

OUR CENTURY

1906

AT A GLANCE



PD FILE

A thrill a minute at Luna Park.

Mayor makes inroads on 'threefer' line

Amid cheering crowds lining the route, Mayor Tom L. Johnson drove the first 3-cent streetcar from Denison Ave. to Detroit Ave. on Nov. 1. The "threefer" line partially met the mayor's campaign pledge of 3-cent fares, but the Con-Con line still controlled most of the city. The new line ended just short of the tracks across the Detroit Ave. Viaduct, which is now the Detroit-Superior (Veterans Memorial) Bridge.

A fire destroyed much of White City Amusement Park on May 26. It reopened, only to close for good after a severe storm in 1907. The site, at E. 140th St. and Lake Shore Blvd., is now the Easterly Wastewater Treatment Plant.

On the other hand, Luna Park, "Cleveland's fairyland of pleasure," which opened in 1905 at Woodland Ave. and Woodhill Rd., continued to thrive.

In June, it was visited by an airship, which landed, then rose and maneuvered overhead. The park closed in 1931 and the last vestige, the roller rink, burned in 1938. In 1940, the Woodhill Homes housing project was built on the site.

The Naps lost the pennant race to the Chicago White Sox, known as the "hitless wonders," but Naps won most of the individual titles. Catcher Justin Clarke tied for the batting championship at .358, three points ahead of Naps manager Nap Lajoie. Elmer Flick led in stolen bases and runs. Pitchers Dusty Rhoades, Addie Joss and Otto Hess were all 20-game winners.

It was big news. The story started on Page One and took most of an inside page in The Plain Dealer:

Before 6,545 — a record Cleveland football crowd — the red and white of Western Reserve triumphed over the brown and white of Case, 10-8, in the annual Thanksgiving game. It was Reserve's first win over Case since 1900, the team having been shut out in the previous five contests.

Two touchdowns accounted for Reserve's 10 points; Case had a touchdown, a kicked goal and a safety. Both teams used forward passes, legal for the first time this season. Reserve also gained 15 yards on a fake drop kick.

In a rare spectacle on Aug. 13, Clevelanders were able to see Rondeau, Ontario, in a mirage reflected across the lake.

A benefit at the Opera House on April 27 raised more than \$2,000 for victims of the San Francisco earthquake and fire. William Ganson Rose records that actors and vaudeville performers from Cleveland and other cities "delighted the great audience that packed the house."

On Nov. 6, the 100th anniversary of his death, the Chamber of Commerce erected a monument to the city's founder, Moses Cleaveland, at the Canterbury, Ct., cemetery where he is buried.

In December, work started on one of the most expensive houses built in Cleveland up to its time. Samuel Mather's mansion, at 2605 Euclid Ave., was designed by Charles Schweinfurth, who also designed Trinity Cathedral.

Later the home of the Cleveland Automobile Club, the mansion is now part of Cleveland State University.

New this year: St. Luke's Hospital Association, which began construction on Prospect Ave.; the Infants' Clinic (forerunner of Rainbow Babies and Children's Hospital of University Hospitals); the Orthodox Old Home (Memorah Park); the Baptist Home of Northern Ohio (Judson Retirement Community).

Reform in the schools

Language barrier, need to work kept students out of classroom

By Fred McGunagle

Shocked by truancy, high drop-out rates, lack of funding, overcrowded classrooms, automatic promotion of poor students, lack of textbooks, battles over bilingual education and charges of patronage, a business-led group today called for a dramatic shakeup of the Cleveland school system.

"Today" was July 24, 1906.

"People think the fights today about education are unusual or new, but they are eternal," says Edward Miggins, co-editor of "The Birth of Modern Cleveland, 1865-1930."

The 1906 schools had one problem worse than today's: Three-quarters of the children came from families in which a foreign language was spoken; in the Broadway area, 90 percent did not speak English. Second-grade classes were disrupted by 12- and 13-year-olds put into them in an attempt to match their skill levels.

And those were the children who came to school — barely half of the school-age population. While boys were supposed to stay in school until they were 15 and girls until 16, boys were going into factory work as young as 13.

The schools originally had been set up as prep schools, according to Miggins, a professor of history and urban affairs at Cuyahoga Community College. The new model stressed vocational training as early as elementary grades. Technical High School (later East Tech) and Commercial High School were established, along with evening classes for dropouts.

In an early attempt to deal with social problems, the schools added playground programs and medical and dental checkups. They also divided grades into "slow" and "fast"



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This library scene was taken in the old Willson Avenue [E. 55th St.] School. The man with the mustache, standing in the center, was Edward L. Harris, school principal for 26 years.

classes — often meaning immigrant and nonimmigrant.

The new superintendent, William Elson, referred to some pupils as "sow's ears," whom the schools couldn't turn into silk purses.

The new curriculum stressed Americanization, which Miggins translates as "Anglo-conformity" at the expense of European cultures. Although Elson's "progressive" reforms won national praise, they stirred up a backlash. That, and charges of finagling on school contracts, led to the defeat of the school board in 1911.

The new board, in what was to become a Cleveland tradition, fired Elson and brought in a new superintendent.

Finding an address in Cleveland at the beginning of 1906 was a job for an explorer. House numbers began at



PLAIN DEALER FILE

Cleveland Heights School.

"1" at one end or another and went up from there, sometimes by halves. Some streets changed their names from block to block. Streets in different parts of the city had the same name.

The Chamber of Commerce took the lead in bringing order to the chaos. On March 6, after vigorous debate, City Council adopted a plan that took effect Dec. 1 and soon was hailed as a national model.

The names of north-south streets were changed to numbers. Erie St. became E. 9th, Case became E. 40th, Willson became E. 55th, Doan became E. 105th, Pearl became W. 25th, Gordon became W. 65th.

Lake St. on the West Side became Lake Ave. N.W. and Lake St. on the East Side became Lakeside Ave. N.E.

East-west numbers ran up in either direction from Ontario St. at a rate of 2000 per mile. Thus, E. 130th St. was five miles east of E. 30th St. North-south numbers ran up from the lake. On the East Side, they reached 1400 at Superior Ave., 2000 at Euclid Ave., 3500 at Union Ave.

Odd numbers were on the east side of north-south streets. On east-west streets, odd numbers were on the north on the East Side, and the south on the West Side, so that somebody traveling away from downtown (where the low numbers were) always had odd numbers on the left.

Thoroughfares were avenues if they ran east and west, streets if they ran north and south, roads if they ran diagonally, drives if they curved and boulevards if they were wide and tree-lined. Short or disconnected thoroughfares were courts (east-west) or places (north-south).

The numbering system was picked up by all but a few suburbs such as Berea, Bedford and Chagrin Falls, although streets in some Heights-area suburbs dropped the first "1" and rose more slowly. Eastern Lake County and many communities in Lorain County also picked up the system.

McGunagle is a Cleveland freelance writer.



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This was the Cleveland School of Art, also on Willson Ave.

LOOKING AT A YEAR

Feb. 10: The British royal navy launches the \$7.5 million Dreadnought, the world's largest and fastest warship.

April 14: President Theodore Roosevelt scolds American journalists for excessive "muckraking."

April 19: More than 1,000 are killed and tens of thousands injured when an earthquake jolts San Francisco.

July 21: French army Capt. Alfred Dreyfus, wrongly convicted 12 years earlier of spying for Germany, is awarded the Legion of Honor. "My honor has been restored," he said.

Nov. 23: Joseph P. Smith, president of the Mormon Church, is charged with polygamy following the birth of his 43rd child. The baby was born to his fifth wife. Smith pleads guilty and is fined \$300.

Nov. 26: Roosevelt tours the construction of the Panama Canal, breaking a 117-year-old tradition by becoming the first president to travel outside of the United States' territorial jurisdiction.

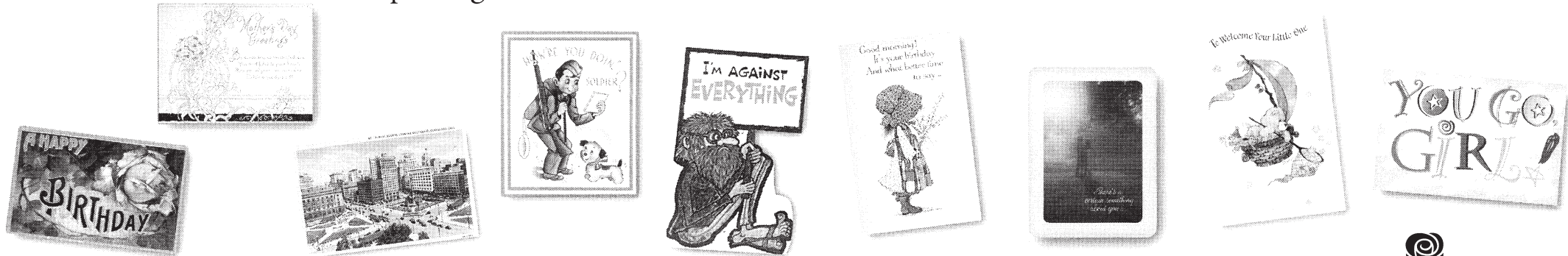
Dec. 10: Roosevelt wins the Nobel Peace Prize for his work on ending the war between Japan and Russia.

Born: Leonid Brezhnev, Clark Clif-

ford, John Huston, Margaret Bourke-Wright, Otto Preminger, Warren Burger, William Brennan, Adolf Eichmann.

Died: Suffragist Susan B. Anthony, French impressionist Paul Cezanne, African-American poet and novelist Paul Dunbar; Marshall Field; James Bailey, co-founder of the Barnum & Bailey Circus.

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