

HISTORY OF HILLSIDE

Lewis A. Park commissioned construction of the house at 406 Hillside Road in 1922 and it was completed by 1925. The house was designed by William Boyd, Jr. of the “society architectural firm” Ingham & Boyd. Hillside was a rare solo project for the architect. The house was built by Sewickley contractor James M. Scott and the landscaping was done by William Pitkin, Jr. and Seward H. Mott.

Park was the only child of steel magnate David E. Park and Mary Lewis Park. He remained a bachelor until his 40s when he married Frances L. Schoen. The two lived year-round at Hillside, which was named after the Park’s farm “Hillside Farm” in Ebensburg, PA.

The next owners were Maitland Alexander, Jr. and Anne Paul Alexander. The two lived in the home, from 1948 to 1974. Detailed information on the history of 406 Hillside is contained in the following report.



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2025

OWNERSHIP

Pre-Construction

June 22, 1920 (Allegheny County Deed Book 2024: 351): Tuxedo Land company conveyed 520 acres, including the land where 406 Hillside Drive would be built to Lewis A. Park for \$1.

November 18, 1922 (Deed Book 2136: 477): John Denny conveyed 23 acres where 406 Hillside would be built to Lewis A. Park for \$1.

Lewis A. Park died September 7, 1946 and left the property to Frances S. Park (Will Book 276: 313). Frances S. Park remarried in 1947 and took the name Frances S. Greene.

January 6, 1948 (Deed Book 2987: 236): Frances S. and Orland S. Greene conveyed 406 Hillside to Maitland Alexander, Jr. for \$90,000. The property contained 115.760 acres.

December 21, 1959 (Deed Book 3816: 188): Anne Paul Alexander was added to the title to 406 Hillside Drive.

Maitland Alexander Jr. died on February 15, 1973, and the property was vested in Anne Paul Alexander.

December 26, 1974 (Deed Book 5445: 33): Anne P. Owsley, formerly Anne P. Alexander, by G. Donald Gerlach her Attorney in Fact conveyed 406 Hillside to W. Scott and JoAnne D. Brinker for \$230,000.

April 12, 1978 (Deed Book 5922: 65): W. Scott and Joanne D. Brinker conveyed 406 Hillside to Hal F. and Desire Reynolds for \$245,000.

August 21, 1986 (Deed Book 7374: 500): Hal F. and Desire G. Reynolds conveyed 406 Hillside to John R. Hess, Jr. and Sandra Hess for \$425,000.

On August 30, 1991, Helge H. and Erika Wehmeier purchased 406 Hillside from John R. Hess, Jr., and Sandra Hess (Deed Book 8559: 85).

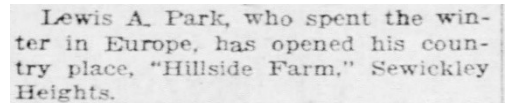
AGE OF HILLSIDE

Construction

All available information indicates that construction began on the house at 406 Hillside Drive in 1922 and was completed by 1925. *The Pittsburgh Post* reported on February 7, 1922 that Ingham & Boyd were designing a county estate for Lewis A. Park in Sewickley. An article in *The Pittsburgh Press*, published in May of that year indicates that the house was to cost \$200,000 and be completed fall of 1923

Many modern-day sources list the construction date of Hillside at 1927, however in April of 1926 *Architecture – The Professional Architectural Monthly* published photographs of the estate. These photographs show a completed house with mature landscaping. Printed media from that time would have required a lead time of at least a month but likely longer, and the deciduous trees in the images would not have had leaves if the photos were taken between January and March of 1926.

However, there are no known sources providing concrete evidence the house was completed before 1925. It has been rumored that Hillside took a number of years to complete, and there are no known records showing a definitive completion date. Hillside was built to be a summer cottage for Park, and his parents also owned an estate in Sewickley Heights where Park spent much of his time, so when newspapers labeled Park as living in Sewickley Heights, there was no way to know if it was his own home or his parents' home.



Lewis A. Park, who spent the winter in Europe, has opened his country place, "Hillside Farm," Sewickley Heights.

Pittsburgh Gazette-Times, June 25, 1926

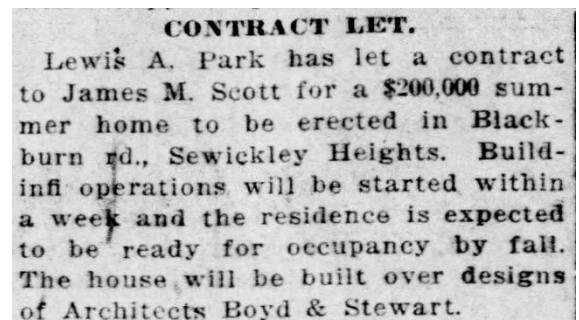
A blurb published in the *Pittsburgh Gazette-Times* on June 25, 1926 is the first to specifically mention the house at 406 Hillside Drive.

The contractor James M. Scott:

Lewis A. Park hired James M. Scott to construct 406 Hillside Drive. James M. Scott was a building contractor whose business address was 407 Centennial Avenue in Sewickley. Scott lived at 613 Locust Place. His employees included John Scott, a carpenter who lived at 611 Hill Street.

Other work by James M. Scott included construction of:

- 903 Amberson Avenue, Shadyside, 1919
- 1224 Shady Avenue, Squirrel Hill, 1920



CONTRACT LET.
Lewis A. Park has let a contract to James M. Scott for a \$200,000 summer home to be erected in Blackburn rd., Sewickley Heights. Build-in operations will be started within a week and the residence is expected to be ready for occupancy by fall. The house will be built over designs of Architects Boyd & Stewart.

The Pittsburgh Press, May 23, 1922

- alterations to 630 East Drive, Edgeworth, 1925
- Muottas, a house built in Leetsdale for William Walker, 1926
- an addition to Linganore, the home of Alex Laughlin on Beaver Road in Sewickley, 1926
- 245 Frederick Avenue, Sewickley, 1928-1929
- the Sewickley Heights Fire and Police Department building, 1928-1929
- 420 Woodland Road, Shadyside, 1929

The Architect: The Architect William Boyd, Jr.:

William Boyd Jr. designed buildings and houses for clients who were prominent in Pittsburgh's financial and social worlds.

While a partner in the architectural firm of Ingham & Boyd, William Boyd Jr. participated in design of:

- the Historical Society of Western Pennsylvania building, 4338 Bigelow Boulevard, 1912
- the Board of Education building, 341 South Bellefield Street, Oakland, 1926
- Frick International Studies Academy, 107 Thackeray Street, Oakland, 1927
- Chatham Village, Mount Washington, 1931 and 1935
- Jennings Memorial Chapel of St. Stephen's Episcopal Church, Sewickley, 1937
- the Buhl Planetarium, North Side, 1939



The Pittsburgh Post, February 7, 1922

In addition to Hillside, work by William Boyd Jr. working alone included "Sunnymede," a house on Scaife Road, Sewickley Heights, 1921. William Boyd Jr. designed Hillside while living on Woodland Road in Edgeworth. He later resided for a number of years on Poia Place in Edgeworth.

The landscape architects: William Pitkin, Jr. & Seward H. Mott

William Pitkin Jr. was a prominent landscape architect, and his brother-in-law was Seward H. Mott. The two were originally from Rochester, New York, but moved to Cleveland in 1919. The two officially began their firm "William Pitkin, Jr. & Seward H. Mott – Landscape Architects in 1923.

The firm designed estates and subdivisions in Ohio, Western Pennsylvania and Western New York. Some of their more well-known projects in the Cleveland area include Rockefeller Park, Shaker Lakes, and Ambler Park as well as estates in Cleveland and Shaker Heights. The firm is best known for its work on Kingwood, the estate of Charles King in Mansfield, Ohio (1926).

Both William and Seward gave up the business during the 1930s. Pitkin returned to Rochester to run his family's nursery, and Mott moved to Washington D. C. to become a lobbyist to promote national policies for neighborhood planning.

Architectural style

William Boyd, Jr. designed Hillside in the Georgian Eclectic style, a variation of the Colonial Revival Style. Colonial Revival homes, built in the Pittsburgh area between the late 1890's and the 1930's, used features common to Georgian, Adam, and Dutch Colonial houses built in the American colonies and United States until the 1840's.

Georgian Revival features of 406 Hillside Drive include the house's side-gabled arrangement; its main block, measuring six bays wide, with a centered, pedimented entrance, and three dormer windows across the top.

The whimsical turret was built for practical use. The lower level contained an ice storage room off the kitchen and the upper level was a water tank, which purportedly supplied the sprinkler system.

LEWIS A. AND FRANCES S. PARK

Lewis Anderson Park was born on August 9, 1886. He was the only child of steel magnate David E. Park and Mary Lewis Park. He grew up in the family home on North Avenue in Allegheny City, which was located where Allegheny General Hospital is today. As an adult in the 1920s, Park would donate a portion of the family estate to the hospital.

When Park was a young child he attended Allegheny Preparatory School, and as a teen attended St. Paul's school in Concord, New Hampshire. He completed his education at Yale University and then returned to Pittsburgh, where he dabbled in many business interests, eventually becoming director of the Union Trust Company and owner of the Park Building in Downtown Pittsburgh.

When the United States joined World War I in 1917, Park decided to serve his country. On January 28, 1918, he showed up at his local recruiting station and joined the navy. He was given the rank of Second Class Seaman and served his tour in Philadelphia from February 19 to November 11, 1918.

Park remained a bachelor until his 40s when he married Frances Schoen. Frances was born in Pittsburgh on November 4, 1905 and had been raised in a house on Woodland Road in Shadyside. Her father William Henry Schoen had founded the Schoen Pressed Steel Company, which manufactured rail car components. After

Mrs. William Henry Schoen of Fifth ave. announces the engagement of her daughter, Miss Frances Louise Schoen, and Lewis A. Park of Sewickley Heights.

The Pittsburgh Press, November 6, 1927

parents' living room on February 5, 1928. After the wedding they honeymooned "in the east," for a few weeks before setting up household at Hillside.



Frances Schoen in the Junior League Musical Review, published in *The Pittsburgh Press*, November 23, 1924

finishing school, Frances spent her days traveling with her family and performing in charity revues when she was home.

Lewis and Frances were married in a small ceremony held in her

The 1930 census was the first taken at Hillside. Neither Lewis nor Frances listed an occupation. The house was tended to by five live-in servants. Karl Kusser, 38, was the butler. He had immigrated from Germany in 1907. The cook was Stella Patton, 34. Stella was a native of Pennsylvania. Susanne Jreleak, 34, had immigrated from Czechoslovakia in 1911. She worked as the family's laundress. Martino Chirumbolo, 39, was the only married servant, although his wife did not live with him. He had immigrated from Italy in 1909. Sallie Wattenpole, 17, worked as a maid. She was a native of Pennsylvania.

The Parks had an active social life during the 1930s. They participated in horse shows and dog shows and threw dinner parties at their home. They lived at Hillside when they were in Western Pennsylvania, but every year after the holidays, they would go to their winter home in Aiken, South Carolina.

NICE day for the dog show, isn't it? Apparently we can't rely on June any more. She has failed us almost every time an outdoor event has been scheduled all during the month. If it hasn't rained, it has been too chilly for comfort—and this last day is including both of these somewhat unpleasant features. Aside from the weather, though, everything tends toward the success of the show. Nearly 400 dogs are entered, among the local exhibitors being Lewis A. Park, who is showing 17 pointers, setters, greyhounds and wire-haired fox terriers;

Pittsburgh Sun-Telegraph, June 30, 1928

At the time of the 1940 census, the Parks were staying at Hillside. Only two of their servants from 1930 were still employed by the Parks. Martino Chirumbolo had been promoted to the position of butler. The census reported he had a sixth-grade education, worked 40 hours per week and earned \$1,920 per year. Sallie Wattenpole seems to have been demoted from maid to laundress. She had a high school degree and worked 28 hours per week, earning \$650 per year.

Patick Lalley, 30, worked 72 hours per week as a companion, earning \$2,100 per year. He was single, a native of Pennsylvania, and had a college degree from Duquesne University. There were also two chambermaids: Louise Barg, a 60-year-old widow, and Julia Carnic, who was 55 and single. Both women were natives of Pennsylvania and had eighth-grade educations. Louise worked 70 hours per week and earned \$940 per year; Julia worked 62 hours per week and earned \$860 annually.

LEWIS A. PARK

Funeral services for Lewis A. Park, sportsman and financier, will be held today at 2:30 p. m. at his home, "Hillside," Sewickley Heights. Mr. Park died Saturday at his home after a long illness.

The son of Mary Lewis and David E. Park, he had been prominent in Pittsburgh's business and social life. Mr. Park was the owner of the Park building and was a director of the Union Trust Company, Allegheny General Hospital and the Pittsburgh Club. He was a member of the board of trustees of the First Presbyterian Church of Pittsburgh and a member of the Pittsburgh Club, Allegheny Country Club, Pittsburgh Golf Club and Rolling Rock Club.

Mr. Park is survived by his wife, Mrs. Frances Schoen Park, noted horsewoman and dog fancier.

Pittsburgh Post-Gazette, September 19, 1946

In 1944, Lewis was diagnosed with carcinoma of the neck. Despite surgeries at the Doctor's Hospital of New York, he succumbed to the disease on September 7, 1946. He was 60 years old.

A little over a year later on November 15, 1947 Frances married Orland S. Greene a friend of her brother. They sold Hillside and spent their time between homes in the Hamptons, Palm Beach, and Barbados.

The couple spent fourteen years together. Orland died of cancer on December 14, 1961. A year later, Frances also succumbed to cancer and passed away on November 6, 1962, at the age of 57. They are buried in Southampton Cemetery in Southampton, New York.

MRS. GREENE DIES: The death of Mrs. Orland S. Greene on Tuesday at "Pheasants Crossing," Water Mill, Long Island, closes another chapter among old-timers of the resort. For Mrs. Greene, with her late husband, Orland S. Greene, were associated with Palm Beach for many years. He died in Dec. 1961 just prior to their planned arrival here for another season. The Palm Beach residence of Mr. and Mrs. Greene was at 161 Kings Road. They were members of the Everglades Club here and also, in addition to their Palm Beach and Water Mill homes, maintained a residence at St. James, Barbados, B.W.I.

The Palm Beach Post, November 8, 1962

MAITLAND ALEXANDER, JR. AND ANNE PAUL ALEXANDER

Maitland Alexander, Jr. purchased Hillside in 1948. He was the son of Rev. Dr. Maitland Alexander and Madelaine Laughlin Alexander. His father was the prominent pastor of the First Presbyterian Church of Pittsburgh, and his mother was an heiress from both the Jones and Laughlin families.

Maitland Jr. was born on May 21, 1908 and raised in his family's Ridge Avenue mansion. In 1928, he and his family moved full-time to their Sewickley Heights estate, "Poplar Hill." After finishing high school at St. Paul's school, he attended Princeton University, graduating in 1930 and then medical school at the Columbia College of Physicians and Surgeons, graduating in 1943.

He remained a bachelor until 1946 when he married Anne Paul Clark. Anne was a great-granddaughter of Anthony Joseph Drexel, the founder of both Drexel University and Drexel, Morgan & Company, which would be renamed J. P. Morgan & Co., after Drexel's death.

This was Anne's second marriage. Her first husband, Louis Crawford Clark served in the Navy during World War II and had been killed in a plane crash. The couple had only been married for a year at the time.

Maitland and Anne were married on June 1, 1946 in Long Island New York. Anne had one young son from her first marriage, Louis. The couple moved into Hillside in 1948 and started their own family. Their first son was born in July, just a few months after they purchased the home.

The 1950 census shows the Alexanders in their home. Maitland, 41, reported he worked 48 hours a week as a surgeon and earned \$10,000 per year. Anne did not work outside the home. The enumerator reported that Anne had three children: Louis was 7 and in school, Charles was 2, and Maitland had just been born in July.

The family employed four servants who lived in the home with them. Madalene Dodge was single, 40, and hailed from Maine. All the other servants were natives of Pennsylvania. Dodge was the family's nurse and worked 72 hours per week. She was randomly selected to report income information, which was \$1,530 per year. Anna Brewer, 50, worked 48 hours per week as the cook. She was married but did not live with her husband. Sally Batalic, 30, was single and worked 48 hours per week as a chambermaid, and Frances Kirk, 32 was married and worked 60 hours a

week as the downstairs maid.

The 1950 census is the last census that provides information on occupants of Hillside. Manuscript census records are withheld from public view for 72 years, to protect the privacy of persons who were enumerated.

SUPPLEMENTARY MATERIALS

The following materials accompany this report:

- A copy of part of a plat map of the area around 406 Hillside Drive, published in 1940.
- Photographs of 406 Hillside Drive published in *Architecture – The Professional Architectural Monthly*, April 1926.
- The obituary of architect William Boyd, from *The Pittsburgh Press*, March 4, 1947.
- The obituary of contractor James M. Scott from *The Pittsburgh Press*, January 19, 1948.
- “Attractive Late Winter Weddings Solemnized,” from *The Pittsburgh Press*, February 5, 1928.
- “Hospital Donor,” from the *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*, November 3, 1928.
- “Cool Pools in Gardens,” from *The Pittsburgh Press*, June 16, 1968.
- “Sewickley Heights Proposal Snagged,” from the *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*, August 22, 1985.
- “Mansions: Restoration blends past with present,” from *The Pittsburgh Press*, April 12, 1987.

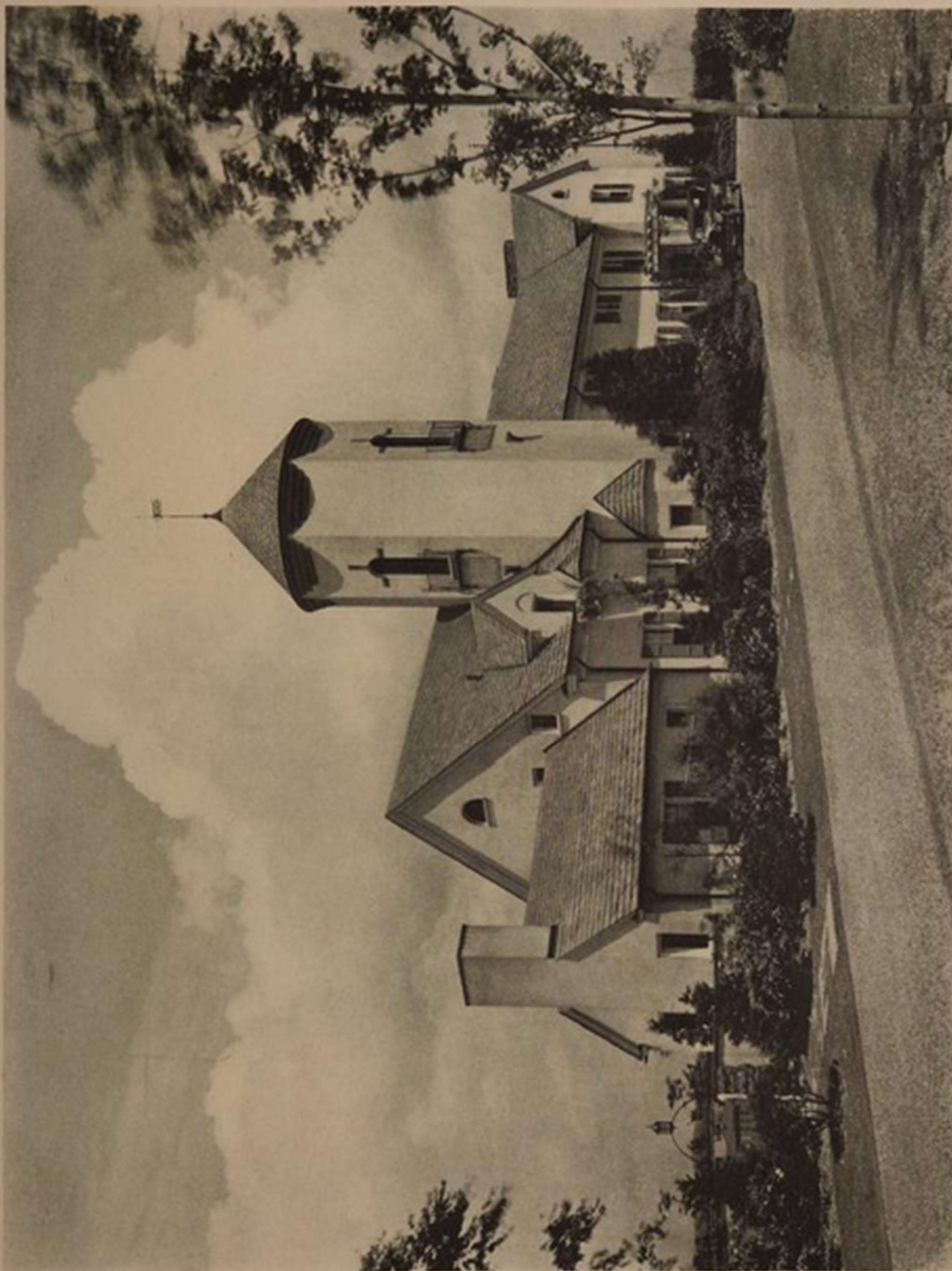
1940



PLATE LX.

ARCHITECTURE

April, 1926



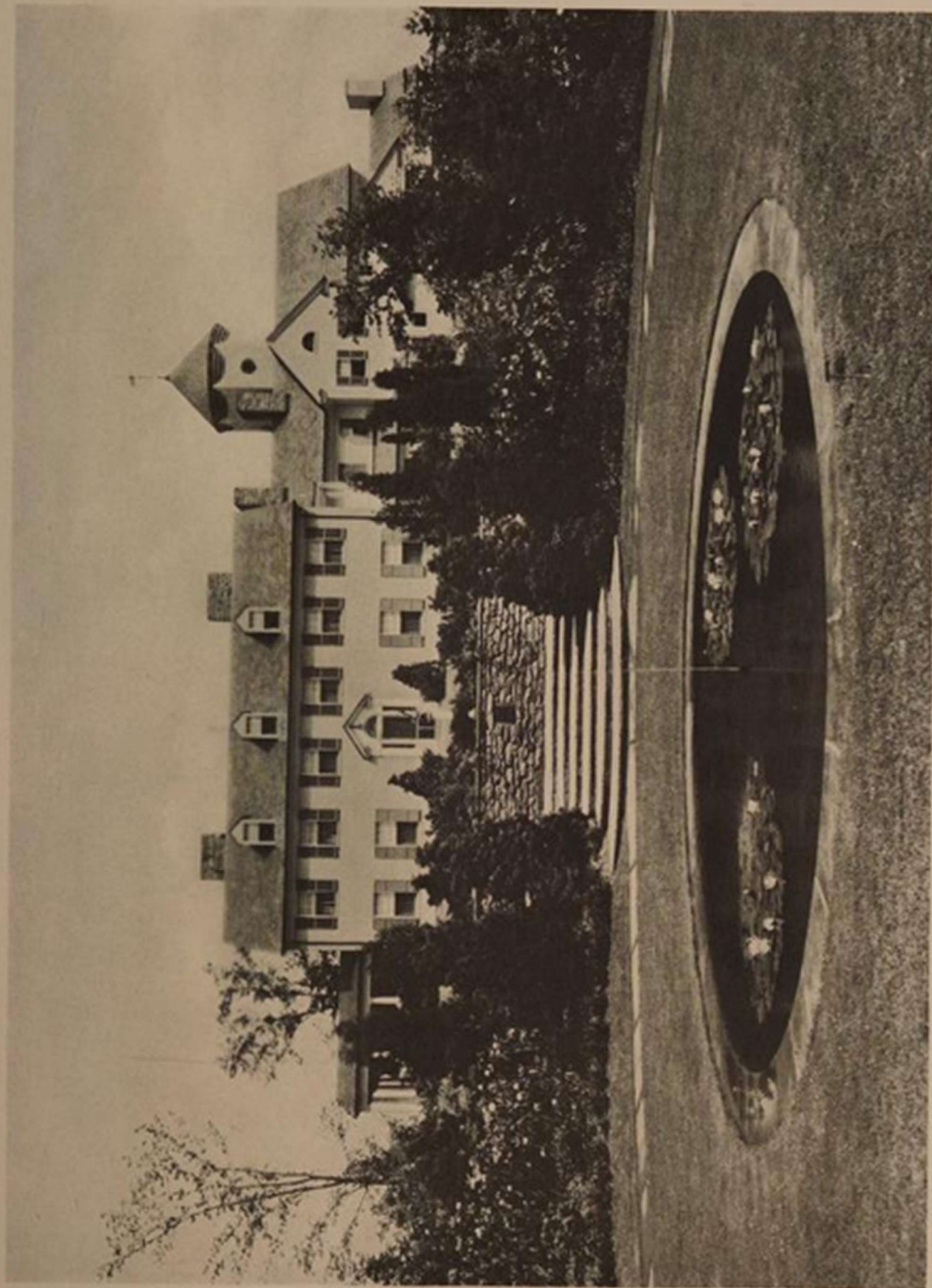
RESIDENCE, LEWIS A. PARK, SEWICKLEY, PA.

Ingham & Boyd, Architects; Wm. Pitkin, Jr., and Seward H. Mott, Landscape Architects.

April, 1926.

ARCHITECTURE

PLATE LXL



TERRACE FRONT, RESIDENCE, LEWIS A. PARK, SEWICKLEY, PA.

Ingham & Boyd, Architects; Wm. Pitkin, Jr., and Seward H. Mott, Landscape Architects.

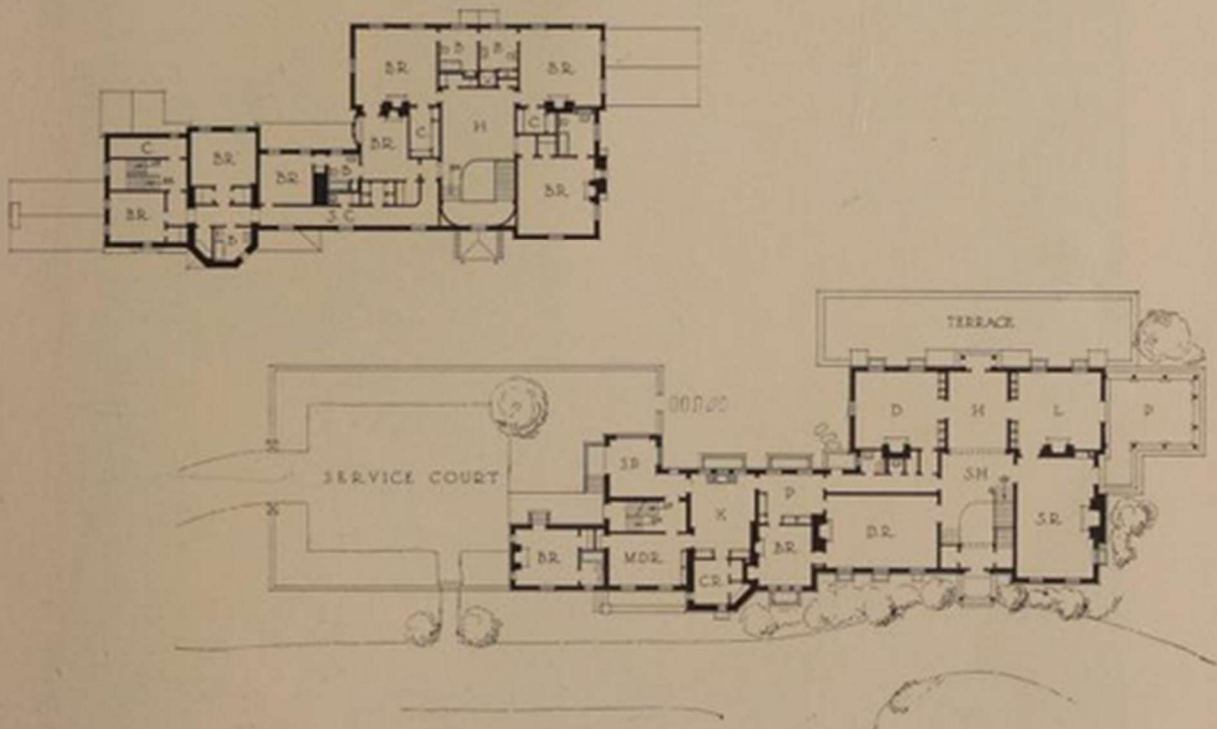
APRIL, 1926.

ARCHITECTURE

PLATE LXII.



FARM BUILDINGS.



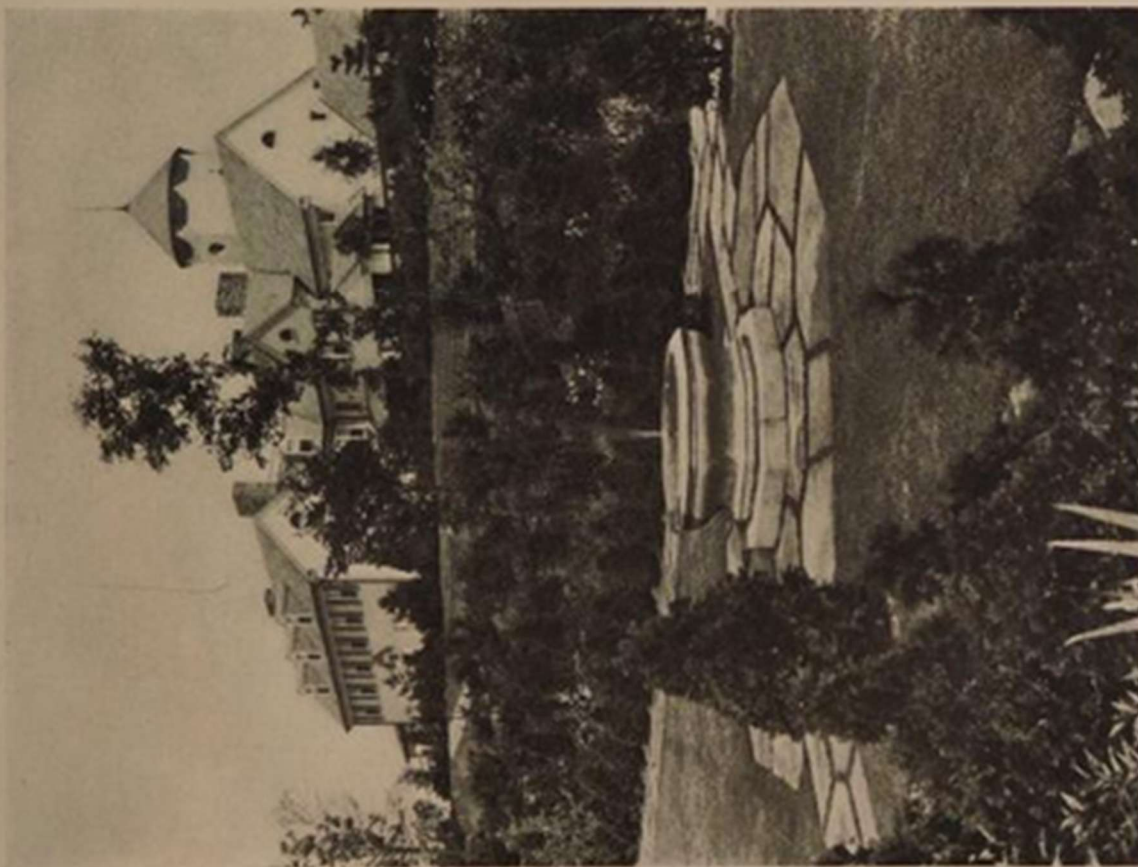
PLANS.

Ingham & Boyd, Architects; Wm. Pitkin, Jr., and Seward H. Mott, Landscape Architects.
RESIDENCE, LEWIS A. PARK, SEWICKLEY, PA.

April, 1926

ARCHITECTURE

PLATE LXIII.



GARDEN.



DETAIL.

RESIDENCE, LEWIS A. PARK, SEWICKLEY, PA.
Ingham & Boyd, Architects; Wm. Pickin, Jr., and Seward H. Mott, Landscape Architects.

Obituaries—

William Boyd, Architect, Dies at Home

Designed Planetarium And Chatham Village

Funeral services will be held at 4 p. m. tomorrow for William Boyd, who died Saturday at his home, 310 Peebles St., Sewickley. Services will be from the H. Samson funeral home, 537 Neville St.

Mr. Boyd, a well-known architect, was a member of the firm of Ingham and Boyd, Pittsburgh. He lived all his life in the Pittsburgh district and was a graduate of Shady Side Academy and the University of Pennsylvania. He belonged to Delta Kappa Epsilon fraternity and was a Mason.

Mr. Boyd was a former member of the Pittsburgh Art Commission and was the designer of Buhl Planetarium, Chatham Village, the Board of Education's administration building, the Juvenile Court Building, Waverly Presbyterian Church and Mellon Junior High School in Mt. Lebanon.

He is survived by his widow, Mrs. Catherine McCutcheon Boyd; a daughter, Mrs. Coleman C. Per-two brothers, Marcus Boyd Jr., and two brothers, Marcus Boyd, Coraopolis, and Herbert S. Boyd, New Hope, Pa.

James M. Scott

James M. Scott, well-known contractor and builder in the Sewickley district, died yesterday in Sewickley Valley Hospital after a short illness. He was 77.

Buildings erected in Pittsburgh under his supervision include the Keenan Building and several schools and churches. Mr. Scott also built many of the larger homes in the Sewickley area.

A member of Sewickley Methodist Church, Mr. Scott also belonged to Doric Lodge, F. and A. M., Syria Mosque and the Pennsylvania Consistory.

Surviving are a son, Robert W. Scott, and one grandchild, both of Sewickley.

Friends are being received at the Gray Funeral Home, 228 Beaver St., Sewickley, where services will be held Wednesday at 2:30 p. m. Burial will follow in Sewickley Cemetery.

Attractive Late Winter Weddings Solemnized

Miss Frances Schoen Weds Lewis A. Park—Miss Katherine Clapp Is Bride—Miss Ellen Stone Names Bridal Party.

THE calendar of the past week has been replete with weddings and entertaining has been confined mostly to brides-elect and their attendants. A continuous round of teas, dinners and dances which have occupied social attention, ended with several notable weddings which were solemnized yesterday.

One of the most interesting ceremonies of the late winter took place yesterday afternoon at 5:30 o'clock when Miss Frances Schoen, daughter of Mrs. William Henry Schoen became the bride of Lewis A. Park, of Pittsburgh and Sewickley Heights. The service was read in the living-room of the Schoen residence of Fifth ave., by Dr. Edwin J. Van Etten, rector of Calvary Protestant Episcopal church.

The bride was attired in a gown of cream Callot satin fashioned in straightline effect. The deep V-yoke was of Alencon lace and long tight sleeves were of satin while a drape to the left side of the skirt was secured with a satin ornament. A court train of the same lace was bordered with satin and lined with flesh tulle. The veil of tulle was secured with a bandeau of Alencon lace and she carried a bridal bouquet of white orchids, gardenias and valley lilies.

Miss Josephine Nicola, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Oliver Nicola, was the bride's only attendant, appearing in light beige marquisette over satin. Two broad strands of lace, forming at the neckline, joined at the bodice and hung to the hemline in the front of the gown. The long sleeves were of marquisette and her large hat was of lace of the same shade. She carried an arm bouquet of American Beauty roses. Alexander S. Hunter was Mr. Park's best man.

Mrs. Schoen, mother of the bride, was attired in gray satin with a large hat of black lace. She wore a shoulder bouquet of orchids. A small reception supplemented the ceremony with only the relatives and a few intimate friends present.

Mr. and Mrs. Park left for an eastern trip and after March 1 will reside on Sewickley Heights.

The bride has been feted with a number of attractive parties during the past few weeks. Alexander Hunter was host at a dinner dance Wednesday night in the Pittsburgh

club for Miss Schoen and Mr. Park, and Mr. and Mrs. T. Howe Nimick entertained with a luncheon on Thursday. Mr. and Mrs. William Larimer Jones were hosts at a theater party Monday night, and Miss Priscilla Hall entertained with a dinner in the Pittsburgh Golf club in their honor. Mr. and Mrs. George Kelly, III, gave a tea in their home Tuesday afternoon for the same honor guests.

Hospital Donor



LEWIS A. PARK.

Mr. and Mrs. Park recently subscribed \$50,000 to the building fund for the new \$5,000,000 Allegheny General Hospital. Park has been connected with the hospital for several years and donated a portion of the ground for the new building.

Friday Is Announced As Closing Date Of Campaign.

With next Friday announced definitely as the closing date, the 850 workers engaged in the appeal for the Allegheny General Hospital's new \$5,000,000 building are redoubling their efforts to see all prospective givers to the project before the close of the campaign.

Appeal leaders predict that the report at the third luncheon, which will be held Monday noon in the William Penn Hotel, will surpass the amounts announced at the previous meetings. At the last meeting a total of \$270,896.50 was reported, which added to the amounts announced at the opening meeting and first luncheon brought the grand total to \$3,660,174.50. The amount yet to be raised is \$1,340,825.50.

According to Dr. Maitland Alexander, president of the hospital and general chairman of the appeal, many of the smaller memorials have been given. This is, particularly encouraging, he said, as it is an indication that the movement is receiving the support of the general public.



Resting on the grassy mall which fronts the pool of Dr. and Mrs. Maitland Alexander in Sewickley Heights are Mrs. Alan Amsler and daughters, Wendy and Molly. Mrs. Amsler and Mrs. Michael Rea are co-chairmen of the pool and garden tour to be held June 27 by the Sewickley Council of Garden Clubs.

Cool Pools In Gardens

By SYLVIA SACHS

When the summer sun sits high in the heavens, and the air is shimmering with heat, the many pools which dot the Western Pennsylvania landscape sparkle with all the desirability of priceless jewels.

And like all jewels, they are enhanced when placed in the proper places.

Nature uses trees, greenery, rocks and vari-colored flowers. So do many pool owners who labor long and hard to soften the safety-dictated features of their swimming pools with natural beauty.

A pool setting depends on many factors. How much ground surrounds it? How many gardeners are available? What degree of formality is wanted?

Dr. and Mrs. Maitland Alexander of Sewickley Heights have acres of lawn which stretch to an impressive mall approaching the pool. A rose garden and two lily pools are part of this formal setting, and a cool arched pavilion in the Florentine style flanks the far end of the grounds.

Gazebo Shaded By Vines

A smaller, free-form pool at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Charles Ramsburg Jr. is flower-lined and has the added high-point of a fragile gazebo shaded by a passion flower vine.

Because she likes to do as much as possible of her own gardening, busy Mrs. Michael Rea of Sewickley has planned her garden for "minimum maintenance."

The pool is surrounded by an all-green garden and a "sunning wheel" of permanent stone parapets topped with striped pads which provide the only poolside furniture.

A Mt. Lebanon family has hung art objects on the wire mesh fence which encloses its pool, and in Ben Avon, the chlorine-dominated air of an indoor-outdoor pool has been circumvented by the judicious "planting" of an artificial garden.

'Swimming Pool Hands'

However a pool is set, there is a certain amount of work involved for owners. One young matron claims she has a new status symbol—"swimming pool hands." But the pleasure her family and friends reap from her work makes it all worthwhile, she adds.

A tour of eight pools and gardens in Sewickley will be held June 27 from 10 a. m. to 4 p. m., and the public is invited by the sponsor, the Sewickley Council of Garden Clubs, to buy tickets.

Funds will be used for community planning. Mrs. Alan Amsler and Mrs. Michael Rea are co-chairmen of the tour.

Sewickley Heights proposal snagged

By Lynda Guydon
Post-Gazette Staff Writer

A plan to develop an 88-acre estate in Sewickley Heights into 12 single-family houses was sent back for revision this week.

Charles Koval, who bought the property on Hillside Drive, off Blackburn Road, about a year ago, hopes to develop the land once owned by the late Dr. Maitland Alexander.

Koval plans to build a house for himself and develop the remaining property into minimum 5-acre lots for single-family houses.

But when Steven Victor, a landscape architect, presented the plan on Monday, Sewickley Heights Borough Council appeared reluctant to approve a plan that would disrupt the lush Fern Hollow Valley.

Sewickley Heights has been known long for its vast estates and open space.

Included in the plan are three separate pieces of land, measuring about 8 acres, 1 acre and 11 acres, considered unfit for development for different reasons.

The largest piece is accessible only by crossing the Fern Hollow Valley, which council members said they would like to preserve undisturbed.

The 8 acres consists of hillsides, which makes it unsuitable for construction, and the remaining 1 acre is too small to develop, Victor said.

The borough ordinance requires a minimum of 5 acres to build.

Just what would become of the three pieces of ground concerned council.

Solicitor Evans Rose Jr. said he would hate to see council "sanctify" land that is less than 5 acres, referring to the 1 acre.

Could the parcel be deeded to the borough, Victor asked?

Council is not in the position to make a decision at this point, but will look favorably on the proposal, council President G. W. Snyder said.

In the meantime, Snyder urged Victor to meet with the planning commission to resolve problems with the plan.

Frank Thompson, a builder and developer who owns land adjacent to Koval's, also appeared at the meeting.

Koval initially bought the entire 114-acre estate, then sold 26 acres to Thompson and kept the remaining 88.

At the Monday meeting in the Allegheny Country Club, Thompson questioned the odd configuration of some of the proposed lots.

Three lots in the center of the estate include narrow strips of land unfit for development.

Because of the odd configurations, Thompson said, the development ends up with a "clustering effect."

Thompson suggested council consider requiring minimal configuration of lot sizes.

But, Snyder said, Sewickley Heights already has been criticized for requiring a 5-acre minimum lot size.

If the borough were to restrict the configuration of lots, it would be considered even more exclusionary, Snyder said.

On the whole, council does not perceive any major problems with the plan, Manager G. Robert Surls said later.

"It isn't a case of any controversy or hard feelings. It just takes a little more work," Surls said.

When asked what the houses are expected to cost, Surls said, that would be up to the buyer.

In any case, 5-acre lots in the borough sell for more than \$100,000. □

The Pittsburgh Press, April 12, 1987

HOME AND GARDEN

The Pittsburgh Press

April 12, 1987

North Edition



Pete Diana for The Pittsburgh Press

Hand-carved pickled pine from an English castle remains in this 32-room Sewickley Heights mansion

Sunday, April 12, 1987, The Pittsburgh Press

N3

Mansions

Restoration blends past with present



Pete Diana for The Pittsburgh Press

Mahogany beams and Corinthian columns provide an opulent focal point in 42-foot dining room of Herbert Beatty's Shadyside home.

By Diane Lefkowitz

For The Pittsburgh Press

*'Mid pleasures and palaces though we
may roam,*

*Be it ever so humble, there's no place
like home.*

— John Howard Payne

CRUCIBLE STEEL founder Lewis Park apparently had entertainment in mind when he built Hillside 60 years ago: The 1,100 acres that comprised the sprawling Sewickley Heights estate included a golf course, bowling alley, ferris wheel, roller coaster and Olympic-sized swimming pool.

Not to mention the garage for his 13 limousines — reportedly, his wife rode in whichever car matched her dress — or the 32-room house.

One of these is a concrete "organ room," where a full-time organist would play music that was piped throughout the house and to the pavilion near the pool.

The families upon which Pittsburgh was built had vast resources of strength, as well as money. The Mellons, Carnegies, Fricks, Thaws — the list of industrial barons reads like a Who's Who of America's richest and finest. And the edifices where they once lived reflect this wealth, this splendor and the strength.

The foundations they laid for the city are immense, and many of their houses remain, for the most part, on solid ground, continuing to share the history and the wealth.

You can create any illusion you wish when you redecorate a home: With the right trimmings and trappings, you can revive any time and place.

But, when a house is actually a piece of the past, and its every musty feature, from the splintered hardwood floor to the peeling, handcrafted crown molding on the ceiling, cries out for attention, the result is something more than an illusion.

You fall in love with the house.

Three households have undertaken the task of trying not to create the illusion of the past, but bring it back in three areas where Pittsburgh's history-makers settled.



Pete Diana for The Pittsburgh Press

The hand-carved green marble dining room fireplace, brought over from Ireland, is one of the features the Hess family is leaving in the Hillside house.

And, in the process, they've fallen in love.

The former Buhl "Honeymoon House" on Buena Vista Street on the North Side's Mexican War Streets, is 27-year-old Dwight Lenzner's third restoration project.

In fact, he's been at it since he was a child, when he helped his father restrip wood on the farm his family restored in Sewickley. All of his projects have been in the North Side and, though he says that "everybody should do it once," this, a rowhouse built in 1862 as the first home for Henry Buhl Jr. and his bride, may be his last.

The restoration was well under way when Lenzner moved into the Victorian house; the previous owners, with a special

low-interest Urban Redevelopment Authority loan, restored it from a six-unit apartment building back to a single-family home. Lenzner, who lived across the street, watched the restoration.

"It took them about eight months to a year to finish this house, and I would come in from time to time to look at it," he said. "Of course, it was run down. The garage was caving in; there was a hole in the roof, and it leaked. If the Buhls could have seen it then . . ."

The previous owners spent "well over \$150,000" on the house, replacing the slate roof and gutting the back staircase, which led to the servants' quarters and restoring the pine and walnut doors.

It took about \$15,000 and a year and a half to finish the job, and his work

included restoring and resupporting the hardwood floors and banisters.

Like so many similar projects, the house and its accessories comfortably weave the past with the present.

Except for the modernized kitchen, the downstairs retains the period look: At the entrance is original Italian marble, and the fireplaces are the original, cut from white marble, as well. Each room has an original cast-iron water heater, and the original crown molding remains on the living room and parlor ceilings.

Antiques he has collected from around the world fill the rooms: A Tiffany-style lamp shakes while the sound from the piano fills the 12-foot-high parlor and, in the corner, his grandmother's victrola sits unused.

Living room furnishings include a carved rosewood chair and couch that belonged to his uncle, and a 1930s grandfather clock with a Westminster chime.

The second-floor room the servants inhabited now holds exercise equipment, a television, a whirlpool just yards away and a skylight the previous owners installed.

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John Hess Jr. and his wife, Sonie, are taking an opposite approach with the Hillside house: The downstairs is being "opened up" and modernized to a certain degree, while they plan to restore more on the two top floors.

Except for the living room, where they left the original hand-carved pickled pine that was brought from a castle in England, they brightened the house by lightening the walls. They removed the wallpaper with a hunting scene in the main entrance and painted the walls white.

The Parks had three kitchens in the original design: the Hesses converted one into a breakfast room, enlarged the windows, painted the walls shrimp and removed some outside shrubbery to provide more sunshine and a better view of the grounds.

"It was so pretty outside, I just wanted

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to open it up," Mrs. Hess said. "In the olden days, the ideas of living were a little bit different."

Obviously. No longer does one need a metal turret to hold 8,000 gallons of water for the house's sprinkler system.

Many of these period features aren't only curious, however, but practical. The built-in wooden compartments in a second-floor closet are now considered a contemporary amenity and are expensive to build in new homes.

The low, arched doorways and small, high windows upstairs, in the Ladies Dormitory (sic), for female guests, are characteristic of the English-Georgian and French-Country styles.

The maids' quarters, where the walls were covered with a heavy, dark floral-patterned wallpaper, are being painted white.

"We're just trying to restore what we think should be restored and updating it to our lifestyle," Mrs. Hess said. "Everything that should be restored, we're going to leave, not to take anything away from the house."

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Since the house was built by steel tycoon William Penn Snyder in 1886, the guest roster at 5135 Ellsworth Ave., Shadyside, has accumulated such names as Presidents Theodore Roosevelt and Woodrow Wilson, King Albert and Queen Elizabeth of Belgium, Madame Curie and Charles Lindbergh.

But, the guest list changed considerably after 1969. The family of E.V. Snyder, a former Pittsburgh mayor, sold it then, and the new owners converted it into apartments, primarily occupied by college students and, later, a religious sect.

Interior decorator Herbert Beatty "discovered" the house, styled in Palladian and Greek Revival architecture, while looking for artifacts to salvage three days before it was to be demolished. And after one look at the sweeping, grand staircase, with its wide steps and hand-carved spindles, he realized that there was more to be saved.

He gave the 18-room house, originally designed as the "Pittsburgh Palace," a complete renovation. It had to be completely gutted and new mechanical systems installed — there are 57 separate electrical circuits — as well as a new roof. And he enlarged the kitchen to make it more "livable."

Twelve years and "well over half a million dollars" later, the house again entertains presidents.

"I try to keep the feeling of originality, but only on a practical level."

He carpeted the floors, instead of restoring the hardwood, for example, because carpet holds heat better and is easier to maintain.

The only room that is not carpeted is the ballroom on the lower level, which Beatty still uses to entertain. From the wide landing at the top of the descending staircase, guests can be properly announced.

Entertaining apparently played a big part in the design of this house.

"The system of building this house at the time, money was no object," he said. "My dining room is 42 feet long. Who wants a 42-foot dining room? Or a 50-some-foot entry hall?"

Also, the class-oriented structure of society 120 years ago, when the house was built, largely influenced its design. For example, "help" could not walk in

front of the masters of the home, which partially accounts for the high number of doors in the house.

And what was one large communal room for all of the servants is now three separate rooms.

The interior and exterior have been completely sandblasted. And Beatty planted trees and removed a slope the previous owner had built outside to restore the landscaping to its original appearance.

As grand as it sounds, restoration is not without its problems. Because the walls are so thick, hiding the wiring and plumbing was a problem for Beatty.

Eighteen-inch solid concrete walls also posed some restrictions for the Hess project, and the Hesses were forced more than once to adapt their plans to the original heating and plumbing systems.

"We really did much more than we expected to," said Hess. "Once you get into these things, you can't stop. These things, you don't jump into and do overnight."

The house does not have air conditioning, nor a duct system for hot-water heating.

Other restrictions include toilet seats and wide metal shower faucets so outdated replacements can't be found.

"When you try to restore something and you have someone out here to repair it, what you think you can repair, you might not be able to because it's so old," said Mrs. Hess.

"But in the end it's worth it. You enjoy your home so much more."

While creating certain obstacles, these original features make it easier to determine which design changes need to be made, according to architect Martin Chetlin.

"The biggest challenge is to know what you want to keep and how you want to work around it. Sometimes owners in between what was there originally (and current owners) make changes," Chetlin said.

He said more homeowners are trying to restore the original appearance of houses, rather than modernize.

"In today's environment, they do," he said. "Thirty years ago, it was not considered to be the way to do things, to go back to the decor and the trim and a little slower pace."

Although preserving the home's original ambience is important, however, another consideration is preserving the integrity of a neighborhood where restoration is taking place.

Residents see their neighborhoods on a social level, said Franklin Toker, University of Pittsburgh associate professor of fine arts and author of "Pittsburgh: An Urban Portrait." Outsiders are able to see the architectural value of a neighborhood more clearly.

It is the "insiders," however, who keep the community's economy going and buildings standing before the area is restored.

He uses the South Side, where restoration has been underway for several years, as an example.

"The South Side had a restoration in the '50s and '60s, but it was, architecturally, the wrong one. The insider knows what he's got socially. He doesn't know what he's got architecturally, but he lives on Jane Street because his grandfather

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