules for these changes can be found online at <http://www.fhho.org/images/standards.pdf>. They are called the Preservation Guidelines. Permission from FHHO is in addition to any permits required by your city. You can email the Standards Committee at Standards@fhho.org.

If your property is in disrepair, you can expect to get a notice from the Standards Committee pointing out what you need to fix. If you are considering changes to your property, you need to request an application; if you are not current with your dues, you will have to pay an application fee of \$30. If you make changes to the appearance of your property without consulting the Standards Committee, you can expect to have a fine levied against the property.

The most grievous changes we have seen recently have been the abrupt removal of slate and tile roofs and their replacement with asphalt shingle. This is not allowed. What you need to do is consult with our roofing expert, Tony Rupcic (216-371-6233 or Treasurer@fhho.org) to evaluate whether the slate or tile roof can be saved. We know that is not always possible, so if the roof is beyond repair, Tony will OK a replacement that is in keeping with the aesthetics of our community.

Money is always an issue, but for most of us our biggest asset is our house, and that means property values are a huge issue. Please be considerate of your neighbors and keep your property looking good for yourself and for your neighbors by meeting the standards of Forest Hill.

Hester Lewellen

Feel free to contact me at President@fhho.org or at 216-371-0674.

2013 Annual Meeting

The annual meeting of Forest Hill Home Owners, Inc. will be held Tuesday, November 12, 2013 at McGregor, 14900 Private Drive, East Cleveland, beginning at 7:15 PM to hear the financial reports and elect the 2014 Board of Trustees. After the business meeting local historian and Forest Hill resident, Sharon Gregor, will deliver a slide presentation entitled, "The Rockefeller Family at Forest Hill." She will be available for book signing afterward. Come join your neighbors and friends, stay active in your community, and learn a bit about our history.

The 1930 Forest Hill Development Landscape Plan by Sharon E. Gregor

Spring comes to Forest Hill, especially this year, with welcome relief, from Lake Erie's winter storms and shrouded overcast days. But it is also a time to marvel at the remnants of the original 1930 landscape plan designed by architect Andrew J. Thomas and the planting material that he incorporated into and with which he surrounded the first 81 homes that were built in the Forest Hill Development. Those homes, our well-known "Rockefeller's," now comprise Forest Hill Historic District which was placed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1986.

Perhaps the most beautiful and certainly the showiest of the surviving landscape design are the original Japanese azaleas. Thomas placed those azaleas at the sidewalk creating a dramatic entrance to the front yard through the privet hedge which lined the sidewalk and defined the front of each homeowner's property. They can be clearly seen in the low aerial view of the Wyatt block flanking the curved sandstone walks leading to the front porches and doors of Thomas's French Norman farmhouses. The aerial view, along with photographs of the original landscaping, is found in the promotional sales book "Forest Hill Homes" which was published in the early 1930's. While there appear to be three azaleas in a triangle, judging from today's existing conditions and my own recollection, each azalea was accompanied by two low and eventually sprawling evergreen yews.

The original 1930 Japanese azaleas are differentiated from more recently cultivated azaleas by their brilliant, iridescent fuchsia color. These azaleas absolutely glow and can be spotted throughout the Historic District where they have thrived and survived. They can also be identified and distinguished from their modern cousins by their petite dark "Forest Hill" green leaf. The slender waxy leaf only measures about an inch long and stays green with a slight reddish color throughout the winter.

Over the years many "Rockefeller" homeowners took out the privet hedge that had enclosed their front yard and in doing so also removed the original azaleas. Some owners apparently moved and successfully transplanted the early azaleas up to the front of the house incorporating the shrubs into their foundation planting. Whether next to the house or at the sidewalk, the now ninety year old treasures will be obvious next spring...an heirloom plant and gift from Andrew J. Thomas.

Article reprinted from Forest Hill Historic Preservation Society Newsletter – Summer 2013



Beware of Home Improvement Scams: Don't Become a Victim

We all know that there are those who would take advantage of others. But it is that other guy who is the gullible one. Not me!

Well, we can all become victims, particularly to a smooth talker and an honest looking salesperson. Here is some advice to help you stay out of the clutches of the scammer. In this case, we are talking about scams related to home improvement, but the ideas apply generally.

Never let a person into your home who wants to sell you a repair or home improvement, unless you have called that person for an estimate. Never sign a contract, until you have compared the proposal with other proposals that you have gotten on your own.

For example, a sales person who shows up at your door and suggests that they can help you get your home repaired should be regarded with great suspicion. This person may even suggest that you have storm damage of which you weren't aware and which may not actually exist.

When you tell them that there isn't any damage, they may say that you just can't see it right now, but it will show up later in bad weather.

Or when you say you can't afford it, they may say that they will help you get financing. Signing a contract for financing could lead you down the path of exorbitant loan rates in addition to a dubious and perhaps unneeded repair. And in the worst case scenario, it may end up being a financial disaster and could mean the loss of your home.

In short, always be sure your home needs a repair, and then find your own contractor, using recommendations from people you trust. Verify the contractor's credentials before you sign for any work and make sure they are approved to work in your city and have all required permits.

Please Welcome These New Neighbors!

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**Forest Hill Monster Garage Sale – Saturday
October 19, 2013 9:00AM to 3:00PM
Call 216-724-9683 for Details**

Northvale Three Lovely Ladies of Forest Hill with Great Memories

By Hester Lewellan

Recently I visited with three long time Forest Hill residents: Ruth Kay, Marguerite Opaskar, and Virginia Colville. Ruth moved into Forest Hill in 1963, Marguerite in 1949, and Virginia in 1937.

Since breaking her pelvis last winter, Ruth Kay has moved to independent living at Waterford at Richmond and Chardon Roads. So she lived in Forest Hill for only 50 years. I won't tell you her age, but she told me she was born on 5/5/15, so I'll let you figure it out. She met her husband Don when both were working for Tow Motors in 1948. Ruth was a payroll clerk. They loved dancing and playing cards. They raised two girls, Bonnie and Linda, who both graduated from Shaw High School. After they moved to Forest Hill, Ruth became a long time member of the lawn bowling group. Don passed away in 1997. Sadly their daughter Bonnie passed away in 2011.

When I went out to Waterford to interview Ruth, I found out she has lunch every day with another long time Forest Hill resident, Bill Muth (99), who used to live on Walden. Bill has a walker and Ruth has a cane, but they still enjoy playing "Kings in the Corner" and other card games.

Marguerite Opaskar is older than Ruth (!) and lives on Hollister. Yes, she's 99! She met her husband in 1931--he was a classmate of her brother's when both were freshmen at John Carroll and planning a dance together--but she and Carl didn't marry until he had graduated from medical school in 1937. In 1949 they moved onto Hollister into a house Carl had designed and his contractor father Frank had had built for them. They had seven children: first a boy, then 6 girls.

Two of the girls, Pat and Peggy, remember that when they moved in, there were still lots of empty lots on Rumson. They had trees to climb and half-built houses to explore. Using cardboard boxes they built a little town amidst the berry bushes which they of course called Opaskarville. As kids they loved sledding down the hill in Forest Hill Park in the wintertime and rolling down the hill in the summer. They belonged to the Forest Hill Swim Club when it first opened. When they grew up, Peggy became an elementary teacher in Cleveland, but Pat who started as a teacher moved to Chicago and got into publishing. Now both live with their Mom. Marguerite and Carl loved playing pinochle with Forest Hill friends. He also enjoyed photography and woodworking. They were married for 66 years until he died in 2003. She has lived in Forest Hill for 64 years.

The third interviewee, Virginia Colville, moved to Glynn Road with her parents and older brother in 1937. The house was brand new, and her family has occupied it ever since. Her father was an engineer and the supervisor of sales personnel at General Electric. Like the Opaskar girls, Virginia and her friends loved prowling all

the empty lots on Glynn; she says they skated in the basements of half-finished houses. Virginia went to East Cleveland public schools: Caledonia, then Kirk, then Shaw. She went to the University of Michigan and became a medical technician, working first at U. of M., then Temple University Hospital in Philadelphia, and finally, St. Luke's Hospital in Cleveland where she supervised the chemistry lab for nearly 30 years.

When she moved back here to her parents' home, she joined a number of local organizations and is a former president of the College Club. At that time she decided to join the Forest Hill Church because of the fact that it was integrated. She enjoys great relations with all her neighbors. She really appreciates the diversity of Forest Hill and wouldn't live anywhere else, but in the summer she and her many nieces and nephews enjoy spending time in their 5 generation cottage on the Grand River. She is shown on page 1 posing with one of her cats, Kitchie who has lovely green eyes. Although Virginia hasn't lived here continuously since 1937, it's been her family's home for 76 years. Can anybody top that?

If there is any through-line among these ladies, it is how much they love their Forest Hill homes. And they're all really sharp, so I asked whether they had any special advice on staying sharp for the rest of us. Ruth says it's just luck, but she helps the luck along by engaging in all the exercise, games, ice cream socials, and Manhattan Night at Waterford. Marguerite says staying sharp is a gift from God, but also mentioned she has always been interested in life, being alert and watchful and taking care of other people. And it might be coincidence, but they all seemed to be card players: bridge, pinochle, solitaire. I'm hoping sudoku will work for me.



Pat, Peggy and Marguerite Opaskar at home on Hollister



Bill Muth and Ruth Kay at their new home, Waterford

Cleveland Metroparks: Assistance with Trees at Forest Hill Park

By Charles Engelhart, Director of Parks-East
Cleveland Metroparks

Parks and trees alike provide a multitude of social, ecological and economic benefits to the community in which they reside. For example, the trees in parks provide more appealing places to gather with family and friends. They also help to mitigate storm water run-off, reduce summertime heat, and clean the air in which we breathe. The trees within our parks, however, are in a constant state of flux and from time to time require our attention.

As a long-standing employee at Cleveland Metroparks Division of Forestry, I have had the privilege of partnering with many East Cleveland officials and East Cleveland Parks Association members. Albeit these opportunities ebb and flow over the years, the overarching goal has remained the same: to provide assistance with the trees at Forest Hill Park. To this end, Cleveland Metroparks has collaborated with multiple city administrations over multiple decades.

My first experience working with East Cleveland officials dates back to May 1996, and again in the spring of 1997. Although I'm not able to recover detailed work records, I did find some photos with captions. Coupling the aforementioned with my memory, I recall the Division of Forestry spending two weeks in 1996, and one week in 1997 doing tree work at Forest Hill Park. The photos and captions I found in my archive depict equipment staged in the Lee Boulevard parking lot. Staff members ground stumps; elevated trees along Lee Boulevard; elevated trees in three different parking lots; removed compromised trees near the baseball fields, trails and picnic area near Meadow Vista, and the Great Meadows.

Notes from the Forest Hill Historic Preservation Society

Imagine my joy this summer when I drove west on Glynn Road to see a brand new shake roof being installed on one of the homes that predate the historic Rockefeller homes. From old photographs taken during construction, many of the houses on Glynn can be seen, from the back and even in an old aerial photograph of the development. These are beautiful homes, most in excellent care with conscientious owners. Some have suffered the indiscretion of vinyl siding and ugly security doors, but in general, this is solid housing stock.

This year, foreclosed homes on Rutherford, Newbury and Hereford have been purchased by caring individuals and rehabilitated to former glory. Interested new residents are entering the area and lending a voice and action to keep the neighborhood strong.

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So many stories in historic neighborhoods like ours involve the "removal" or "replacement" of significant portions of the home. We have seen a few slate roofs inexplicably removed and replaced with less valuable and certainly shorter lived asphalt. Rather than investing in a quality paint job, owners for some unexplained reason opt for vinyl, which covers the beautiful craftsmanship of these old homes and masks the details that probably instigated the initial purchase. Viewed individually, it is a minor blip of concern. However, we should be concerned. Gone too far and these minor alterations add up and can result in a mass devaluation of the entire neighborhood. Let's be careful!

Resist the urge to remove a slate roof. The roof will likely outlast any human who occupies the home. Simply maintain it with a biennial review by a professional. Tile roofs are similarly long lasting. Painting is cheaper and better looking than vinyl. Don't damage the resale value of your home with low-priced alterations. Find local craftsman who know how to properly repair and rehabilitate the nuances that make your home unique. Once changed, it is very difficult to go backwards. Take care of your old home and it will provide you with shelter, wellbeing and financial wherewithal.

-Jeffrey R. Dross
(Jeff is Vice-President of FHHPS. An article by the Society appears in each issue of the Forest Hill newsletter. If you are interested in more details about the organization, call him at 321-0206.)

Thanks to the following contributors to Forest Hill Home Owners, Inc. – You make us a better neighborhood!

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The Forest Hill Cook Book Needs Your Recipes!

We are preparing a cookbook that features recipes from the Forest Hill neighbors and we need your favorite recipe. They will be assembled into a printed and bound book and sold to benefit the neighborhood. If you have an old family favorite or a new recipe that is destined for fame, please contact Joyce Holloway at membership@FHHO.org or leave a message at 932-4590 and she'll return your call. Who knows, soon everyone will be making your grandma's special chocolate cake!

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Notification to Home Owners in Forest Hill

Written approval from the Forest Hill Home Owners, Inc. is required for new construction, exterior alterations and/or additions to comply with Deed Restrictions.

Written Approval is Needed For:

Windows / Roofing / Siding / Fences / Patio Enclosures / Room Additions / Deck

Alteration guidelines are available on our website at www.fhho.org

Call **216-932-8952** for an application. FHHO approval is in addition to and independent of City approval.

Eastwick (PLUS!) Block Party

Eastwick Dr. celebrated their 18th annual block party on the anniversary of their first one, August 31, 1996. President Freda Webb welcomed residents and their guests for a perfect evening: dancing in the streets, courtesy of a DJ and a lot of spirited participants, a Bouncy Castle for the kids, and lots of ribs and potluck for everyone. Thanks to Cleveland Heights Councilperson Cheryl Stephens who joined us AND won the grand prize!



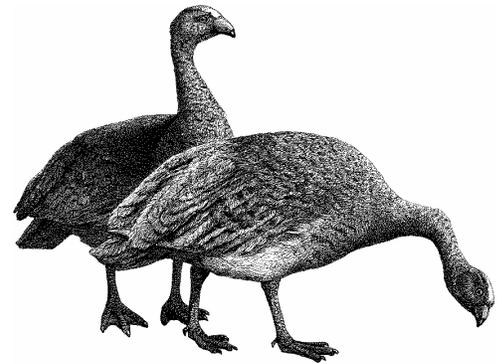
Geneva Duncan with Cleveland Heights Councilperson Cheryl Stevens and "Dancing in the Street!" on Eastwick



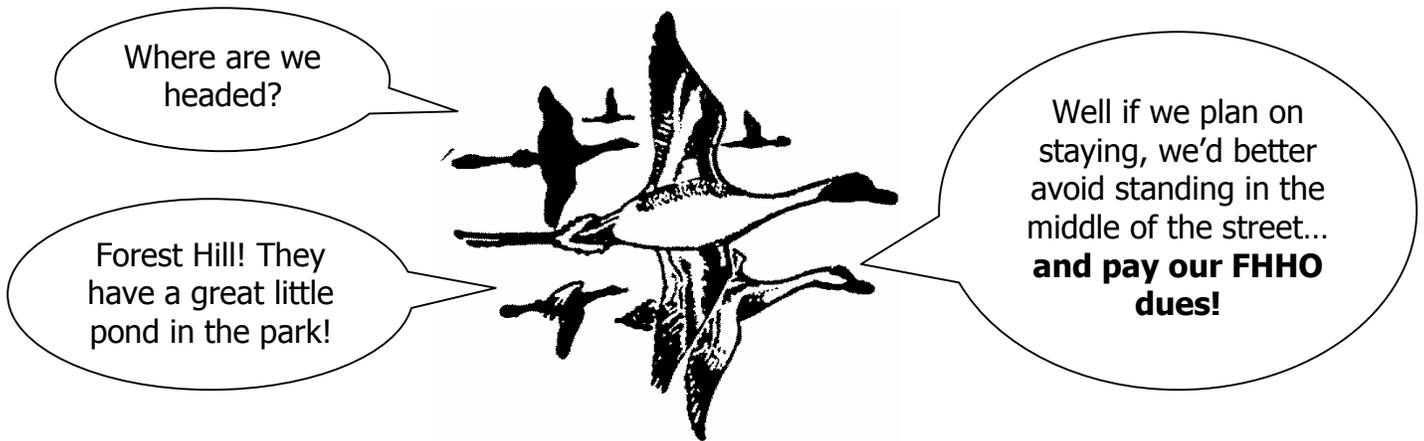
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Remember, The Forest Hill Home Owners Annual Meeting is scheduled for 7:15PM Tuesday November 12, 2013 at McGregor, 14900 Private Drive, East Cleveland, OH



Fill in the form below and mail it to FHHO, 2419 Lee Blvd., Cleveland Heights, OH 44118-1206. \$52 is the suggested membership fee, but any amount is welcome. If you'd like to further help your community, please indicate your interest in volunteering. You will be contacted!

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